BUILDING THE NEW TURKEY: STATE-SPACE, INFRASTRUCTURE, AND CITIZENSHIP

PELIN ASCI

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF GEOGRAPHY

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN GEOGRAPHY

YORK UNIVERSITY

TORONTO, ONTARIO

July 2020

Abstract

This dissertation explores the contentious and contradictory ways the development of authoritarian infrastructure shapes state-citizenship relations, using the urban as an entry point through which such relations are (re)ordered and (re)produced. To do so, it analyzes the recent housing and mega transit projects in Istanbul as a common thread that weaves through state-space, citizenship, and urbanization. In this context, the research has three interrelated core arguments. First, it argues that within the last 20 years, the Turkish government created a new citizenship contract that presented the provision of infrastructure (housing and transit projects) as its primary mechanism to overcome existing inequalities and to offer full-fledged citizenship to its subjects. Second, it argues that what makes such a citizenship contract possible is the state-led process of commodification and production of parceled land (*arsa* in Turkish) through urban infrastructure, built on the Neo-Ottoman fantasies of unity, communal belonging, and collective prosperity. Finally, the research argues that such a citizenship model has its own contradictions and instead of overcoming existing inequalities, it creates new forms of socio-spatial and economic unevenness. The state's failure to deliver its infrastructural promises reflect the gaps in the social contract, opening new spaces for citizens to reclaim and redefine their rights and responsibilities.

Acknowledgements

No dissertation is merely the result of one's individual work. I'm deeply indebted to my supervisor Ranu Basu for her continuous wisdom, support and nurturing along all the up and downs of this long journey. I hope I can provide guidance to others in the same compassionate and wise way she has done for me. I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my committee members Steven Tufts and Stefan Kipfer. They both encouraged and challenged me with their insightful and constructive scholarly conversations and without them the completion of my dissertation would not have been possible.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all of my research participants, including activist residents in the neighborhoods, as well as activists from Istanbul Kent Savunmasi and Kuzey Ormanlari Savunmasi. They welcomed me at their homes, offices and meetings and generously donated their time to answer all my questions. You breathe life to Istanbul.

I am extremely grateful to my comrades in Toronto who made this city a home: Kenneth Cardenas, Jon Paul Mathias, Paulina Candia Gaja, Murat Ucoglu, Balca Arda, Murat Guney, Marshia Akbar, Hazel Dizon and Tewodros Asfaw. Thank you for your friendship. I cherish it every day. My dear friends from Istanbul: Tugce and Emel, you have been my rocks during these times and I am proud that oceans between us only made our sisterhood stronger. I cannot leave York Geography Department without thanking Yvonne Yim, for her continuous assistance in various times of crisis.

I thank my CUPE 3903 fellows for teaching me how to cherish my labour. I thank the trees of Dentonia Park for accepting me as I am, during many walks with lots of questions and worries in my mind.

Finally, I cannot thank my family enough. My dear mother and father, Hikmet Asci and Halil Ata Asci, with their unwavering support and love taught me to believe in myself and not to give up. My dear sister, Ipek Asci, thanks to you I am never alone in this world. My canim, Paul Bocking, who puts his heart into everything he does, thank you for teaching me how to love. Your sincerity is my peace.

This is for all of you.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acronyms

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
ANAP	Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party)
AP	Adalet Partisi (Justice Party)
CED	Cevresel Etki Degerlendirmesi (Environmental Assessment Report)
CHP	Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party)
DHMİ	Devlet Hava Meydanları İşletmesi (General Directorate of State Airports Authority)
DP	Demokrat Parti (Democrat Party)
DSP	Demokratik Sol Parti (Democratic Left Party)
FP	Fazilet Partisi (Virtue Party)
GEDAS	Gayrimenkul Degerleme A.S. (The Real Estate Valuation Corporation)
GYODER	Gayrimenkul ve Gayrimenkul Yatirim Ortakligi Dernegi (the Real Estate and Real Estate Trust Investment Association)
HDP	Halklarin Demokratik Partisi (Peoples' Democratic Party)
IBB	Istanbul Buyuksehir Belediyesi (Greater Istanbul Municipality)
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KIPTAS	Istanbul Konut Imar ve Plan Sanayi ve Ticaret A.S. (Istanbul Housing Development Planning Firm)
KOS	Kuzey Ormanlari Savunmasi (Northern Forests Defense)
MHP	Milliyetci Hareket Partisi (Nationalist Movement Party)
P3s	Public Private Partnerships
PKK	Partiya Karkerên Kurdistanê (Kurdistan Workers Party)
REIT	Real Estate Investment Trust
RP	Refah Partisi (Welfare Party)
THY	Turk Hava Yollari (Turkish Airlines)
TMMOB	Turk Muhendis ve Mimar Odaları Birligi (Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects)
TOKI	Toplu Konut Idaresi (Mass Housing Development Administration)
TUIK	Turkiye Istatistik Kurumu (Turkish Statistical Institute)
UTP	Urban Transformation Project

Glossary

Arsa: A parcel of land that is homogenized and hierarchized so that it can be bought and sold in the market as a commodity.

Gecekondu: An informal dwelling, constructed on available public lands without permission. It literally means “built in one night”.

Kentsel donusum: Urban transformation, a term used by state officials to describe the development projects based on earthquake danger.

Muhtar: An elected head of a neighborhood and/or village

Tapu Tahsis Belgesi: A land document that is given by successive governments through amnesty acts to provide the gecekondu owner with de facto use rights.

Rant: Profits accrued through rent seeking behavior. Socially it is used in a pejorative manner, highlighting the lack of labor and effort in making quick money.

Rantsal Donusum: For profit transformation, a term coined by residents and activists who oppose urban transformation projects due to their profit-oriented nature

Toprak: Lands that are mainly conceived as a part of nature/earth and valued for their use value.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

> "My dear sisters and brothers, our service (*hizmet*) journey which started in Istanbul in 1994 continues today by embracing the whole Turkey. We accomplished the firsts in Istanbul and today we accomplish them all over Turkey." Recep Tayyip Erdogan, 2014

1.1. Introduction

Since 2002, the Justice and Development Party (hereafter AKP) has been ruling Turkey via a majority government. Under the charismatic leadership of Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the party gradually drifted to electoral authoritarianism with a markedly Islamic character (Ozbudun 2014: 156). With the 2011 national elections, the party consolidated its power through the adoption of authoritarian patterns of governance and significantly limited the scope of democratic contestation. The failed coup attempt in 2016 only facilitated this process by enabling the government to put the country under a two years long "state of emergency", weakening independent media, imprisoning pro-Kurdish parliament members, journalists and firing tens of thousands of civil servants, academics, military, police and judges on the grounds of national security (Tisdall 2018). A conception of democracy has replaced Turkey's already not so strong democracy tradition (Tisdall 2018). In 2018, the country further switched its regime from parliamentary democracy to executive presidency, an ill-tailored system especially made for Erdogan. The reduction of politics to a ballot box, ongoing social polarization and right-wing populism raise important questions about the nature and future of citizenship in Turkey.

Parallel to the rise of authoritarian policies, there has been a growing emphasis on urban restructuring and infrastructure development. In line with the global trends that has seen skyrocketing infrastructure spending incomparable to "any time in the history of mankind"

(Flyvbjerg 2014: 5), Erdogan made infrastructure his government's top priority. In prestigious international newspapers, Turkey is praised that its "airport, highways, and other infrastructure are first class", as its "high-speed intercity rail networks" link cities to each other (Sachs 2013: para. 5). Real estate prices have been increasing though the prices are recently in decline (Collinson 2015). In such a context, Istanbul, though not the capital, has become the centre for Turkish government's ambitious developmental efforts that seek to comprehensively update its infrastructure. Framed by rhetoric of bringing Istanbul back to its imperial glorious days, infrastructure projects ranging from large scale housing development to mega transit projects seem to occupy every parcel of the city.

I argue that by focusing on infrastructure development, we can make connections between the seemingly distinct mentalities of authoritarian state-space making and struggles for citizenship. In this context, the objective of the research is to explore the contentious and contradictory ways infrastructure development shapes the state-citizenship relations. In order to do that I focus on two distinct types of infrastructure development in Istanbul Turkey: state-led urban transformation projects and mega transit projects. In 2002 the AKP launched an ambitious plan to redevelop informal settlements and to build mass housing units to make every citizen a "homeowner". Called urban transformation projects (UTPs), the projects massively changed the social, economic, and physical landscapes of Istanbul and beyond, making housing infrastructure a tenet of the new regime. Along with UTPs, various mega transit projects were launched in the city, among which the three so called "Crazy Projects" gathered much political attention: the construction of a new bridge over the Bosphorus (Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge) that was completed in 2016 and cost over 20 billion TRY (T24, 2016), a new airport (Istanbul Airport) whose construction is partially completed and is expected to cost more than 240 billion TRY (Yenicag 2018) and finally a

proposed artificial strait to connect the Marmara Sea to the Black Sea (Canal Istanbul), whose cost was estimated to be 170 billion TRY in 2018 (Yenicag 2020).

The dissertation claims that examining these two distinct types of projects, housing for everyday use and mega projects for national development and prestige, help us to bring different scales of infrastructure development together. Infrastructure is developed as it weaves through neighborhoods, villages, the city, and the nation. It connects and mobilizes nationalist narratives and accumulation strategies to citizens' dreams and disillusions in everyday life. Examining infrastructure allows us to trace its glitches, failures, and break downs where instead of connecting and moving things, it disrupts and functions as a trap, "promising to enable and facilitate only to prey on our aspirations and then manipulate or immobilize us" (Simone 2018: 41). As such infrastructure politics help us contour the lines and limits of the making of a social contract between the state and its subjects. Accordingly, the dissertation argues that the contested and contradictory spaces of infrastructure development have the potential to reflect the existing conflicts and cracks in the Turkish state-citizen social contract. It further claims that these cracks, failures, and glitches are where alternative social ethics might emerge, planting seeds of different understandings of citizenship.

In order to provide a background to these dynamics, this chapter first briefly introduces the research framework and main questions, followed by the research methods used to answer those questions. The chapter concludes with a brief explanation of the overall arguments in the dissertation.

1.2. Research Framework and Questions

In order to understand these dynamics, I mainly utilize a political economy framework. Political economy approach has been a popular tool in the recent critical urban theory literature to understand and explain post 1980s changes in urban governance and politics. Whether by explaining the shift from a Keynesian managerial stance to a denationalized and flexible one (Sassen 2006), or demonstrating neoliberal roll-back/roll-out policies (Peck & Tickell 2002) or conceptualizing the entrepreneurial city (Harvey 2005), various scholars utilized the political economy approach to explain how the neoliberal rationale shape urban governance and politics. Deregulation, privatization of public assets, commodification of social and economic life, emergence of flexible governance in cooperation with quasi-state bodies and private companies have been argued to be the main tenets of this new entrepreneurial - neoliberal urbanism (Jessop & Sum 2000, Purcell 2002, Macleod 2002). For many political economy scholars, this neoliberal urbanism has been a way for efficiently shaping cities according to the rules of globalizing capital (see Smith 2002; Scott & Storper 2003; Harvey 2008).

Building on this approach, a significant number of regulation school scholars stressed the continuing importance of the nation state in neoliberal urban politics. Looking at the state-economy relations at various scales, they pointed out the state's active role in neoliberalizing the city through "forced introduction of market models and regulation in most sections of life" (Aalbers 2013a: 1054). As such they pointed out to the current rise of the authoritarian state forms in order to push and reinforce neoliberal agendas (Peck & Tickell 2002, Swyngedouw 1996, Aalbers 2013b). Hence, they claimed that urban neoliberalization does not necessarily mean the disappearance of the state but rather relates to the state's restructuring in specific ways (see Peck 2010; Wacquant 2012).

While these authors make important contributions to theorize the urban, I claim that such a political economy approach prioritizes the *economy* at the expense of the *political* by seeing economic motivations as the primary force that shape cities and beyond. It highlights the continuing importance of the authoritarian forms of the state, yet explains it primarily through the needs and demands of global capitalism. However, "too-quick alignment of urbanization with global capitalism" in the prevailing political economy approach "limit[s] the scope for diverse processes shaping the urban to emerge into theorization" (Robinson & Roy 2016: 184). The state, aside from corresponding to the needs of global capitalism, is still an important actor in shaping urbanization to consolidate its base and political power. The urban is not merely about "equal distribution of capital and goods" (Van Eijk 2010: 831), but is also about ongoing contestations for political power, for belonging and for political agency.

Lefebvre's theory of production of space (though widely used in a narrower sense by David Harvey and his followers, see Kipfer et al. 2008 for the critique of such use) allows us to incorporate diverse processes such as the political contestation between the state and its subjects into conceptualizing the urban. For Lefebvre social space is produced through "three dialectically interconnected dimensions" (Schmid 2008: 29): the material (perceived), the ideological-institutional (conceived) and the experienced (the lived). While classical political economy approach, as described above, prioritizes the production of the material over these two other dimensions and thus pose the economic as "the origin or thesis" of totality, in Lefebvre's triadic version these moments of are of equal value and none is privileged (Kipfer et al. 2008). The three moments equally interact, clash and/or complement each other. Thus, their relationship is not causally determined but rather is an ongoing and uncertain process of interaction, conflict and/or alliance (Schmid 2008). The dynamic interaction of these three moments helps us move beyond

the casually determined parameters of neoclassical Marxism and "problematize the stability of any given system without being deterministic" (Kofman & Lebas 1996: 10). In this perspective, space is always present, unfinished, and uncertain and thus political. It is an open-ended process of 'becoming' - discovering, recognizing, complying, resisting, and negotiating - through the multiple contradictory tendencies and realities. In this vein, the urban is not a mere instrument or a product of global capitalism, but simultaneously is a political, economic, and social entity that mediates "between everyday life and large state-bound social order" (Kipfer 2018: 476). In Lefebvre's words:

> The theory we need … might well be called, by analogy, a "unitary theory": the aim is to discover or construct a theoretical unity between "fields" which are apprehended separately … The fields we are concerned with are, first the physical … second, the mental … and thirdly, the social. In other words, we are concerned with logico- epistemological space, the space of social practice, [and] the space occupied by sensory phenomena (Lefebvre 1991:11–12).

Drawing on Lefebvre, this research treats Istanbul as an entry point - as opposed to a unit of analysis, in order to understand wider social, political, and economic dynamics of authoritarian state-space making and struggles for citizenship in Turkey. Treating Istanbul as an entry point is important because it allows us to go beyond the narrower understandings of urban citizenship which dominates the existing literature. The concept of urban citizenship found much interest especially in the literature regarding the global South where western liberal definitions of citizenship with rights and obligations have been long criticized for their irrelevance to the realities of developing countries (Mamdani 1996; Kabeer 2002; Miraftab & Willls 2005). The struggles of the marginalized in impoverished residential neighborhoods in the South for housing, property, sanitation, health services, education, child care etc. have put unprecedented claims on and to the city, and expanded citizenship to new social bases (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 198). Whether under the name of "insurgent citizenship" (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 196 - 197), "urban and

regional forms of citizenship" (Garcia 2006: 762) or "the politics of compensation" (Roy 2009: 160), there is no doubt that such struggles created "new sources of citizenship rights and corresponding forms of self-rule" (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 198) as well as pointing out how urban citizenship take space through situated struggles over urban space and resources.

However, in its attempts to conceive urban citizenship "as a process, a struggle enmeshed in the materiality, identities and politics of urban life, rather than in the legal and bureaucratic realms of state institutions" (Yiftachel 2015: 728), the relevant literature assumes that urban and state citizenships "occupy partially different analytical, practical and normative fields" (Yiftachel 2015: 728). Pointing out to the expansion of decentralized mechanisms of decision making and policy implementations, urban citizenship scholars argue that the notion of nation state as a successful arbiter of citizenship is in decline and calls for a new discussion concerning local dimensions of citizenship (Garcia et al., 1996; Garcia 2006; Purcell, 2002, 2003; Samara 2012). The globalization of capital and growing transnational flow of ideas, goods, images, and persons are argued "to drive a deeper wedge between national space and its urban centers" (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 189). Urban inhabitants are increasingly disenfranchised and lose the control they exert over the decisions that shape their own city (Purcell 2002). As a result, both as the site of capitalist surplus accumulation and progressive social struggles, the city is portrayed to challenge, diverge, and even replace the nation "as the important space of citizenship as the lived space." (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 189). Whereas conventional enfranchisement empowers national citizens, urban citizenship is supposed to empower urban inhabitants. Membership and rights are gained through "living out the routines of everyday life in the space of the city", and not via nationality, ethnicity, or birth (Purcell 2002: 102).

This perspective approaches the city as a contained unit of analysis and leave out the questions of how various urban discourses and practices are related to the wider scales of the nation state. Such a way of overlooking of the role of the nation state in urban citizenship has a few important implications. First despite its neoliberal reconfiguration the nation state is ever- present and continues to be one of the most powerful shapers of society (Therborn 2017; Yiftachel 2015). Second, it leads the related literature to put "too much naïve hope on the thin shoulders of urban citizenship" and on "the ability of the city to deliver genuine responses to the issues raised in the increasing urban protest of recent years" (Blokland et al. 2015 cited in Yiftachel 2015: 728). Finally, as this dissertation claims, it overlooks the fact that urban struggles are not just about equal distribution of capital and goods, but also seek to achieve "the horizon of … equal and inclusive membership, so central to the modern concept of citizenship" (Yiftachel 2015: 730).

Looking through Istanbul, we can trace how multi-scalar networks of domination and resistance operate and mediate between everyday life of citizens and the Turkish state. Yet, by no means does this dissertation maintain that citizenship should be understood solely or primarily in relation to the nation state. Proliferation of flexible citizenships, deterritorialization of the law, emergence of zones of exceptions (Ong 2006), transnational migration movements where migrants live under multiple jurisdictions (Benhabib 2007) definitely challenged the coupling of citizenship with the nation state. Nevertheless, this dissertation asserts that the state is still one of the most important layers of citizenship and is crucial to consider especially when thinking about the recent rise of authoritarianism.

In order to explore how the urban is used to consolidate authoritarian regimes and transform state-citizen relations, I focus on one particular aspect of urbanization: infrastructure development. Infrastructure is "the connective tissue that knits people, places, social institutions

and the natural environment into coherent urban relations" (Graham and Marvin 2001:43). Its built networks provide essential services and are vital to the functioning of state-space. Infrastructures are often material (roads, pipes, schools, housing etc.), yet they are also embedded in socio-spatial relations, remaking and re-inscribing them (Star 1999, Marvin and Graham 2001, Larkin 2015). Infrastructure is a core drive of the capitalist urbanization process. As urban population increases, it creates an increasing demand for housing, transportation, and recreational areas. Expanding infrastructural investments spread urbanization to further areas and open new lands for future rounds of real estate investment. Infrastructure weaves through urban and non-urban spaces, makes things relate, brings what is far to near and what is near to far (Simone 2018). In doing so, it reorganizes the relations of domination and resistance between socio-political centres and peripheries (Kipfer 2018). Thus, just like the urban, infrastructure mediates between everyday life and state bound social order, moving and connecting things, people and places.

Understanding the urban through an infrastructural lens helps us reconceptualize the relationship between the production of state-space and struggles for citizenship. Infrastructure not only enables and facilitates the production of state-space through urbanization, it also mobilizes citizens' needs, dreams, and expectations (Larkin 2015). I conceptualize citizenship as "an institution mediating rights between the subjects of politics and the polity to which these subjects belong" (Isin & Nyers 2014: 1). Such rights do not merely pertain to economic rationalities (though they are an important part of it), but also are inherently related to demands and fantasies of belonging, equality, and inclusive membership. It is often subjects' infrastructural demands and needs that are put onto the state as claims to their citizenship rights. The degree of one's access to infrastructure also signals their level to be accepted as full-fledged citizens and members of the polity. From this perspective, infrastructure development is a realm of an ongoing struggle to

redefine the rights and duties between the state and its subjects. This contestation also reflects the contradictions and fissures existing in state-space, opening new spaces for citizens to redefine and reclaim their rights and responsibilities.

The research explores the contentious and contradictory ways in which the infrastructure development shapes the state-citizenship relations, using the urban as an entry point through which such relations are (re)ordered and (re)produced (Lefebvre 2001). Thus, the main research questions of the dissertation are as follow:

1. What is the role of urban transformation and mega transit projects as one common thread in shaping the state-citizenship relation in Turkey?

2. What are some of the main forms of representations in which urban transformation and mega transit projects are framed and justified to the public (conceived spaces)? How do they align with popular aspirations for a better environment and a better life? What kind of imaginaries do such representations evoke in connection to the symbolic power of the state as well as the dreams, expectations, and obligations of citizen-subjects? How are counter-discourses marginalized, excluded, or denied?

3. How are urban transformation and mega transit projects implemented? What are some of the main material practices and capital accumulation strategies that underpin their development (perceived spaces)? How are these spaces produced as a commodity? What are some of the main political implications of this commodification regarding the state- citizenship relations?

4. How do citizens, as users of space, experience urban transformation and mega transit projects (lived space)? To what extent is this lived experience coherent with the conceived and perceived spaces of infrastructure development? How do citizens contest, negotiate or reproduce such state-spaces (Isin 2001)?

In order to address these questions, I adopted the following methodological framework.

1.3. Discussion of Methodology and Data Collection Methods

Before and during my field work Turkey was speedily abandoning democracy whereby the state surveillance of citizens and activists was increasing every day. Academics who were vocally critical of the government policies were under special scrutiny and at risk of losing their jobs, passports, and facing trials on terrorism charges.[1] In the middle of my fieldwork in July 2016, there was an attempted coup d'état against the ruling government which hastened and justified the government's further implementation of authoritarian policies. The day after the attempt the government declared a nationwide state of emergency which lasted two years till July 2018, suspending already limited rights and freedoms of citizens. Moreover, as the government strictly controls the official collection and release of wide range of statistical data (and as many independent economists argued the government manipulate the numbers such as lowering the unemployment rate, inflation rate), the utility of official statistics for my research was significantly reduced.

[1] Indeed, several of my research participants had ongoing lawsuits against them and one of them was later fired from their academic position via the government's executive order.

This context of an authoritarian and coercive regime inevitably restricted my choice of fieldwork techniques and selection of research participants (Koch 2013: 390). I had to drop my original plan of interviewing relevant state officials, in order not to attract attention to my ongoing research which was mostly critical in its nature. To compensate for the lack of official interviews, an in-depth newspaper content analysis was conducted and examined how the projects were officially presented to the people. The pervasive culture of fear in society and criminalization of politics (especially urban politics) limited my reach to non-activist residents and villagers who lived around the targeted project areas.[2] Participatory observation became a critical method by participating in public meetings and observing interactions.

In this context, I collected my research data based on two main techniques of empirical investigation: qualitative document analysis (of primary and secondary sources) and field work (participatory observation and interviews). These two methods complemented each other. Analyzing newspapers, policy, and legal documents as well as government and business documents helped me understand how state officials, developers and planners 'conceive' Istanbul abstractly and in doing so how they attempt to re-order the city and shape its lived experience. It also revealed the specific historical-material ways the state and capital sought to commodify Istanbul. However, understanding conceived space on its own is not sufficient, since "conception… never proceeds separately from the traces of practice or experience" (Pierce & Martin 2015: 1286). Thus, field work also consisted of structured and unstructured participatory observation and interviews. The following section explains each of the data collection method in detail.

[2] I reached out to interview ordinary residents who lived in targeted neighborhoods via common friends/acquaintances my offers were rejected in the fear that what they would say could be used against them in future or simply they did not want "to seem to be causing trouble".

1.3.1. Newspaper Content Analysis

Media coverage plays an important part in citizens everyday life by framing information they come to know, understand, and evaluate. It provides images and produces narratives that order, maintain and repair social reality (McCormick 2018). These images and narratives, according to Schmid (2008: 36) "enter[s] into social structures and ideologies" and form the basis for "social imaginary". Thus, media outlets are crucial analyzing tools for the production of representations of space (the conceived) as well as the lived spaces. Since coming to power (and particularly after their second election victory in 2007) the AKP government sought to suppress critical journalism and media outlets by using judiciary and executive power (Akser & Hawks 2012) and encouraged media ownership changes towards pro-government capital (Adakli 2009). [3] High number of arrested journalists, online banishment, and practice of economic sanctions on critical outlets have resulted in direct and indirect control of media in favor of the AKP and thus closely aligned the mainstream media discourse with the party's interests.

Furthermore, as described later, in the Turkish context the concept of urban planning became almost obsolete. Important decisions regarding Istanbul's governance are taken primarily by President Erdogan in an improvised and ad hoc manner. New infrastructure projects are often declared during political rallies or groundbreaking ceremonies which are broadcast on TV and their details are speculated for days on the newspapers. Thus, media coverage often constitutes the main way citizens and city officials hear for the first time about new urban policies. Media analysis in this research is used to explore the ruling party's discourse, to note how it is mediated and reaches the everyday life of its citizens.

[3] Between 2002 and 2008 "The media assets of two powerful groups, Ciner and Uzan, changed hands to more government friendly owners" (Adaklı 2009).

An in-depth content analysis of one of Turkey's most circulated newspapers, *Hurriyet*, was conducted between 2002 and 2017. [4] At the time, *Hurriyet* was among the top three popular newspapers in Turkey. Owned by Dogan Group, it was one of the most powerful media conglomerates in Turkey with good relations with the AKP. The newspaper was a representative of mainstream populist media, had a relatively wide range of readership, and its website was one of most popular news sites in Turkey (Birgun 2012). Over the years the government's influence on the newspaper had increased, and in 2018, the Dogan group sold the paper to AKP supported Demiroren group, ending the relative autonomy of the newspaper.

The content analysis consisted of examining news article coverage regarding the urban transformation projects and the three mega projects in Istanbul. The Hurriyet webpage search engine was used to access all online published materials since 1991. The fifteen-year time period of the study was chosen as it covered the beginning of the AKP government's one-party rule (2002) to the end of my field research in Istanbul (2017).[5] The content analysis specifically looked for how the projects were discursively constructed, promoted to the public, and how the potential conflicts of interest (resistance) were portrayed. Common themes frequently emerged in the news coverage were open coded under appropriate topics and sub-topics: housing (home ownership, rising real estate/land values; TOKI as a welfare institution; state as a service provider (*hizmet devleti*); National Development (neo-Ottomanism, national pride/prestige, rising real estate/land values, construction as an economic growth method, Erdogan's charismatic leadership); and state

[4] Content analysis refers to "the study of recorded human communications" (Babbie & Benaquisto: 2002: 285). It seeks to understand "Who says what, to whom, why, how and with what effect?" (Babbie & Benaquisto 285 – 286) and in doing so it looks for "the ways in which people, places or issues are represented or imagined" (Hay 2004: 125).

[5] In the initial phase of the research, I used the keywords "urban transformation" (*kentsel donusum*), "mega project" (*mega proje*), third bridge (*ucuncu kopru*), new airport (*yeni havalimani*) and Canal Istanbul (*Kanal Istanbul*) to search for the related articles. For each year I went through all the search results (on average 600 articles while there were less published articles in the early 2000s with a peak in 2016 and 2017).

of exceptions (grassroots resistance rent-oriented transformation, criminalization of dissent, earthquake threat as a discipline mechanism, the state's right expropriate private property).

1.3.2. Analysis of Related Laws and Regulations

In order to explore the restructuring of the Mass Housing Administration (TOKI) under the AKP government and the related changing parameters of the legal and institutional framework of the Turkish housing and construction system, the related laws and regulations between 1984 and 2018 were closely examined. The legislations, regulations, executive orders and edicts within that time period were available online on the official legislation website (https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/).

1.3.3. Analysis of Government and Business Documents

Related official documents such as briefings, planning reports on past, present and future development projects (at the neighborhood and city levels), environmental assessment reports (CED) were examined and accessed through the official websites of Mass Housing Administration (https://www.toki.gov.tr/) and Environment and Urbanization Ministry (https://www.csb.gov.tr/). For more case specific projects such as the third airport or a neighborhood development plan, the official websites of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (https://www.ibb.istanbul/) and district municipalities were utilized. The Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (IBB) provides open online access to all the local plans, monthly news bulletins and other publications. These were examined to see if they had relevant information to the specific projects. Additionally, the activity and sectoral reports of semi-public housing developer Emlak Konut (http://www.emlakkonut.com.tr/tr-TR) , an associate of TOKI, as well as the research reports of the Real Estate and Real Estate Trust Investment Association (GYODER) (https://www.gyoder.org.tr/) were examined. The goal of examination was to understand general

patterns and trends in Turkish housing sector as well as to see how the biggest developers (re)framed urban development projects.

1.3.4. Qualitative Field Work

Babbie and Benaquisto (2002: 306) state that qualitative field research allows the researcher to develop a fuller and deeper understanding of their field by allowing them "to notice nuances of attitude and behavior". It foregrounds the embodiment of space into the research by revealing the spatial practices, rhythms, encounters which may be affective in their content and simply defy the realm of language. Only by incorporating oneself– the corpus of the researcher into the actual field, one is able to reach "the level of affective, bodily, lived experience" (Lefebvre 1991: 230). Being there, observing, following the rhythms and mundane movements of everyday life, talking to people to understand how they perceive and live their spaces, through participatory observation and interviews were, thus, critical aspects of studying space.

The field I conducted this research was not "new" to me. I was born and raised in Istanbul and lived most of my life in the city. I was adjusted to its crooked streets, crowds, traffic, and ever-changing rhythms. The field work was conducted in two consecutive summers: first in 2016 for four months between May and August and then in 2017 for three months between June and August. Even after my field work was officially completed, I continued to visit the city in the summers of 2018 and 2019 for two months each time. Being familiar with the field site provided me with the advantages to adapt according to place specific norms (such as knowing how to dress and act in different spaces; easier means of access; and to build rapport with my research participants) (Kleinknecht et al. 2018: 75). However, as Kearns (2000: 113) maintains being overfamiliar with the research context also brings partial blindness in observations as an independent researcher. It carries the risk of "too much participation at the expense of the observation" (Kearns 2000: 113)

that one "might not see something an outsider would see with fresh eyes" (Kleinknecht et al. 2018: 75), and take important patterns for granted (Hillier & Milne 2018). Yet despite being a long-term resident of Istanbul, the field sites included localities that I was unfamiliar with. The research locations were mostly at the outskirts of the city, the inner suburbs of working-class neighborhoods, as well as the rural parts of the northern Istanbul. As I was not a member of the communities in those places, I had to be introduced through informants. This made my positionality as "a marginal researcher", defined by Kearns (2000: 113), an in-between status of being an outsider and insider, enabling the researcher "be a critical, only partially involved, observer of the place".

1.3.5. Participatory Observation

The participatory observation part of my field work included attending regular meetings organized by urban activists, neighborhood, and local municipality meetings, attending public rallies, and regularly visiting the development sites. After the Gezi Park protests, many activist groups against various urban development projects were formed and often had online presence. I had started following such groups on their websites and social media accounts since 2014. Among those groups *Istanbul Kent Savunmasi* (Istanbul Urban Defense) garnered my attention as a prominent, organized, and comprehensive grassroots organization. Founded in 2013 in the aftermath of Gezi Park Protests, *Istanbul Kent Savunmasi*, was an umbrella activist group that aimed to provide coordination among various urban activist groups. Thus, unlike the other grassroots organizations it was concerned with city wide issues. I also knew the group from the Istanbul City Rally (*Istanbul Kent Mitingi*) they had organized in December 2013 which aimed to bring diverse forces together.

During my visit to Turkey for fieldwork in May 2016, I contacted the group via Facebook explaining my research and asking if I could participate in their meetings. They were welcoming and accepted my presence as a participant. For four months between May – August 2016 I regularly attended the group's biweekly meetings which were hosted at the Chamber of Architects Office. During the meetings, housing, environmental or neighborhood activists from different parts of Istanbul would come and inform the group about their ongoing struggles against various development projects. Diverse neighborhoods presented at the meetings, from Gaziosmanpasa and Kadikoy to Uskudar, Adalar and Fatih provided me with a comprehensive view of the resistance struggles in Istanbul. My participation in the meetings was also useful to observe urban activists themselves and how they perceived and narrated these struggles. It also helped me build and maintain rapport with the activists in the field.

These meetings guided me to the districts and neighborhoods which were designated as risky areas, such as the neighborhoods of Sarigol in Gaziosmanpasa, Okmeydani in Beyoglu, Cumhuriyet in Sultangazi, Tozkoparan in Gungoren and Fikirtepe in Kadikoy (see Figure 1.1). The neighborhoods varied in their income levels, social structures, geographical locations, and land tenure (see Appendix A). The heterogeneity of the neighborhoods is important to provide a general framework for urban transformation in Istanbul. In those districts I attended the ongoing neighborhood and local municipality meetings which debated the proposed developments. Such meetings included larger scale organizations that were held at wedding venues and hosted hundreds of residents which were often attended by local politicians, community leaders and legal advisors as well as smaller scale organizations that took place in front of the residential apartments and attended by residents and housing activists. These meetings were good opportunities to observe the contested spaces of the development projects and informally chat with the locals from

the neighborhood. In the beginning of the meetings I introduced myself as a researcher and observed activists and community leaders as they gave their speeches. During the breaks I informally interviewed the locals to inquire about the projects and their concerns and expectations. I found that these informal talks made ordinary locals feel safer to express their opinions about the projects since they were anonymous and were already in an environment where others were organically discussing how to proceed further. Such meetings attracted a wide range of people from different political opinions (dissidents, undecided and pro-development), and presented me with valuable data of ordinary people's perception of the state.

It appeared that my positionality as an in-between researcher a Turkish citizen who is outside of the community, while working with a Canadian University often installed trust in my relationship with urban activists and neighborhood residents. The stereotypical images of Canada as a developed, civilized country that is respectful of human rights and environmental protection instilled a sense that I would evaluate their struggle fairly. I was similar enough to them in terms of having lived in the same city and familiar with its problems and desires but also distant enough to understand them from a 'neutral' and 'orderly' perspective from a "developed" country. Indeed, as one resident in one of the neighborhood meetings told me: "You would understand our demands, because you also left Istanbul and went to live in a more developed and modern city. That is what we deserve here as well." Furthermore, the fact that I came from Canada and was planning to disseminate the research in Toronto as well flattered some research participants. However, the same reasons also cautioned me from doing interviews with the government officials as within the polarized and authoritarian political climate I would be easy to be marked as a 'Western agent'. Even though it was relatively easier to blend in the neighborhood meetings, for the smaller villages around the mega projects (see Figure 1.1) where everyone knew each other, my outsider status was

immediately apparent. During visits to those villages, I stayed away from taking photos or informally interviewing people. Rather I visited the main teahouses, walked around, and took notes. It was difficult to build rapport with the locals when I was in the villages.[6]

Another way to observe the ongoing contestations around the mega project areas was to join the grassroots activists group's, Northern Forest Defense (KOS), public rallies and fieldtrips. KOS was among the participants of *Istanbul Kent Savunmasi* and their activists attended the meetings to talk about their struggle to halt the mega transit projects. Furthermore, during the summer of 2016, I attended two protests organized by the group. One of them was a protest held in front of Istanbul Forestry Regional Directorate in central Istanbul against the deforestation of the inner-city forest Fatih to provide raw materials for the projects. The other one was a field trip to the northern village of Agacli, another village located at the intersection of third bridge and third airport and a mining source for the necessary raw materials. The field trip led by the activists was a useful way for me to see the impact of the mega projects on the region's ecosystem, to talk with the dissident villagers and learn their motivations as well as observing the activists themselves and their interaction with the locals.

[6] Luckily, the long hours, waiting at the bus stops and commuting to those villages turned out to be valuable field work sites. As the villages are far away from Istanbul, there were limited options of taking public transit. The commuting hours were long, including waiting time for the bus. Since there were many locals waited for the bus with me, as we waited and complained together, we also developed a companionship. I introduced myself as researcher on the mega projects and informally asked of their opinions to inform the research. In this way most people felt more comfortable and actually proud to share their 'two cents' on the developments. As the commuting part turned out to be more fruitful than actually visiting the villages, I started to do these round trips once two weeks for two months. Not all trips were productive as the others but nevertheless they provided me with organic and interesting insights on the local's perception of their everyday life and impact of the projects.

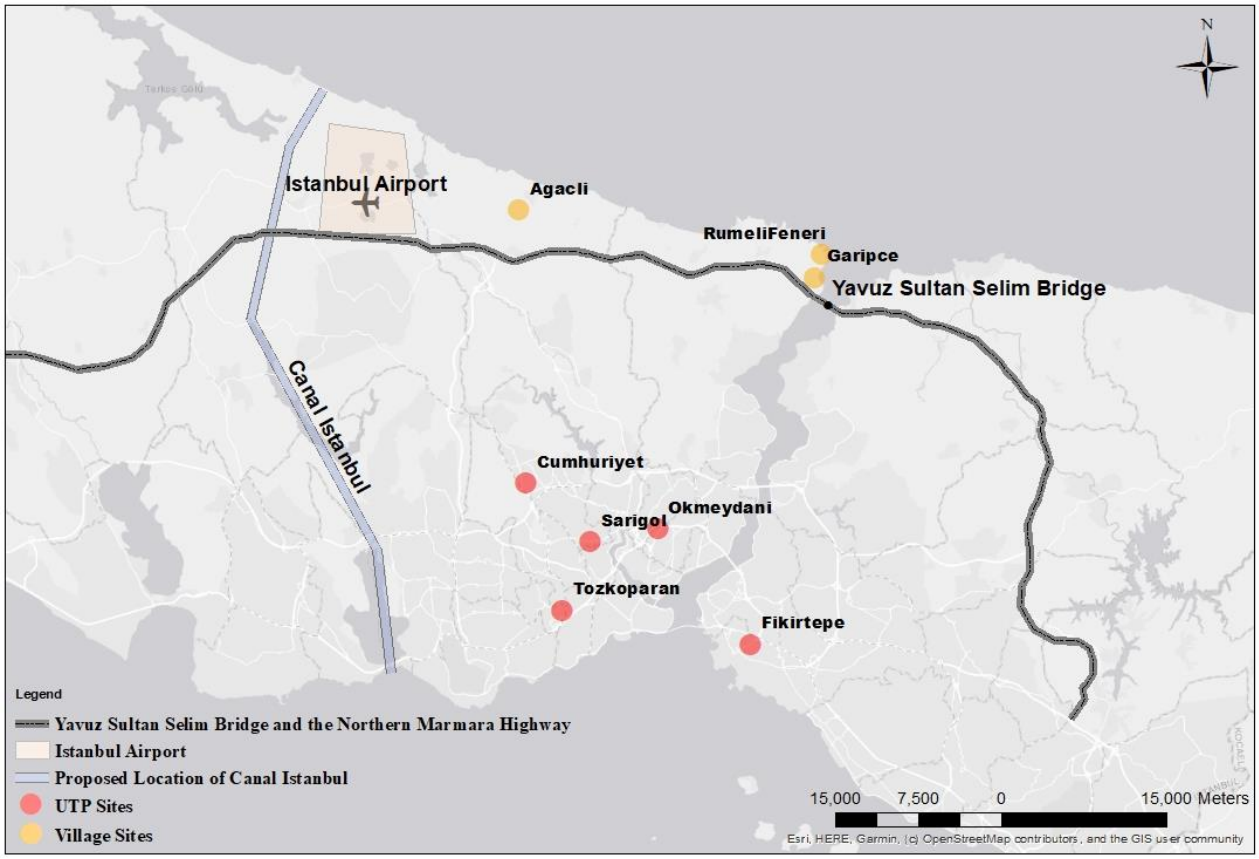

Figure 1.1 Locations of Mega Transit Projects and Field Sites in Istanbul Area

(Drawn by author)

1.3.6. Interviews

I conducted 15 in depth interviews with different research participants ranging from environmental activists and neighborhood representatives to ordinary residents in the transformation areas (see Appendix B). The objective of the interviews was to develop a deeper understanding of how the projects unfolded on the ground and "how subjects made sense of them" (Babbie & Benaquisto 2002: 307; Bocking 2020). I started my interviews using a semi-structured interview technique because of its flexibility "to explore topics, particularly unanticipated issues that may arise in the course of interview" (Babbie & Benaquisto 2002: 331). I utilized primary opening questions to initiate discussions on the respondents background and their involvement/

relation to the development project in question (Dunn 2004). This semi-structured form helped me conduct interviews more in a manner of a conversation guided by the respondents and thus reformulate or reframe my questions in relation to the specific issues as raised by them.

Interviews were selected through the snowball sampling. My participation at the *Istanbul Kent Savunmasi* provided me with the initial contacts for interviews, who then referred me to other activists and/or residents in different neighborhoods and villages around the mega project areas. This resulted in most of the activists/residents I interviewed in being often prominent figures in organizing neighborhood/ mega projects resistance and thus able to act as "informants" who could directly talk about the communities they worked with (Babbie & Benaquisto: 2002: 167). They also provided me with access to their social media groups (email, facebook and whatsapp) as well as extra materials such as planning documents, documents regarding the legal cases, municipality issued documents, photos and videos of their prior meetings and events which all enriched my research. Even though I did not use any material directly from the social media groups in the dissertation due to ethical reasons, they nevertheless helped me to understand the group dynamics, concerns and hopes of the related members who were going through the urban transformation process.

The interviews lasted between 60 minutes to 90 minutes. Whenever possible I conducted the interviews in public spaces. However, some felt more comfortable at their homes so two of the interviews were conducted in the respondents' houses. I also paid attention not to contact the respondents often or become a regular visitor in their circles (Çalışkan 2018). At the outset of my fieldwork I had planned to take the respondents' written consent. However, most respondents did not want to sign such written forms as they found them intimidating and did not want to be identified and/or held responsible for their interviews. Thus, after the initial phase I opted for

taking oral consent not to intimidate my respondents and be able to build rapport. Due to similar reasons, seven interviewers did not want their speech to be audio recorded so those interviews were hand-written. These notes were later transferred to digital files. The rest of the interviews was recorded using an audiotape; stored in my hard drive and later fully transcribed for analysis. After each interview I wrote into my field work journal as soon as possible, reflecting on my feelings and observations regarding the interview, taking notes on the emerging themes and connections that could be useful for the next interview (Bikos 2018: 82). In order to achieve anonymity, I assigned a number to each participant and used it for data, transcription, and analysis. I also used pseudonym names in the dissertation and wrote in a way that the participants could identify themselves but could not be identified by readers (Çalışkan 2018). All translations (interviews, newspapers, reports etc.), unless otherwise stated, are mine.

1.4. Conclusion and Outline of Dissertation: Making sense of Istanbul and Beyond

One main theme that emerged from the field work was how infrastructure development whether in the form of UTPs or mega transit projects acted as a mediation between state-space and citizens. Infrastructure weaved through official discourses, documents, neighborhood meetings and interviews. It was a tool for the government to recast the state-citizenship relationship, claiming to transform its subjects into full-fledged citizens. Some citizens vehemently opposed the infrastructure projects due to their rent-oriented nature; others sought to capitalize on them and saw them as proof of rising prosperity, while many were not sure how to make sense of them. The lands were cleared out; houses were demolished and rebuilt; villages stifled under dust and debris; people were displaced and displaced others. In each case, the anticipation of future infrastructural development occupied imaginations, engendered hopes, fueled anger, creating a geography of desires, anxieties, and conflicts.

Based on these insights, I use the concept of infrastructure development as a thread that builds, weaves, and reproduces state-space and citizenship relations, unraveling its dynamics and contradictions. Overall, the dissertation has three interrelated core arguments. First, it argues that within the last 20 years, the Turkish government built a new citizenship contract that presented the provision of infrastructure (UTPs and mega transit projects) as the primary mechanism to overcome existing inequalities and to offer full-fledged citizenship to its subjects. In this sense, citizens are expected to: i. participate in the rampant and aggressive mode of commodification of urban land through the infrastructural projects (duty); ii. enjoy better provision of infrastructural services/ benefit from the rising urban rent (rights); iii. when necessary surrender individual rights to promote the common good. Those who stood outside the terms of the contract were excluded and marginalized from the process and the polity. Second, the research argues that what lies at the core of this new citizenship contract is the state-led process of urbanization and production of abstract space in the form of parceled land (*arsa* in Turkish). Finally, the research argues that such a citizenship model has its own contradictions. Instead of overcoming existing inequalities and addressing the citizenship gap, it creates new forms of socio-spatial and economic unevenness that puts unique pressures on the Turkish state. Infrastructural 'glitches' from incomplete projects to an oversupply of condo units exacerbate the contradictions in the citizenship contract, opening new spaces for citizens to redefine and reclaim their rights and responsibilities.

Overall, this research uses infrastructure development as an entry point to understand wider social, political, and economic dynamics of authoritarian state-space production and struggles for citizenship in Turkey. In this context, chapter 2 theorizes the multiple ways in which infrastructure development mediates the state- citizen relationship. Chapter 3 presents a brief overview of the historical and socio-economic context of infrastructure development in Turkey. The empirical

chapters that follow are divided into three themes. Chapter 4 looks at building 'the new Turkey" under the AKP leadership through the lens of three mega infrastructure projects: the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, Istanbul Airport and Canal Istanbul. Located in a neo-Ottomanist context, the chapter looks at how the state conceives the projects as vital to its national existence and to citizens prosperity. It then explores how the projects (re)produce and solidify unequal patterns of citizenship by distributing its costs and benefits unevenly and thus create cracks in the ruling party's citizenship contract. Chapter 5 focusses on urban transformation projects (UTPs). It claims that if mega projects are conceived as monuments to the collective prosperity of a rising nation-state, then UTPs are promises of the everyday materialization of that prosperity. As a part of the state-citizenship contract, UTPs are conceived both as a right and a duty for citizens with the purposes of addressing the housing inequality and creating a homogenized nation. However similar to the mega projects, it is then argued that through the projects the state actively generates and deepens inequalities while sharpening the contradictions in the perceived and lived spaces. Finally, chapter 6 looks at how infrastructure development becomes a key forum for different grassroots organizations to challenge and contest state spaces in an attempt to produce different spaces and citizenship ethics. I discuss different methods and tactics employed by the activists and locals to change the terms of their membership to state-space with both successes and failures. Overall, I argue that community mobilizations against the infrastructural projects represent 'a glitch' in the social contract between citizens and the Turkish state. Finally, I maintain that to widen resistance movements we need to develop politics that understands urban development and its contradictions especially as it relates to uneven experiences of citizenship. The conclusion summarizes the arguments of the dissertation with prospects for future studies.

Chapter 2 – Theoretical Framework

2.1. Introduction

This chapter theorizes infrastructure as a mediation between state-space and citizenship. It consists of three sections. In the first section I explore the concept of the production of space in Lefebvre with references to his spatial triad of the *perceived*, the *conceived* and the *lived*. Building on this, I then look at production of state-space and analyze infrastructure development as a core condition of state-space production. In the second section, I look into the literature on citizenship and explain how I conceptualize citizenship for the purposes of my study. After a brief conceptual discussion, I lay out how both in theory and practice infrastructure mediates the relationship between state-space and citizens as a site of reproducing uneven citizenship patterns and as a site of contesting state-imposed citizenship. In the final section, I explain how following Lefebvre we can conceptualize the urban as a mediation and contribute to our understanding of infrastructure and citizenship relations, especially in the current context of rent oriented infrastructure development boom.

2.2. Production of Space, State-Space, and Infrastructure

French Marxist thinker Henri Lefebvre (1991: 421) rejects the "trivial" way of seeing space as a simple container of social processes. He famously argues that (social) space is a (social) product. In this view space is no more a *tabula rasa* that enables things to take place as proposed by the Cartesian thinkers but rather is "an active moment" that is produced via social and material relations in society (Merrifield 2006: 207). "Space is permeated with social relations" and "it is not only supported by social relations but is also producing and produced by social relations" (Lefebvre 2009: 186). In that respect Lefebvre states that:

> Space is social: it involves assigning more or less appropriated places to the social relations of reproduction, namely the biophysiological relations between sexes, the ages, the specific organization of the family, and to the relations of production, namely, division of labour and its organization (Lefebvre 2009: 186).

Lefebvre's call for an epistemological shift in the study of space from space as a thing to a social product implies that space is always under construction. Being "a product of interrelations as constituted through interactions space is always in the process of being made; never finished, never closed" (Massey 2005:9). In this sense space is always present: it carries the marks of the past but also the possibilities for future in its presence:

> The past has left its marks, its inscriptions, but space is always a present space, a current totality, with its links and connections to the action. In fact, the production and the product are inseparable sides of one process (Lefebvre 2009: 186).

Thinking space as simple container is not only a philosophical mistake but also removes attention from the acts and producers of spatial reality and conceals that "(social) space is a (social) product" (Lefebvre 1991: 27). As such it mystifies space and makes its production appear "irrational, swelling up from the unknown and the unknowable. Or denied and … reduced to what was already existing" (Lefebvre 1996: 104). For Lefebvre de-fetishization and demystification of space are, thus, the first steps to understand socio-spatial relations because only then the users can recognize space as a product of their actions and start to think about changing it.

> The error - or illusion — generated here consists in the fact that, when social space is placed beyond our range of vision in this way, its practical character vanishes, and it is transformed in philosophical fashion into a kind of absolute. In face of this fetishized abstraction, 'users' spontaneously turn themselves, their presence, their 'lived experience' and THEIR bodies into abstractions too. Fetishized abstract space thus gives rise to two practical abstractions: 'users' who cannot recognize themselves within it, and a thought which cannot conceive of adopting a critical stance towards it (Lefebvre 1991: 93).

In this relation, Lefebvre (1991: 33) defines three crucial moments that contribute to production of space: representations of space (the conceived), representational spaces (the

perceived) and spatial practices (the lived). Representations of space refers to “abstract thought of space” as it is constructed and imagined by the technocrats and professionals (Merrifield 2006: 109). It is the space that is divorced from its lived actuality, carefully measured, and planned in the mind and on the paper (Elden 2004: 187). Thus, it is the space of maps, mathematics, and used by “social engineers and urban planners, of navigators and explorers” (Elden 2004: 190). As such it is the space of “calculative planning” (Elden 2004: 188). Spaces of representation, on the other hand, refer to everyday perception of space that is “concrete, material and physical” (Elden 2004: 189). It is the non-linguistic space, the realm of “non-verbal symbols and signs” (Lefebvre 1991: 39). Thus, it is the site of the body, of the physical form and designates “real space…that is generated and used” (Elden 2004: 190). The third moment is spatial practices which connect representations of space and representational spaces. “Between the poles of conception and perception” (Elden 2004: 190), lies the socially produced lived space that depends on both mental and material constructions. As the space that is simultaneously “real-and-imagined”, the spatial practices ensure the social cohesion and continuity between different moments (Lefebvre 1991: 33).

> That the lived, conceived, and perceived realms should be interconnected, so that the 'subject', the individual member of a given social group, may move from one to another without confusion — so much is a logical necessity. Whether they constitute a coherent whole is another matter. They probably do so only in favourable circumstances, when a common language, a consensus and a code can be established (Lefebvre 1991: 40).

In this framework Lefebvre (1991) argues that every society creates its own particular space. As such space is also at the heart of the political struggles in the contemporary world. “No longer merely a medium or theatre of socio-political conflicts”, space is now one of their constitutive elements (Lefebvre 1991: 373). However, this struggle does not merely revolve around capturing physical spaces. In order to create new social conditions, one must first and

foremost create new social spaces (Lefebvre 1991: 59). Accordingly, Lefebvre (1991: 416) states that "all social actors, movements, institutions are subjected to a trial by space". Just like no power can be hegemonic without appropriating space and dominating it (Lefebvre 1991: 420), any subaltern social movement therefore must produce their own space otherwise they cannot go beyond being "a strange entity, a peculiar kind of abstraction -unable to escape from the ideological or even the 'cultural' realm" (Lefebvre 1991: 53).

Drawing on the theory of the production of social space discussed above, Lefebvre conceptualizes the modern state as a "spatial framework of power" (Goswami 2004: 8). "The state is itself a socio-spatial configuration, a form of social architecture that is constantly engaged in the production of matrices of social space that extend its power and control over social relations" (Brenner 1997: 146). The state has its own dynamic space, but also produces space as its privileged instrument. In this relation Lefebvre states, "in the chaos of relations among individuals, groups, class fractions and classes, the State tends to impose a rationality, its own, which has space as its privileged instrument" (Lefebvre 2009:226).

In order to understand how the state produces space as its privileged instrument, we need to understand Lefebvre's concept of *abstract space*. Abstract space is the primary type of space produced by the state under the capitalist mode of production (Lefebvre 1991). As the advent of capitalism dismantled feudal space and has produced "its historically specific urban and industrial forms" (Merrifield 2006: 107), abstract space came to dominate absolute and historical spaces (Wilson 2013). The abstract space is an instrument of the capitalist state-space (Lefebvre 1991) and is distinguishable with its *abstractive* logic that is manifested in "the geometric representation of space" (Elden 2004: 182). Just like geometric representations of space empties nature of its socio-natural substance, transforming it into homogenous and calculable shapes and forms, the

modern nation state attempts to abstract space from its embedded context, turning into homogenous, interchangeable, and quantifiable units. Space becomes a commodity that is bought and sold at the market, homogenized, and fragmented into parcels. As such abstract space "is a reflection of ―the 'world of commodities', its 'logic' and its worldwide strategies" (Lefebvre 1991: 53).

By turning space into a calculable commodified entity, the production of abstract space provides the possibility of "social and technological domination" to serve the interests of the state and capitalist accumulation (Elden 2004:183). By producing abstract space, the state "dissolves and incorporates such former 'subjects' as the village and the town" (Lefebvre 1991: 51) and replaces them with homogeneous units of space. It distinguishes discreet spaces and delineates them from each other as a part of a broader system of domination and exploitation (Lefebvre 2009: 212). It breaks spaces into separate spaces "such as spaces of labour, housing, transit, leisure etc." (Lefebvre 2009: 214) and then reorganizes them a hierarchy such as ghettos, public housing projects, luxury housing etc. (Lefebvre 2009: 215). Segregation becomes the norm of the contemporary society as social space turns into "a―collection of hierarchized ghettos" and constitute "―a hierarchical morphology" (Lefebvre 2009: 244). Hence in the modern society "the social hierarchy thus presents itself more than ever as a spatial hierarchy" (Lefebvre 2009: 245).

The process of constituting hierarchical morphology is shaped through a dialectic relationship between the peripheries and center(s) which Lefebvre refers as "colonization" (Kipfer & Goonewardena 2013: 92). Here the concept of centrality refers to the centres of decision making, wealth, knowledge and so forth and is not based on virtual cancellation of distance in time and space; yet it retains some physical notion as well (Lefebvre 2003: 123). Whenever "a dominated space is generated and mastered by a dominant space" states Lefebvre "where there is periphery

and center, there is colonization" (cited in Kipfer & Goonewardena 2013: 95). The role of the state is crucial in organizing the relationships of centre and periphery. It links up peripheries, coordinates them, and submits them to its own strategy. In other words, while the state attempts to pulverize space into a manageable, calculable, and abstract grid, it also creates physical, political, and mental peripheries and centres. Hence through the way state produces abstract space, social space is on the one hand centralized and established as a political centre and on the other hand it is specialized and parceled out.

However, it is important to note that even though the state prioritizes the production of abstract space, it never fully achieves this abstractness. Assuming otherwise would be to "bestow a cohesiveness, it utterly lacks upon a totality which is in fact decidedly open - so open, indeed, that it must rely on violence to endure" (Lefebvre 1991: 11). Abstract space can never fully shed "the residues of the social spaces that preceded it" (Lefebvre 1991: 368) and the fact that it tends toward both homogenization and fragmentation, makes it rife with internal contradictions (Goswami 2004). Indeed "the very practices that homogenize[d] social relations also engender[ed] new forms of differentiation and deepen[ed] socioeconomic and cultural unevenness" (Goswami 2004: 9). Thus "the materialization of state space is at once abstract and concrete, homogenous and differentiated" (Goswami 2004: 132). The state space and its tendency to abstraction "reflects the result it seeks rather than what it really is" (Lefebvre 1991: 287).

> Abstract space is not homogenous; it simply has homogeneity as its goal, its orientation, its "lens." And, indeed it renders homogenous. But in it- self it is multiform.... Thus, to look upon abstract space as homogenous is to embrace a representation that takes the effect for the cause, and the goal for the reason why that goal is pursued. A representation which passes itself off as a concept, when it is merely a... mirage; and which instead of challenging, instead of refusing, merely reflects (Lefebvre 1991: 287).

Thus, even though "abstract space is buttressed by non-critical (positive) knowledge, backed up by a frightening capacity for violence, and maintained by a bureaucracy which has laid hold of the gains of capitalism", Lefebvre also maintains that "abstract space carries within itself the seeds of a new kind of space" (Lefebvre 1991: 52). He calls this space "differential space". Lefebvre conceptualizes difference in opposition to the homogenizing effects of the abstract space which takes difference as a threat to the social order and seeks to absorb and eliminate it (Lefebvre 1991: 373). In this sense the right to difference means the right to not to be classified into categories which have been determined by the homogenizing powers and produce a differential space where these differences can be practiced to their fullness (Lefebvre 1976: 35).[7] Lefebvre's concept of difference is not based on particularity, individuality or originality like the difference inscribed in the hegemonic space (Kipfer 2002). What is difference for Lefebvre (1991: 373) is what is excluded, "the edges of the city, shanty towns, spaces of forbidden games, wars". It is through the theoretical and practical struggles of these edges that the difference has an actual meaning. As such difference is a negotiated process that emerges from struggle (Kipfer 2002). In this relation Lefebvre (1991:52) notes that the new society of differences would "restore unity to what abstract space breaks up - to the functions, elements and moments of social practice".

Of particular importance to the issue of the production of state-space, from the perspective of this dissertation is infrastructure. Infrastructures are built networks that provide essential services and amenities for any political organization to function. They "facilitate the flow of goods, people, or ideas" and "allow for their exchange over space" (Larkin 2013: 328). The primary goal of infrastructure is to move, circulate and mediate "exchange over distance, bringing different

[7] Lefebvre criticizes classical philosophy that it eludes difference (Elden 2004: 230) and claims that "a new space cannot be born (produced) unless it accentuates difference" (Lefebvre 1991: 52).

people, objects, and spaces into interaction and forming the base on which to operate modern economic and social systems" (Larkin 2013: 330). As such they bring the far near and the near to far covering vast geographies. "Infrastructures are matter that enable the movement of other matter." (Larkin 2013: 329). Since in modern economies, it is primarily the state that can take on the task of managing space "on a grand scale" (Brenner & Elden 2009a: 20), infrastructure is a crucial tool for the state to build its state-space; "organize and coordinate establishments of places" and "impose its own rationality" (Brenner & Elden 2009a: 20). Building factories, roads, large urban transformation projects, housing, "the state institutions play an essential role in production, regulation and reproduction of a vast range of infrastructural spaces" (Brenner & Elden 2009a: 20).

Infrastructure is essential for building state-space and producing abstract space from three main perspectives: to commodify land and transform it into a parcel; to produce an integrated national territory; and to signify the symbolic power of the state. In order to explain how infrastructure is crucial to commodify land, I rely on the Turkish urban planning scholar Ilhan Tekeli's (2009: 53) distinction between *toprak* (earth/soil) and *arsa* (parcel of land). According to Tekeli, *toprak* may refer to land: i. in rural areas and is dominantly conceived as soil, as a part of nature/earth and is cultivated for agricultural production (*tarimsal toprak*); or ii. in urban peripheries that may be or not used for production (Tekeli 2009: 59). What distinguishes *toprak* from *arsa* is the fact that its *toprak's* value dominantly arises from its use value and is intricately linked to its physical qualities such as its ability to yield various crops. *Arsa*, on the other hand, is land that is homogenized, hierarchized, and fragmented so that it can be bought and sold in the market as a commodity. In order to do so, it needs to be served by the necessary material infrastructures such as roads, electricity, sewage system etc. as well as the socio-legal

infrastructures like zoning, development rights and transferrable property titles. While material infrastructures that weave through *toprak* make it possible to have similar and comparable services in different regions, evening out their differences; socio-legal infrastructures like clear and transferable property titles make it possible for *toprak* to be exchangeable and measured in quantities. Together material and socio-legal infrastructures are essential to abstract *toprak* from its concrete social and natural context, to conceive it "beyond immediate experience" (Smith 1984: 109), producing *arsa* as a specific form of abstract state-space.

Second, infrastructure is crucial to bring all those homogenized and divided parcels of land together and centralize them under the authority of state power, shaping and controlling patterns of economic development in the interests of the state, producing an integrated national territory (Brenner & Elden 2009: 21). By constructing "roads, canals, railroads, commercial and financial circuits, motorways, and air routes, etc." (Lefebvre 2009: 224), the state maps and demarcates its national territory, aiming to integrate its different and uneven geographies into a homogenous whole. Spatially integrated transportation and communication systems "eliminate spatial barriers to circulation and production" and thus "enable the formation of an increasingly uniform space of production, circulation, and exchange" (Goswami 2004: 62). This uniformity helps the state perform its utilitarian functions by "enabling it to enforce laws uniformly, extract taxes in the form of cash or labor, demand compulsory military service, and tighten its control over the newly forged and fragile geopolitical unit" (Kezer 2009: 509). It allows the state to designate of natural resources (forest lands, oil, mines) as its sovereign state space (Goswami 2004) and thus legitimize their exploitation. In other words, the state unifies space through mapping, modifying, and transforming its landscape and "the modern state inscribes its authority in a continuous body of bounded territory" (Goswami 2004: 38). The consolidation of such national territory in turn helps the state

mobilize its techniques to control economic resources embedded in the land (Brenner & Elden 2009a: 363; Lefebvre 1991).

Finally, it is important to emphasize that infrastructure is also crucial to signify the symbolic power of the state. As Larkin explains (2013: 329), "roads and railways are not just technical objects… but also operate on the level of fantasy and desire…they encode the dreams of individuals and societies and are the vehicles whereby those fantasies are transmitted and made emotionally real". As such infrastructures do not only move matter but also mobilize "affect and the senses of desire, pride, and frustration, feelings which can be deeply political" (Larkin 2013: 333). Roads, bridges, housing units, public works etc. produce spaces of representation, where the power of the state can be felt and recognized in everyday life. Such spaces are crucial "to set in motion and to suspend the circulation of people, documents, money, and influence that marks out the space - time of the state" (Secor 2007: 33) and present "mental spaces composed of popular representations of state power" (Brenner & Elden 2009b: 21). So that even in simple ordinary chores of everyday life, they mobilize new forms of knowledge (Brenner & Elden 2009: 21b) and "communicate specific kinds of meanings that serve as spatial coordinates of identity" (Lynch 1972 as cited in Osborne 2001: 21). In other words, infrastructure grounds the abstract sense of state power "in concrete experiences in the real world" (Kezer 2009: 509). As such what is rendered "near" by infrastructure is not merely the physical distances of things and matters, but also the emotional and affective perception of the state and its national unity as abstract categories of society.

Overall infrastructure "brings people, objects, and spaces into interaction and forms the base on which to operate modern economic and social systems" (Larkin 2013: 330). It is essential for the production of state-space and abstract space on multiple levels: to commodify land, to

facilitate national integrity, and to signify the symbolic power of the state. Through dividing, connecting and moving matters, people, and emotions infrastructures help "each state [to] claim[s] to produce a space wherein something is accomplished – a space, where something is brought to perfection, namely a unified and homogeneous society" (Lefebvre 1991: 281). The state-space comes to signify "a symbolic whole", "namely a unified and homogeneous society" where "the whole stands for the norm" (Dikeç 2002: 93). It represents an "established social order with a process of governing" (Dikeç 2002: 93), "a structuring of the common space… fixing at once a common space and its exclusive parts, which makes forms of domination appear as if they are founded on a sensible and obvious system" (Dikeç 2002: 94). Everything in this system has its proper space and order.

Yet as I explained above, even though the production of state-space aims for absolute abstraction, in reality it cannot achieve this perfection. Thus, abstract space remains to be "both abstract, universal and concrete, particular; it is both an exchange-value and a use-value" (Goswami 2004: 293). The production of state-space is ridden with contradictions that simultaneously work to homogenize, fragment, and unify socio-spatial relations. In the words of Goswami (2004: 38):

> Yet rather than a unitary, homogenous configuration, state space is shot through with contradictions. The contradictions internal to capitalism and the multiple ideologies, practices, and institutions that comprise state space continually beset, undermine, and constrain the attempted homogenization of state space and the naturalization of everyday state epistemologies. These include, but are not limited to, the contradiction between exchange-value and use-value, production and consumption, work and leisure, need and desire, dominant and dominated spaces, and that between the mobility of capital and the generation of value through the fixing of capital and geographies of allegiance within particular spaces.

Similarly, even though the primary goal of infrastructure is to move, circulate and mediate, this goal is rarely perfectly achieved. Infrastructural ambitions "to tie things down, to make things

relate, to bring what is far near and to transport what is near to further regions" are predicated on risks (Simone 2018: 42). Infrastructure development may be realized only as "a semblance, a seeming, a projection effect of interest in a thing we are trying to stabilize" (Berlant 2015: 394). It is no surprise that the world is full of failed and costly mega projects, ghost residential units that are left to decay in isolated regions. Instead of moving things somewhere else, infrastructures can lead to things, relations, people to become "stuck in place, stuck in routines, stuck in dead end future" (Simone 2018: 41). "Infrastructures can function as traps, promising to enable and facilitate only to prey on our aspirations and then manipulate or immobilize us" (Simone 2018: 41). As much as any infrastructure has potential to make things relate, it also has potential to reveal "infrastructural failures", "troubled transmissions" or what Berlant (2016: 393) calls as "glitches". "From bridges to systems to fantasy" glitches disrupt flows of circulation and reproduction of "namely a unified and homogeneous society" (Lefebvre 1991: 281) and thus opens spaces to think new "images of shared life" (Berlant 2016: 403).

Overall, this section discussed the production of space in Lefebvre, referring to the three moments: the conceived, the perceived and the lived. It then focused on production of state-space with a special emphasis on the role of infrastructure in producing i. *arsa* as a specific form of abstract space; ii. an integrated national territory and its corresponding economy; and iii. the symbolic power of the state. Through these means state-space comes to represent a perfectly unified whole and signifies the norm. However, I also explained how this whole is ridden with conflicts and contradictions which can be revealed as infrastructural failures or glitches. The next section incorporates the concept of citizenship into this discussion, first by theorizing the concept and second by exploring its relationship to state-space and infrastructure dynamic.

2.3. Infrastructures of Citizenship

There is no single and easy answer to explain what constitutes citizenship. In the simplest terms it can be defined as membership in a polity (Ince 2012). The polity in question was once the city–state of the ancient Greece. Thus, the origin of the word 'citizen' refers to "someone from the cite (city)" while the concept of citizenship is closely related to "the notion of civilization which entails a movement from rural to urban centers" (Kadioğlu 2013: 107).[8] In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries with the emergence of the nation state, "citizenship became associated with nationality and was understood as belonging to the state rather than the city" (Isin 2009: 374). Based on the principle of equality of rights, instead of subjectship or kinship, citizenship "emerged as a particular tie between states and their subjects, then as a collective identity, a shared experience of the state-subject site" (Tilly 1995: 12). It signified being a full member of a community, a body politic with its full rights and responsibilities (Marshall 1992). As such it can be claimed that the concept of citizenship was revolutionary in its time, because it was a promise of a better life, a more civilized and dignified mode of being for every member of the community.

Following Isin and Nyers' work (2014: 1), I conceptualize citizenship as "an institution mediating rights between the subjects of politics and the polity to which these subjects belong". This definition has three main concepts that require further explanation: *institution*, *polity*, and *political subjects*. First, following the authors an *institution* can be defined as "processes through which something is enacted, created, and rendered relatively durable and stable but still contestable, surprising, and inventive" (Isin & Nyers 2014: 1). As an institution, citizenship translates "one's projects, needs and desires into claims on the state" (Eckert 2011: 312). However,

[8] In a similar way, the Turkish word '*medeni*' (civil, civilized) which has Arabic roots, comes from the name of the city 'Medina' and refers to the transition and civilization which came with leaving the nomadic lifestyle and establishing the city.

an institution is not a 'thing' but is rather a social - spatial relation. It is social because it is repeatedly practiced through expectations, norms and rules which make it endure (Giddens 1984; Martin 2004). It is spatial because every institution has its "proper spaces" that acquire a quasi-natural self-evidence in everyday life (Lefebvre 2009: 225). Yet like any other socio-spatial relation, an institution is also inconsistent, contradictory, and always in the process of change (Martin 2004: 1257). Thus, citizenship as an institution is not static but is "an ongoing relationship of struggle to define the rights and duties between the state and its subjects" (Wood 2017: 12).

Second the term *polity* points out to the inherently social nature of citizenship. We understand our rights and duties and perceive ourselves as rights bearing subjects in a social context *with* others or *in* comparison to the others; and in doing so we recognize "the similarities in forms of subjection and in the needs of life." (Eckert 2011: 313). As Isin and Nyers (2014: 1) elaborate the polity in question should not be restricted to the nation state as the sole source of authority for reigning and enacting rights. Indeed, citizens are always connected to "several nested, if not overlapping and conflicting, series of polities ranging from the city, region, the state, and the international" (Isin & Nyers 2014: 2). However, as explored in the previous section, the state, a crucial actor in producing and maintaining power relations and in generating various types of 'belonging', has a privileged position in building and contesting citizenship politics (Tilly 1990; 1995). Indeed, the state, in most cases, maintain its long-standing plural constellations of governing (Eckert 2004, 2011).

Third, the term *political subjects* as the agents of mediation points out that citizenship cannot be reduced to the designation of official status. As people are vested in multiple polities and identities, citizenship is about different layers of inclusion and exclusion that are related and/or not related to their official/legal status (Isin & Nyers 2014). Indeed, not all political subjects are

official citizens as in the case of illegal migrants who can and do act as political subjects in their polities (Isin 2009). Similarly, not all official citizens are equally considered to be political subjects and despite their official status as citizens; they may be restricted or stripped of their capabilities to act as political subjects (Gilbert & Dikeç 2008). Thus, the kernel of any political order – the question of who *a legitimate political subject* is at the heart of any citizenship project (Isin & Nyers 2014: 4). When we talk about citizenship it always refers to "official and non-official forms, legal and extra-legal belongings" (Isin & Nyers 2014: 4). In Isin's (2009: 370) words:

> If we understand citizenship as an instituted subject-position, it can be performed or enacted by various categories of subjects including aliens, migrants, refugees, states, courts and so on (Bassel, 2008). The political is not limited to an already constituted territory or its legal 'subjects': it always exceeds them. Citizenship as subjectivity enacts that conception of the political.

Based on this conceptualizing, it can be maintained that citizenship has two key dimensions: "combination of rights and duties that defines citizenship in a polity" and "performance of citizenship" (Isin & Nyers 2014: 2). Both dimensions are crucial for understanding the project of citizenship and its dynamics (Isin & Nyers 2014: 2). The first dimension, citizenship as a "combination of rights and duties" highlights the character of citizenship as "a special sort of contract" (Tilly 1995: 8). It is a *social contract* that specifies the rights and obligations of each actor (i.e. the state and subjects) and by doing so, regulates their reciprocal relationship. As a contract, it embodies specific imaginations of those rights and duties, what the political authorities are expected to do and what they are allowed to do (Eckert 2011: 310). People come to imagine themselves as right bearer subjects by administrative practices and classifications of everyday urban life (Eckert 2011). Such images then serve as a reference point for people's expectations, hopes, fears and disillusionments; outline the contours of the social contract and insert trust and certainty to the polity in question.

As a social contract citizenship does not only regulate the relationship between the political authority and subjects, but also the relationship between the members of the polity. This refers back to the social nature of citizenship. It assumes that people perceive, through a sense of belonging that they are different yet, also sufficiently similar to form a common purpose. As Olwig (2005: 20) elaborates "citizenship thus carries some of the same abstract and ideal qualities identified with friendship and fellowship". It is belief in this friendship and fellowship that the members as equals enter into a contract and assume the rights and responsibilities for each other. As a certain form of tie citizenship "involves the art of being with others" and "negotiating different situations and identities" (Isin & Nyers 2014: 3; Tilly 1995). It "governs the conduct of subject positions that constitute it" (Isin 2009: 371).

However, it would be an illusion to assume that the mere existence of the social contract renders all subjects as "all-right-bearing entity with equal rights and obligations" (Miraftab & Willls 2005: 202). Citizenship status might provide subjects with a right to vote, but does not protect them from social, cultural, and economic marginalization (Gilbert & Dikeç 2008). To belong and to be a member is a constant process of effort and struggle: it requires *performance*. The questions of who 'belongs' and who does not, are normative behaviors "that are required to signify belonging" (Yuval-Davis 2006: 207). To prove one's legitimacy as a political subject, they need to master the "modes and forms of conduct that are appropriate to being an insider" (Yuval-Davis 2006: 207). This means that citizenship "creates an actor both in the sense of a person (law) but also a persona (norm)" (Isin 2009: 372).

From this perspective, the concept of citizenship can be considered as an example of the way the state homogenizes, fragments, and hierarchizes space. Indeed, the *etatization of minds and bodies* (Michell 1999) and governmentality has been a central theme in the citizenship studies

(Rose & Miller 1992, Rose 1999, Rose and Osborne 2000, Rose and Novas 2004). The legal and moral power of citizenship demands citizens to "align their personal choices with the ends of government" (Rose & Miller 1992: 188) and punish those who do not and/or cannot, seeking to make subjects "an ally… to the orderly government of a polity and a society" (Rose & Miller 1992: 188). In this context, citizenship as a mutual and contractual relation requires a voluntary "calibration of their conduct to the requirements of species-bodies—economy, population, and society—in a manner that involved fine adjustments to both the body and the species-body" (Isin 2004: 221). Citizenship is not inherently emancipatory or progressive. On the contrary it can involve "ruling class strategies via the state" and become domination (Isin 2009: 369). As Rose and Miller (1992: 174) elaborates:

> Power is not so much a matter of imposing constraints upon citizens as of 'making up' citizens capable of bearing a kind of regulated freedom. Personal autonomy is not the antithesis of political power, but a key term in its exercise, the more so because most individuals are not merely the subjects of power but play a part in its operations.

However, since space is not fixed and is a continuous process, citizenship also has an emancipatory potential to remind people the different rationales of "why one is owed rights by the state" (Eckert 2011: 313). As Isin and Wood (1999) argue in their prominent work, *Citizenship and Identity*, subjects need to engage in practices to maintain their rights and formulate and claim new ones. Isin (2008) calls this 'acts of citizenship' and Miraftab (2004) as 'practices of citizenship' which extend beyond "taking up invitations to participate" in already established spaces of citizenship and citizens "create their own opportunities and terms of engagement" (Cornwall 2002: 50 cited in Miraftab & Willls 2005: 202). By performing as citizens people challenge the imposed modes and forms of citizenship, therefore transform them, and become political subjects (Isin 2009). In doing so they navigate through different subjectivity positions and

"act across the borders of polities for solidarity, affiliation, and association" (Isin 2017: 517). As Isin (2009: 372) articulates:

> For subjects and abjects becoming a citizen means either adopting modes and forms of being an insider (assimilation, integration, incorporation) or challenging these modes and forms and thereby transforming them (identification, differentiation, recognition). Just what constitutes citizen- ship and its appropriate modes and forms of conduct are always objects of struggle among citizens, subjects and abjects through claims to citizenship as justice.

From a Lefebvrian perspective this can be understood as producing social space for self-management (Gilbert & Dikeç 2008). In his words, self- management describes a situation where "each time a social group refuses passively to accept its conditions of existence, of life or of survival, each time such a group attempts not only to learn but to master its own conditions of existence." (1991: 260 cited in Gilbert & Dikeç 2008).

Overall, the dynamics of citizenship as a *social contract* and *performance* are complex. Citizenship "can be both domination and empowerment separately or simultaneously" (Isin 2009: 369). On the one hand, it can be seen as form of 'domination' as the individual is expected to calibrate themselves with the state and the rest of the polity. The constitution of subjectivity in the sense of a person (law) but also a persona (norm) can be shown as one of the fine examples of the principle of forced equivalence as the foundation of the modern state and its logic of homogenization. On the other hand, it can be quite empowering and emancipatory as it transforms the already set rules and expand the limits of what is thought to be political.

So how do state-space, infrastructure and the concept of citizenship relate to each other? Infrastructure is essential for building state-space and is "a precondition of social life itself" (Rodgers 2019: ix). It is also a core thread that weaves through the state-citizenship relationship and connects the state to citizenship in multiple ways. I argue that infrastructure is a crucial

mediation between state-space and citizens in four important ways: first it constitutes the basis of the state legitimacy and power in the eyes of its subjects as the state is responsible for provision of infrastructure. Second infrastructure is a tool for the state to impose duties and responsibilities on its citizens and often to undermine subjects rights by de-politicizing the development. Third, through infrastructure the state (re)produces and solidifies uneven and unequal patterns of citizenship. Finally, infrastructure is also a key forum for citizens to challenge and contest state spaces, by producing novel and different spaces.

The provision of proper and necessary infrastructure is one of the core duties of the state towards its citizens (Allweil 2012, Anand 2017, Fredericks 2018). In order to maintain everyday activities, citizens need to use roads, housing, electricity, water, sanitation etc. Making the bulk of the socio-technical space of everyday life, infrastructure is the most visible and concrete means through which citizens can "see the state" (Corbridge et al. 2005) and be seen by the state "as deserving subjects" (Anand 2017: 10). Access to infrastructural services is often a symbol for belonging to the polity and when the state fails to provide that access, its legitimacy declines. That is why even in the most authoritarian political contexts, the state's legitimacy continues to depend on its ability to provide infrastructural services from housing to transportation. Thus, infrastructure is "decisive in defining the state-citizen contract" and "a key basis for the state to legitimize its rule" (Allweil 2012: 65). Indeed, infrastructural spaces are the key sites "through which the legitimacy of state officials and their institutions are evaluated and claimed by residents" (Anand 2017: 10).

The provision of infrastructure is not only vital for the everyday functionality of state-space and its usage by citizens, but is equally important to convey the dreams and fantasies the state promises to its subjects (Adama 2018: 258). The state's ability to meet financial,

technological and socio-natural challenges of developing infrastructural networks, "like building the tallest building, the longest bridge… or the first of anything" (Flyvbjerg 2014a: 7), is crucial to signify its power and its capability of providing safe, and efficient lived space to its subjects. As such we see an increasing number of mega developmental projects being launched specifically "as societal spectacles" that attempts to instill trust and belief in the state's order as well as the social unity and harmony (Shin 2012: 3). As markers of the conceived space, such projects attempt to contribute to a continued sense of shared prosperity and material enrichment among citizens and act as signifiers that if new infrastructure is being built, then the state must be doing its duties towards citizens.

However, as explained above, the concept of citizenship does not only confer rights to its subjects, but it also imposes duties and responsibilities. It is not only the state, which is evaluated through infrastructure, but infrastructure is often also a means for the state to test its citizens' commitment to state-space. Since "the provision of efficient infrastructure services" is seen as crucial to economic growth and national integration of state-space (Adama 2018: 258), citizens are expected to act in accordance with "the common good" or "the general will", and be willing to relinquish some of their rights. The state of exceptions in state-citizenship contracts are often legitimized in this respect that even though infrastructure projects may clash with individual and/or social rights of citizens, they are justified on the basis of common good.[9] This also raises the issue that infrastructure can become "anti-political in nature", actively preventing subjects' participation in the name of "submission to state-led expectations and norms" (Rodgers 2019: x). In such cases, opponents are often labelled by the state as anti- nationalists, terrorists or less deserving citizens,

[9] One example of such state of exception in infrastructure building would be the state's right to expropriate private property of its citizens, when the infrastructure in question is deemed to be crucial for the common good in the polity (Tekeli 2009: 75).

presented as a threat to the assumed consensus in the polity and thus lose their legitimacy to be political subjects. As much as infrastructure is a means for citizens to evaluate the state and its legitimacy; it is also a means for the state to decide who has a right to be a political subject and who does not.

Even though the abstract concept of citizenship assumes a universal and homogenous relation between the state and its subjects, in practice this relationship is ridden with conflicts and unevenness. Citizenship is process of contestation between different "modalities of inclusion and exclusion, and infrastructure is one of the key means through which these unfold, particularly in cities" (Rodgers 2019: x). Thus, I argue that infrastructure is a significant means for the state to (re)produce and solidify uneven and unequal patterns of citizenship, by controlling and unevenly delivering the access to infrastructure. Infrastructure extends and perpetuates inequality, divides urban fabric between wealthy gated communities with their exclusive private schools, privatized municipal services, recreational areas and more, while poor neighborhoods struggle to have access to basic facilities such as proper housing, electricity, sewage system etc. (Harvey 2008: 9; Graham and Marvin 2001). That is why, socio-economically marginalized groups, such as women, racialized communities, urban poor, refugees etc. often have restricted access to proper infrastructure compared to others (Lemanski 2018a, 2018b, Roy 2003; Staeheli *et al*. 2012). In many respects, the delivery of infrastructure is an important tool for the state to codify unequal citizenship in space by either rewarding or withholding its access, a means to differentiate between its worthy and not so worthy citizens.

Unequal access to infrastructure is not merely about "about access to physical goods and services, but reveals broader processes of exclusion and marginalization that are intrinsically connected to citizens' rights" (Lemanski 2019: 353). It is in this context, Roy (2003) develops the

concept of "propertied citizenship" to illustrate how owning a house in United States has been promoted as the means to become a full member of society, while excluding the already marginalized homeless subjects from its citizenship paradigm. Similarly, Lemanski (2019) develops the concept of infrastructural citizenship to demonstrate how in the post-apartheid South Africa urban black residents associate state-subsidized housing with their long-waited recognition as proper citizens and full members of society. Overall, infrastructure is a powerful tool for the state to recognize or marginalize its subjects and thus reflects uneven power relations embedded in production of state-space.

However, it is important to emphasize that it is not only the state who controls and shapes infrastructure; citizens as the primary users also contest and reclaim them. Indeed, demands for access to land and services (i.e. infrastructure) have been one of the core tenets in recent struggles. It has been demonstrated that the struggles of the marginalized in impoverished residential neighborhoods in the South for housing, property, sanitation, health services, education, child care, and so forth, have put unprecedented claims on the city and thus expand citizenship to new social bases (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 198). Whether under the name of "insurgent citizenship" (Holston and Appadurai 1999: 196 - 197), "urban and regional forms of citizenship" (Garcia 2006: 762) or "the politics of compensation" (Roy 2009: 160), various scholars emphasized how citizenship take space through situated struggles in the city over redistribution of resources. There is no doubt that such kind struggles created new sources of citizenship rights and corresponding forms of self-rule (Holston and Appadurai 1999).

While recognizing the importance of this literature, it is also important to emphasize that when we theorize the relationship between citizenship and infrastructural access in urban contexts, we should not employ the concept of urban citizenship to replace or negate national citizenship

(Gilbert & Dikeç 2008). Here, Yifhachel (2015) criticizes the existing literature that in its attempts to conceive urban citizenship "as a process, a struggle enmeshed in the materiality, identities and politics of urban life, rather than in the legal and bureaucratic realms of state institutions" (Yiftachel 2015: 728), it assumes that urban and state citizenships "occupy partially different analytical, practical and normative fields" (Yiftachel 2015: 728). As such, it mainly occupies itself with the city almost as a contained unit and the questions of how urban discourses and practices are related to the nation state are left out.

This way of overlooking the role of state-space in urban citizenship literature has a few important implications. First as explained in chapter 1, despite its neoliberal reconfiguration the nation state is ever- present and continues to be one of the most powerful shapers of society (Therborn 2017; Yiftachel 2015). Second, it leads the related literature to put "too much naïve hope on the thin shoulders of urban citizenship" and on "the ability of the city to deliver genuine responses to the issues raised in the increasing urban protest of recent years" (Blokland et al. 2015 cited in Yiftachel 2015: 728). This is especially relevant in relation to the power of state-led infrastructure to depoliticize and restrict subjects' rights, which is often overlooked in the urban citizenship literature. Such an approach then prevents us to assess the question "to what extent such mobilizations are effective in challenging anti-political forms of "infrastructural violence" (Rodgers 2019: x).

Overall, I claim that so far in the literature citizenship and infrastructure relationship has been mostly theorized and analyzed at the level of urban as a container. In order to reveal the dynamics between citizenship and infrastructure we need incorporate discussions on state-space by theorizing urban not as a container but as an entry point to their relationship. In order to do so, the next section discusses urban as a mediation in the context urban development, land, and rent.

2.4. Defining the Urban as an Entry Point: Production of *Arsa*, Rent and Citizenship

Conceptualizing space as a socio-spatial product in a Lefebvrian sense contributes to our understanding of the urban. It helps us move beyond conceptualizing the city as a *container* to as a *mediation*. It renders the city a central form of mediation between the micro (everyday life) and the macro levels (the state) (Lefebvre 2003; Kipfer 2009). Approaching the city as a mediation emphasizes that the urban is a socio-spatial process rather than a fixed and static entity. By placing the city "in the middle of an open-ended social totality as a level of reality in mediating relationship to everyday life and state-bound and global social institutions" (Kipfer et al 2012: 117), Lefebvre gives the urban a constitutive role in the social order. It "constructs, identifies, and delivers the essence of social relationships" (Lefebvre 2003: 118). Therefore, it is the site "where a person's consciousness and wellbeing lie" (Kofman & Lebas 1996: 7-8) and where past, present, and future are linked to each other.

> The city is a mediation among mediations. Containing the near order, it supports it; it maintains relations of property, it is the place of their reproduction. Contained in the far order, it supports it, it projects it over a terrain and on a plan of immediate life, it inscribes it, prescribes it, writes it (Lefebvre 1996: 101).

When city becomes a part of an imminent concept of urban and the urban becomes a mediation of the whole social totality, then studying city becomes much bigger than a simple 'urban question'. Put in this way, the urban becomes an entry point – as opposed to a unit of analysis, in order to understand wider social, political, and economic dynamics and trace how multi-scalar networks of domination and resistance operate. It refers to "the city and its extensions" (Lefebvre 1991: 89).

So how does the urban operate within the capitalist state-space production process? Lefebvre explains that as space becomes integrated into capitalism through urbanization, it

becomes "a specific element or function in capitalism's expansion" (1991: 325). In order to explain the dynamics of capitalist urbanization, he uses the metaphors of implosion and explosion. Accordingly, implosion refers to constant transformation and remaking of urban space to expand the terrain of profitable capitalist activity. Urban renewal projects, development of business and entertainment districts, redevelopment of touristic sites are among examples to implosions. Explosions, on the other hand, refer how capitalist urbanization transforms not just the city but also its extensions, spaces that have been before categorized as non-urban, spreading urban agglomeration and its networks (Baysal 2017, Keil 2018). Suburban development, satellite cities mega projects at the outskirts of urban land can be given as examples of explosions.

> [T]he tremendous concentration (of people, activities, wealth, goods, objects, instruments, means and thought) of urban reality and the immense explosion, the projection of numerous, disjunct fragments (peripheries, suburbs, vacation homes, satellite towns) into space (Lefebvre 2003: 14).

Infrastructure is a crucial condition for implosion and explosion of the city. It works through land, homogenizes, and fragments it as well as connecting and relating divided parcels and making something anew from them. Rising urban population creates more demand for housing, transit and recreational areas. Centres are expanded, demolished, and rebuilt. The city 'implodes' with and through infrastructure. In order to support and finance this implosion, the city also needs to 'explode', to spread out and transform the previously non-urban spaces which can only be done through expanding infrastructural networks. Roads, bridges, electricity, and water systems transform non-human spaces, make them comparable to each other by homogenizing, fragmenting and hierarchizing. With infrastructure, qualitive differences between the town and village slowly disappears, and the abstract concept of '*arsa*' (parceled land) replaces both of them (Lefebvre 1996, 2003). So, at the core of the capitalist form of urbanization, and what drives urban implosions and explosions is the relentless drive to produce abstract space in the form of

arsa, a manufactured, homogenized piece of land that is comparable whether in the city or in the village. As a condition of such urbanization, infrastructure weaves through urban and non-urban spaces, endows land with exchange value, inherently connecting implosions to explosions and vice versa.

Urban land as a commodity (*arsa*), has different qualities than other commodities. Since land is a natural resource and not a product of human labour, one cannot talk about the value of land but rather its rent (Tekeli 2011). It is sold and bought "according to the rent it yields' (Harvey 1982, 347). "A title to value: a claim on future profits, here taking the contingent form of rent" (Christophers 2016: 138). In this dissertation, when I use the concept of rent, I mainly refer to ground rent (Smith 1987, Slater 2017). Ground rent can be conceptualized as simply the payment made to landlords (due to private property rights) "for the right to use land and its appurtenances (the buildings placed on it and the resources embedded within it)" (Slater 2017: 118). It can come "as a stream of payments from tenants", but also includes "any asset appreciation captured at resale" (Slater 2017: 118). Since the ownership of landed property is reserved for a small minority, most ordinary people accrue rent through the increasing asset value of their homes (Haila 2016). In other words, the production of abstract space in the form of *arsa* through infrastructure and its rent is of one of the main forms where the urban acts as mediation between the macro and the micro.

It is not surprising, in this sense, that the recent literature emphasizes a real estate turn in city making processes where large-scale infrastructures are geared towards rent mobilization rather than collective benefits and use. As such Swyngedouw et al. (2002: 556) demonstrate that one of the most important aspects of the 'new' infrastructure projects is their real-estate orientation and rationale in "rent extraction and the subsequent realization of the produced land rent". Even the

success of employment and economic activity related aspects of the projects that are promoted and advertised to the public as huge benefits of urban development (Flyvbjerg 2005) depends on further commodification of urban land and "to the successful appropriation of the "manufactured" land rent embodied in the new built environment" (Swyngedouw et al. 2002: 556). This makes infrastructure projects more speculative and riskier than their prior models, as rather than considering use value that would come from the projects – such as public goods as electricity, housing, or job security – they seek to valorize urban rent. In this sense Swyngedouw et al. (2002: 567) explains that:

> As producers of urban space, urban development projects - UDPs are inherently speculative and hence highly risky, in the sense that their financial and economic viability depends on the future realization of the produced increased urban rents… Most of the project's development costs are supposed to be met from the sale or renting of land or buildings— the value of which has been jacked up through state support, re-regulation, zoning changes, infrastructure investment, and the like.

In this context, we see more and more speculative economic development strategies which call for infrastructure development such as housing, highways, airports etc. not because there is already a committed user, buyer or employer but because infrastructure development is believed to increase rent value and attract further investment (Jonas et al. 2015: 29). Due to speculative nature of such investments, we also see emergence of new forms of financial alliances such as quasi-governmental redevelopment agencies and public private partnerships (P3s). P3s refer to arrangements between government and private sector entities where the costs and benefits of providing public infrastructure, community facilities etc. are shared (Ponsiri 2012). Since P3s are seen as an innovative and less costly way for the public to invest in large scale urban development, the model has quickly become popular and been adopted by various governments across the globe (Fainstein 2008).

Overall, I argued that in the contemporary capitalism the production of *arsa* and its rent through infrastructure have become main drivers for urban implosions and explosions. In this regard it is important to make a few notes on the relationship between arsa/rent production and citizenship and explain in detail why this is primarily a political relationship. As Haila (2016) maintains the questions of land and rent are deeply political questions and citizenship should be at the heart of such discussions. Urban rent is collectively produced by the polity via expansion of the population and the production of necessary physical and social infrastructures. It is the rising urban population (due to demographic changes or rural to urban migration) that increases the potential rent to be extracted from urban land (Tekeli 2009). It is the state who mainly determines how to geographically distribute the land rent by changing zoning laws or increasing development rights and developing necessary infrastructures. Furthermore, urban development and production of *arsa* have significant ecological and environmental costs, which are borne by all the members of a polity albeit in uneven ways. Thus, the questions of land and rent are deeply political and are at the heart of citizenship politics in the contemporary society.

2.5. Conclusion

This chapter theorized infrastructure as a mediation between state-space and citizenship. In doing so, I first explored Lefebvre's concept of production of space with references to the conceived, the perceived and the lived. Building on this, I then looked at the dynamics of production of state-space with a focus on the abstract space as a primary tool of state-space to claim to "produce a space wherein something is accomplished – a space, where something is brought to perfection, namely a unified and homogeneous society" (Lefebvre 1991: 281). In doing so, I emphasized the illusionary aspect of abstract space that it attempts to represent a unified and

homogeneous society, but in practice it is ridden with contradictions and conflicts which carry the potential for a different space.

Understanding the production of state-space and abstract space is important to illuminate how infrastructure as "matter that moves other matter" (Larkin 2013: 329) is crucial to such production. Here I argued that infrastructure development contributes to the production of state-space in three important ways: i. producing *arsa* as a specific form of abstract space, ii. producing an integrated national territory with its economy, and iii. producing the symbolic power of the state. Through these means infrastructure facilitates the state's representation of a unified and homogenous society, so that the state can manipulate social space into its own interests. However, infrastructures also reflect the contradictions and conflicts within state-space and indeed are vulnerable to break down, fail to move things and thus reveal the systemic glitches. This dual character is important to explore the contradictions within the state – citizen relationship as mediated by infrastructural politics. In the second section I focused on theorizing the concept of citizenship and how infrastructure mediates between the state-space and its subjects. Here following Isin and Nyers' work (2014: 1) I conceptualized citizenship "as an 'institution' mediating rights between the subjects of politics and the polity to which these subjects belong". Based on this conceptualizing, I emphasized the two key dimensions of citizenship: a social contract of combination of rights and duties" and "performance of citizenship" (2014: 1) to realize and/or challenge these contracts.

The state-citizenship contract has many intermediaries and by no means is infrastructure the only one. However, as I demonstrated it is a privileged one and for the purposes of this research, I use it as an entry point to the state-space and citizen relationship. I argued that infrastructure can be examined in four main ways in respect to this relationship: i. as the primary duty of the state

towards its subjects and the basis of its legitimacy; ii. as a tool of depoliticization and top down consensus building; iii. as a means to (re)produce uneven citizenship patterns; iv. as a forum for citizens to challenge and reshape state-space and social contract. There has been a burgeoning literature especially on the last point regarding infrastructure and citizenship relationship, embodied in the concept of urban citizenship. While recognizing the merits and contributions of this last approach I also criticized it for its treatment of urban as a container and its analytical separation between urban and state citizenships.

In the section on urban development and rent, I argued that in order to bridge the gap between the literatures on urban citizenship and state citizenship, we need to theorize the urban as a mediation between the macro and the micro, using it as an entry point to explore state-space, infrastructure and citizenship dynamics. Here I demonstrated how the urban mediates between the macro structures and the micro everyday life through production of *arsa* and implosions/explosions. Through production of *arsa*, the state-space pulverizes, fragments, homogenizes, and unifies human and non-human spaces under the logic of commodification; creates centres of wealth accumulation and peripheries of deprivation. The production of the urban space reflects the actually existing socio- spatial processes in their concrete, material and physical form (the perceived). It also reflects the discourses, representations, stories which we tell ourselves and each other that justify and legitimize *arsa* production and its costs (the conceived). Thus, through production of *arsa* and implosions and explosions what is transformed is not merely the material land and environment, but also the social infrastructures and social relationships. Finally, the urban reflects the realm of the lived, the space of everyday life as it brings the perceived and the conceived together, revealing systematic glitches and infrastructural failures. Finally, I emphasized the real estate turn in the contemporary infrastructure construction and explained how

the rent of *arsa* production is political and thus is a question that pertains to citizenship. Here I theorized all urban rent is collectively produced by the state and society and thus both its production and distribution are political issues that sit at the heart of contemporary state-citizenship contracts.

Chapter 3 - Historical and Social Context of Infrastructure Development in Turkey

3.1. Introduction

This chapter presents a brief overview of the historical and socio-economic context of infrastructure development in Turkey, with a special focus on Istanbul. The chapter is divided into three chronological sections. The first section explores the infrastructure politics under the one-party regime of the Republican People's Party (CHP) from 1923 to 1951. It then proceeds with the transition to the multi-party system in 1950s and the rapid urbanization process which led to the emergence and spread of informal settlements. The next section discusses the increasing popularity of political Islam, especially among the urban poor. It explores how the movement connected inadequate urban infrastructure to the lack of political will on the side of the state and demanded more state involvement. Finally, the concluding section summarizes the main arguments of the chapter.

3.2. Developing the National Infrastructure

The Turkish Republic was founded in 1923 on the ruins of a multi-ethnic, multi-religious and pre-industrial Ottoman Empire that long had been the 'sick man of Europe' (Savran 2015: 49). Coming out of the Independence War (1919 - 1923) against the Allies, the newly established nation-state had to rebuild its war-torn economy while dealing with the vast geographic, economic, and demographic differences within its borders. Large port cities such as Istanbul and Izmir, located in Western Anatolia were severely damaged during the wars and had lost much of their non-Muslim populations (Tekeli 2011: 67). Most of the population lived in some 40,000 small and isolated villages scattered across Anatolia without access to basic infrastructures (Robinson 1963). The rural areas had no radios, access to postal services and were not interconnected to each

other via roads.[10] An average villager barely survived by subsistence farming and animal raising (Robinson 1963: 36). Confronted with such a fragmented and heterogeneous landscape, the Republican elite faced the challenge of building a united and homogenous nation state (Goswami 2004). They had to integrate the economy, assimilate diverse populations into the body-politic and establish a degree of national homogeneity. "One language, one ideal and one culture" (*tek dil, tek kultur, tek ulku*) was the slogan of the new regime, yet the lived reality was far from these ideals (Ince 2012).[11]

The development of a standard, extensive and centralized web of national infrastructure was crucial for the state to forge its own unitary and homogenous time-space (Goswami 2004, Kezer 2009). It helped to integrate national space and economy, develop a national bourgeoisie class, and establish the symbolic power of the state. Industrialization was a key goal (Keles & Danielson 1984, Bozdogan 2001). The state established major industries in energy and mining sectors and a national banking system with the aim of reducing imports of foreign goods (Bozdogan 2001, Tekeli 2009). The new factories were spread out evenly across Anatolia, established in small towns along the railroads to prevent the creation of industrial concentration and thus uneven development (Robinson 1963). It was assumed that when distributed evenly, industrialization would produce uniform economic growth and thus equalize the material well-

[10] For the purpose of security most villages had a compact and dense housing nature. However, this isolation also provided the villagers with a sort of protection against the tax collector and draft officials in the Ottoman era, which was to be challenged when the country became a centralized nation-state (Robinson 1963).

[11] The official emphasis on "one language, one ideal and one culture" hierarchized ranks of citizenship in new Turkey. Speaking Turkish and adapting to Turkish culture (Sunni Islam) for those who wanted to be *real* Turkish citizens was crucial (Ince 2012: 41). The Law on Surnames which passed in 1934 banned all names that reflected rank, tribe, foreign race or nationality (Ince 2012: 61). All the new names were to be in Turkish and non-Muslim citizens had to give up their traditional surnames and adopt new ones. Several non-Muslim neighborhoods were renamed in a nationalist fashion such the Greek neighborhood of *Tatavla* in Istanbul as Kurtulus (meaning liberation) (Kezer 2015: 142). For non-Turkish speaking Muslim citizens such as Kurds the official discourse was to convince them that they were originally Turkish people but had forgotten about it (Houston 2005). They were called "mountain Turks" (*dag Turkleri*) and a decree in 1924 banned all Kurdish schools, associations and publications (Houston 2015).

being across different regions while minimizing socioeconomic and cultural unevenness (Bozdogan 2001; Goswami 2004). As such, industrialization was not a merely qualitative shift as a means of production but was also a tool of homogenization and leverage for regional development (Keles & Danielson 1984: 55).

In order to eliminate spatial barriers and establish an increasingly uniform space of production, circulation, and exchange, the state prioritized building a nationwide network of railroads (Goswami 2004). The existing railroad system was developed without a comprehensive master plan under the Ottoman Empire and reflected contradicting political and economic rationales (Kezer 2009: 511; Kezer 2015). A state-owned railroad company (TCCD) was established in 1927 with the objective of building new lines and creating a centralized system. Between 1923 and 1938, 3100 km of new rail lines were built, doubling its size, shortening the travel times, and quadrupling the number of passengers (Kezer 2009: 511, Tekeli 2009, Toprak 1988). Railroads reached remote towns especially in Eastern Anatolia, making them accessible almost year-round for the first time and integrating them with the national unit (Kezer 2009: 513). They accelerated the circulation of capital, consolidated the internal market (Toprak 1988) and demarcated Turkey "as a unit of state governance" (Goswawi 2004: 9).

Aside from their practical use, expanding the web of railroads was also a concrete example of the Republican slogan: "catching up with the advanced civilizations" (Zürcher 1997). The ideal of the new Turkish nation was defined as "to reach to the level of contemporary civilizations" (*Muassir medeniyet seviyesine ulasmak*). [12] The decline and collapse of the Ottoman Empire were associated with the state's failure to catch up with the social and material progress of the West

[12] It is important to remember that long before the Kemalist revolution doctrines of positivism and rationalism have been important schools of thoughts that shaped Ottoman-Turkish intellectuals. (Bozdogan 2001: 108).

(Bozdogan 2001). Despite the anti-imperialist nature of the Independence War, in the Turkish nation building process Western civilization was not framed as something to deny or to fight against. It was rather an inevitable process of progress and social evolution fueled by scientific and technological development (Bozdogan 2001: 107). Thus, along with industrialization, railroads were seen as "crucial agents of social and cultural change" (Kezer 2009: 513). In the words of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk "Without railroads, it would be difficult to even disseminate ideas about civilization let alone propagating civilization itself. Railroads chart the path to progress and prosperity" (cited in Kezer 2009: 513). Thus, railroads functioned as symbolic "transmitters of the new ideology to every corner of the nation"; represented "a new territorial consciousness of nationhood" and contributed to the mental mapping of an imagined community (Bozdogan 2001: 119).

Finally, new town centres were created at key locations as a spatial integration strategy (Kezer 2009). Ankara, a small Anatolian town in the middle of the country, was designated as the capital city of the Republic. This was both a strategic choice, to move the centre of decision making further away from the western powers, and a reflection of the distanced approach of the Republican elite to Istanbul. Istanbul, the centuries old capital of Ottoman Empire and the city of the Sultans, was now seen as "the symbol of imperial decay and decline" (Bozdogan 2001: 80). In contrast, Ankara was set as the example 'republican city': "the flagship of the nationalist modernization and integration project" (Kezer 2009: 514). Planning principles were first introduced in Ankara and then carried into other provincial towns which were built along the expanded railroads (Zürcher 2014: 112). [13] Each town was planned with its train station, parks, tearooms, and theatres built

[13] In the architectural magazines and planning circles, Ankara was often compared to the other modern cities in the world such as New York (Bozdogan 2001: 114-116).

around the republic square as well as the state buildings, such as provincial government houses, courts, and police departments (Kezer 2009).[14]

The development of new town centres was also important to encourage the emerging national bourgeoisie's wealth accumulation (Batuman 2005, Tekeli 2009). The revalorization of previously undeveloped lands via urban infrastructure produced new revenue flows that were reaped primarily by the new middle classes. For example, in 1925, the neighborhood of Yenisehir (New Town) in the southern part of Ankara was rebuilt for the use of government employees, high-ranking officials, and diplomatic corps, accommodating "western lifestyle with its balls, parties, celebrations, swallowtail coats, imported furniture…" (Batuman 2005: 35). For that, four million square meters of land was expropriated by the government and given to state officials at highly subsidized prices. As Ankara further developed, the officials were able to make significant economic returns to their landed properties, by capturing the rent gap between the initial and final property values. In this context, beyond being a spatial integration strategy, town building was a crucial means for urban Kemalist bourgeoise's wealth accumulation (Tekeli 2011: 70).

Parallel to the process of town building, the modernization of the countryside was a main tenet of Republican ideology. In the 1930s, more than 80 per cent of the population lived in rural areas. The significant contribution of villages to the national economy was a strong incentive to modernize them (Bozdogan 2001). The expansion of railroads opened up large tracts of uncultivated land and lowered transportation costs for the circulation of agricultural products (Toprak 1988). A national bank for agriculture (*Ziraat Bankasi*) was established to provide cheap

[14] A typical provincial town was usually dominated by three-four large landowning families and accommodated military and administrative personnel, guilds and craftsmen, and religious leaders. They were also where villagers would come to sell their products, hence the face of the urban life for the rural people (Robinson 1963: 59).

credit to producers and to buy their products (Keyder 1983: 140), encouraging the emergence of small farmers' cooperatives (Toprak 1988: 17). However, the existing unequal patterns of land tenure, inherited from the Ottoman Empire, remained mostly intact.[15] In the 1930s, there were parliamentary discussions to implement a comprehensive land redistribution policy to break the economic dependency of the small peasantry on the landlords; however, they were successfully blocked by the large landlord lobby in the parliament who were otherwise supporting the new regime (Önal 2012). Thus, the efforts to support agricultural production mostly benefited the large landlords, barely touching the lives of the small peasantry (Önal 2012).[16]

This modernization process was not perceived merely in material terms, but also in cultural terms where villages and peasants became primary objects of the civilizing mission of *Kemalism* (Öncü 2014). The ideal republican village was inspired by Howard's Garden City diagrams and planned accordingly. The traditional public sphere, the mosque, was perceived suspiciously and as a symbol of backwardness (Bozdogan 2001: 97). Sufi *tekkes* (lodges) and *turbes* (graves of holy sheikhs) were closed down while religious education and publications were taken under state control (Ince 2012: 41). People's Chambers (*Halk Odaları*) which were tightly controlled by the provincial branches of the party were established in towns and villages, followed by Village

[15] Historically the agrarian structure in Anatolia was based on "a high land/labour ratio". Labour was scarce while farmable land was available in abundance (Keyder 1983: 133). Private property rights in a Western sense did not exist, as most land belonged to the state, but could be cultivated by farmers as long as they paid their proper taxes (Keyder 1983: 133). However, during the 19th century with the Empire's growing integration into the world economy, the form sharecropping tenancy became prominent, while the number of independent cultivators declined. Sharecropping tenancy created a new source of surplus extraction for the large landlords, who could also privately own large tracts of land from 1858 on thanks to the recent Parcelled Land Law (*Arazi Kanunnamesi*). This resulted in an increasingly unequal land tenure in the Empire, rendering small peasantry economically dependent on large landlords. Just before WWI, between 1912 -1913, 1% of agricultural producers had 38% of the lands, 4% had 26% of lands, while 85% had only 35% and the remaining 8 per cent were landless peasants (Önal 2012: 153).

[16] Land and properties expropriated from non-Muslim populations such as Armenians and Greeks were significant in this context as they were transferred to the national treasury and used to subsidize the formation of national business class (See Önal 2012).

Institutions in 1940 (Eligür 2010:48)[17]. These institutions offered free technical and practical education to peasants and children and were a crucial part of the wider project of modernizing and secularizing the countryside (Zürcher 1997).

Overall, through the development and expansion of centralized infrastructure, town building and modernization of the countryside, the Republican elite hoped to produce a unified, homogenous, and integrated state-space (Goswami 2004, Akhter 2015). Industrial progress and agricultural development were supposed to erase the socio-economic differences between western and eastern Anatolia. The emerging middle class of urban bureaucrats and technocrats were expected to educate rural masses while expanding railroads would spread the secular values of the republic, bringing the story of a fledging nation-state to the distant corners of the country. Differences such as ethnicity and language were to be assimilated under the motto of 'one language, one ideal and one culture', and the lands of the dispossessed and marginalized minorities were used as capital for the formation of national bourgeoisie. The new capital, Ankara, where all train routes had to pass through, emerged as the centre of political power and wealth, coordinating its satellite towns and rural areas.

However, the state-led infrastructure development entailed its own contractions, heightening regional disparities instead of producing a homogenous and integrated state-space (Goswami 2004, Akhter 2015). There was especially an emerging disparity between urban and rural areas. The new town centres, like Ankara, acquired a disproportionate share of Turkey's resources (Kezer 2009), while the top-down modernizing mission mostly failed to penetrate to the wider parts of country and change the lives of ordinary people (Bozdogan 2001). The widening

[17] Starting with 1933 and onwards Kemalist government emphasized the importance of village education. Village institutes were seen as a means to reach the peasants and spread the nationalist ideology in the villages.

gap of spatial polarization and wealth was visible in the example of urban to rural electric consumption patterns. With industrialization efforts, the total production of electricity had grown tenfold between 1923 and 1945, but its use remained strictly limited to cities. As late as 1953, the total number of villages linked up to an electric grid was ten, in other words, 0.025 per cent of the 40,000 villages of Turkey (Zürcher 1997). Thus, for small farmers, who made up of the 80 per cent population at the time, there had been no significant improvement in life, health, or education standards. In the meantime, the extensive state-led industrialization process was financed mainly through the utilization of their agricultural surplus (Savran 2015). Consequently, there was a great discontent in the countryside against the Kemalist regime, crystallized into the anger against the tax collector and gendarme (village police) (Zürcher 1997).

The state's unpopularity was also exacerbated by its secularist policies which severed the traditional ideological bond between the state and its subjects. As Eligür (2010) argues, Islam was the dominant force in most of the spheres of the Ottoman Empire. The sultan, the ruler of the empire, was also the caliph – the religious leader of the Muslim world. The political figure of the sultan-caliph was embedded in the Ottoman concept *din-u devlet*, the unity of state and religion (Eligür 2010). With the establishment of the Republic, this link between the state and Islam was broken. Yet even though religious organizations such as *sufi tarikats* were banned, they did not lose their legitimacy in the eyes of rural people who could not find the same sense of meaning and a spiritual framework in the Republican ideology (Mardin 1973). While the regime was successful to transform citizens in the major urban centres, where capitalist relations were taking over; it failed to do so in small towns and rural areas (Öncü 2014).

3.3. Transition to the Multi-Party System and the Emergence of *Gecekondu*s

With transition to the multi-party system in 1945, blaming the Kemalist regime for uneven geographical development became the primary focus of the rival parties' critique to the existing system. The pre-election campaigns by the newly established Democrat Party (DP) promised to end the socio-economic gap between urban and rural spaces, by prioritizing public investment to provincial centres in response to peasants' needs over Ankara. One of the leading figures of the DP, Celal Bayar, stated:

> We shall always keep in mind that agriculture constitutes the foundation of our economy. ... No government should attempt to construct a showy and expensive state administration - as done by the former government – burdening a backward agricultural society which is still the slave of the wooden plow and oxcart (Cited in Robinson 1963: 145).

The Democrat Party (DP) won the majority in the 1950 elections against the Republican People's Party (CHP).[18] With the help of the Marshall Aid System, it channeled large public investments to develop physical and social infrastructures in the countryside (Zürcher 1997).[19] Modern farm equipment was imported; irrigation structures were expanded; a massive web of highway transportation was developed to facilitate transportation between the city and countryside (Robinson 1963).[20] The cost of highway transportation significantly dropped, its time shortened, enabling ordinary villagers to pay visits to towns both for business and leisure (Robinson 1963). The party further expanded its rural populism in response to the peripheral rural populations'

[18] The CHP did not win a single province in the more developed west of the country, all provinces where it won east of Ankara were in the least developed regions. Power brokers such as notables, landowners and tribal chiefs loyal to the CHP controlled the vote. The Rise of the Democrat Party meant that a different section of the elite came to power in Turkey. Unlike the Kemalist regime, DP people were not linked to the military and the state bureaucracy but was a presenter of the rising power of Turkish bourgeoisie (Zürcher 1997: 227).

[19] Marshall Plan was an American initiative to reconstruct Western Europe after World War II to prevent the spread of communism. As a part of the plan, Turkey received a significant amount of aid which aimed to increase Turkish production in order to supply food products and some raw materials to Western Europe in return for manufactured products (Zürcher 1997).

[20] Meanwhile the signature of the Republican era, railroad construction came to a halt; signifying a shift from the early emphasis on state investment to private investment.

demands for political and economic centrality. Cheap farm credits and tax exemptions were provided to guarantee higher profit margins for agricultural producers, increasing the amount of agricultural production and the average farmer's income (Zurcher 1997). Expanding infrastructure redistributed the state resources from "the happy few who comprised the Center of the Republic under the one-party rule of the Republican People's Party (CHP)" to a greater number of citizens (Kalaycioglu 2001: 63).

Yet the DP's attempt to 'bring the rural' into the center of the nation through expanding infrastructure provision (Khatam & Haas 2018) was far from being a meaningful challenge to the Kemalist state-citizenship relations. On the contrary, instead of decreasing regional differences and socio-economic gaps between urban and rural spaces, the pro-market short term-oriented populist policies created new inequalities and discrepancies. It was true that the number of citizens who became state beneficiaries numerically increased, yet there were no structural changes in the system. The question of redistributive land reform was put aside indefinitely. The condition of being a state beneficiary was tied to citizens' loyalty to the ruling party and their political support. Those who did not choose to vote for the party were excluded from receiving services such as electricity, water, and various public works (Ahmad 1977: 49, Sayari 2014: 659). On the other hand, supporting regions received most of the investments based on their loyalty to the party.[21]

[21] The DP government ruled the country for 10 years and remained as the popular party of the rural masses. Excellent weather conditions during their first three years, combined with increased mechanization of agriculture, boosted agricultural production in Turkey and significantly increased the average farmer's income. Even though starting from 1953 farmers faced declining profits due to the end of good weather and the limits of mechanization of agriculture; the majority still supported the DP (Robinson 1963: 152). This was due to the fact that the farmers' vulnerability was reduced by the mostly non-monetary nature of the village economy which provided a protection against inflation. The state also continued to channel profits from the city to the village through keeping commodity prices artificially high, proving tax exemption to farmers etc. (Robinson 1963: 152).

The party used infrastructure development as a reward and punishment system for citizens while the authoritarian politics of the single party rule continued unchallenged.

Furthermore, the mechanization of agriculture and the expansion of highways extended urbanization, which came with its own problems and inequalities. Before WWII, Ankara was the only city with a growing urban population. With the end of the war, this growth spread to other cities and the urbanization rate rose by approximately 6 per cent a year (Tekeli 2011: 152). Between 1950 and 1980, Turkey's urban population increased by five times, moving from 4 million to 20 million (Keleş & Danielson 1960: 34). Istanbul was among the fastest growing cities. The DP brought back the political and economic emphasis on Istanbul as the symbolic capital (Akpinar 2015) and as the centre of import-substitution industrialization (ISI) policies. Istanbul's population rapidly increased from 975,000 in 1950 to 2,141,000 in 1965 (Tekeli 2013: 162-163) and the city grew on a west – east axis (Yazman 2010).

The growing size of urban wage earners was beneficial for the state as a source of cheap labor. Yet, it also put unique pressures on the Turkish state to keep up with the needs and demands of an increasing urban proletariat for infrastructure and municipal services. The state was short of offering a formal and comprehensive approach to such issues and utterly failed in providing the necessary infrastructure to its citizens. While the government channeled investment into developing more highways and opening wide boulevards in Istanbul 'to ease traffic jam' through the Reconstruction Operation launched in 1956 (Tekeli 2004, 2009, 2013), such efforts mostly benefited middle and upper-middle class citizens who had access to private vehicles.[22] Similarly,

[22] It is during this period of "the reconstruction operation" (1956 – 1960) led by the then prime minister Adnan Menderes, that the proposals for building a bridge over the Bosphorus Strait emerged. The British Company De Leuw Cather and Co. prepared in 1956 an initial assessment report for this aim called "A Bosphorus Straight Bridge and Connecting Highway System" (Tekeli 1970).

there were partial attempts to address the shortage of affordable housing by providing subsidized credit for residential construction through the Turkish Real Estate and Credit Bank (EMLAK) and the Social Insurance Fund (Bugra 1998). However, such funds were mostly used to subsidize middle/upper class residential projects rather than targeting lower income groups. The luxurious residential complexes in the upper-class neighborhoods of Atakoy and Levent in Istanbul, built in 1950s using the Bank's credits are examples of how these funds were used to cater upper class demands in the city (Bugra 1998: 317).

The state's failure to provide necessary housing infrastructure led citizens to challenge and contest its spaces. Where the state failed to provide, the citizens took over and produced their own infrastructure. In 1949 the first informal settlements emerged in Istanbul (Tekeli 2013). [23] Called '*gecekondu'*, meaning "to be built overnight" (Bugra 1998: 307), these illegal dwellings quickly spread through the cities, meeting the need of housing stock for the emerging urban proletariat. By appropriating vacant public lands in the urban peripheries and building their own houses out of scrap construction materials, the citizens defied official rules and regulations. They carved out new spaces where they could articulate "appropriation as rights of urban citizenship" and "the right to inhabit the city" (Holston 2009: 248). Appropriating, inhabiting and (re)producing urban space, *gecekondu* settlers rendered themselves as political subjects and created an alternative land tenure to the state's private property logic. Between 1950s and 1980s, Istanbul grew like an "oil stain" with extending layers of informal settlements without access to proper public services or green areas (Tekeli 2009: 88).

[23] In the districts of Zeytinburnu (3.219) near to leather and textile factories around the train roads, Mecidiyekoy (200) and Sisli (100) (Tekeli 2013).

The spreading of informal settlements transformed the state-citizenship contract. The lack of a formal affordable housing policy socially provided legitimacy to the existence of informal settlements, making it a political norm that without providing alternative housing projects to those in need, the state would not intervene such neighborhoods (Bugra 1998).[24] With the new social contract, patron-client relationships that were established through rural populism shifted to urban areas. Starting with the Democrat Party, right wing populist parties saw the growing population of the urban poor as an opportunity for expanding their popular support (Sayari 2014). They sought to channel what might have been a demand for a 'different city', a claim to be in the center of politics, to patronage relations.[25] The Democrat Party's successor's the Justice Party (AP) was especially good at building patronage networks among the urban proletariat (Musil 2014: 83).[26] The newcomers' rights to access municipal services such as electricity, transportation, roads as well as legal ownership of their *gecekondus* were doled out in return of their votes (Sayari 2014). The party also passed the first *gecekondu* law and regularized the entity of *gecekondu* by recognizing "that different groups of citizens, the squatters living in irregular settlements, and the residents in the formal housing sector, were bound by different rules with regard to the acquisition of building permits and the use of municipal services" (Bugra 1998: 312).

[24] As an example, in November 1965, at a public conference with the Ministry of Reconstruction and Settlement, the Prime Minister Demirel explicitly stated that "the demolition of gecekondu without providing alternative shelter for squatters was totally out of the question" (Bugra 1998: 307).

[25] Most successful among those who established patronage networks were the regional solidarity groups (*hemsehri*), religious brotherhoods (*tarikat*). The urban middle classes, whose members were individualistic in their lifestyles, were more like to find themselves marginalized in the process (Kalaycioglu 2001: 64).

[26] In 1960 a military coup d'état ended the Democrat Party rule. The party was banned from politics and the Justice Party (AP) as a successor was founded. Suleyman Demirel, son of a peasant from the small Anatolian town- Isparta, became the leader of the party in 1964. Under Demirel's leadership AP won a landslide victory in 1965 elections with 52.9 per cent of the votes and established a single party government. Demirel's story as the son of a peasant resonated with many rural based people and signaled that a different section of the elite came in power in Turkey (Zürcher 1997).

In this context, building bridges to connect the two shores of Istanbul over the Bosporus were seen as quick and short-term solutions to increase land rent by extending urbanization. The first bridge over the Bosphorus, *Bogazici Koprusu*, and its connecting roads were opened on 29 October in 1973 in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the republic. Despite the opposition's criticism that not enough planning went into how the new bridge would change the form of Istanbul and could lead to overpopulation, the leader of the AP responded by saying that "people wanted pilaf, not plans". This statement explains clearly how the revalorization of the land and the built environment by extended urbanization were seen as means to redistribute state resources through opening public lands for informal settlements. With the completion of the first bridge and its connecting roads, Istanbul started to grow towards northern territories which were then unsettled rural lands (see Figure 3.1). Just after 5 years of opening the Bogazici Bridge, there were already suggestions to build a second one which was eventually opened in 1988. Similar to the effect of the first one, the second bridge, Fatih Sultan Mehmed Bridge, extended urbanization to Istanbul's further north, putting pressure on crucial water reserves such as Ömerli, Elmalı, Büyükçekmece and leading to formation of new districts occupied by mostly informal settlers such as Gaziosmanpaşa, Ümraniye, Sultanbeyli, Arnavutköy, Sultangazi (Çalışkan 2010) (see Figure 3.2). Hence the right-wing populist parties successfully continued to secure the votes of the growing number of the urban proletariat by including them in appropriation of increasing land rent (Sayari 2014: 660, Tekeli 2009: 88).

Figure 3.1 Northern expansion precipitated by the opening of the Bogazici Bridge (1973) Source: (Azem, 2011)

Figure 3.2 Northern expansion precipitated by the opening of the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge (1988) Source: (Azem, 2011)

However, the top down enforcement of neoliberal policies in the post 1980s coup era, challenged and changed the conditions of such a social contract.[27] With the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) intervention into Turkish economy, the state-led developmentalist era was ended. Instead an export-led growth model was adopted which emphasized integrating with the global markets, enhancing capital mobility, and liberalizing trade and finance (Yeldan 1995). The neoliberalization of the economy brought the question of how to sell the city to the core of urban politics (Keyder & Öncü 1994). The first civilian government formed after the coup, the Motherland Party (ANAP), created incentives for big capital to involve in residential and infrastructure construction. The housing sector which was deemed unprofitable and mostly occupied by small and middle-sized capital before, was made lucrative through the 1984 Housing Law which provided subsidized credit to private investors (Bugra 1998: 309, Senyapılı 2004, Tekeli 2009). With state subsidies, big developers were able to buy large tracts of peripheral lands at cheap prices and develop them as satellite cities which was not possible to do for small scale capital of the prior era (Tekeli 2009: 90) Office buildings, shopping malls, suburban style residential areas proliferated in big cities such as Istanbul, transferring the larger share of urban rent to big capital, catering to middle-class demands (Bugra & Keyder 2006: 221; Tekeli 2009: 92).

[27] On September 12, 1980 the Turkish military declared that the parliament had ceased to function, and they were taking control of the country. The coup d'état dismissed the parliament and municipal councils and suspended all political parties. A mixed civilian-military government was appointed by the National Security Council (NSC) under the leadership of General Evren, who governed Turkey from September 1980 to November 1983 (Eligür 2001: 89). In 1982 a new constitution was adopted whose primary aim was to restore 'the order' and thus sought to significantly reduce citizenship rights and freedoms. Articles 13 and 14 allowed the government to restrict almost all basic rights and freedoms on the basis of protecting "the integrity of the state" and "public interest" (Ince 2012: 102). Collaborations between associations, unions and parties was prohibited. In addition to banning labour unions, the military regime promoted a Sunni Islam-Turkish nationalism – the so called Turkish Islamic Synthesis- to counter the rising popularity of left politics in the country.

The increased competition over limited peripheral urban land lessened the chances of newcomers to integrate and put the urban poor under intense pressure (Sakızlıoglu 2007; Senyapılı, 1995). As a means to ease the effects of neoliberalization of urban space, the ANAP government issued four decrees regarding informal settlements which legalized the establishment of shanty towns in large cities. The final decree in March 1984 changed zoning regulations and allowed *gecekondu* owners to construct buildings up to four stories on state owned land (Eligür 2010: 140). In this way, *gecekondu* owners in collaboration with small construction companies transformed their squatter areas into multi-floor structures and expanded their houses either to sell or rent extra units (Çavdar 2016). The decrees had a few important consequences for changing politics of infrastructure and state-citizen relations. First, in line with the growing neoliberal policies they commodified *gecekondu* construction and facilitated the spread of private property ideology into urban fabric. For the urban poor, land/housing became "a private commercial venture to be carved up in any fashion that might increase the turnover and further the rise in land values" (Mumford 1961: 507). Instead of challenging the existing power relations by bringing alternative land tenures such as community land trusts where land is collectively owned and thus protected from real estate speculation (Flint 2018), the decrees transformed *gecekondu* lands into plotted *arsas*, making homeownership a primary means to accumulate wealth for ordinary citizens (Karaman et al. 2020, Streule et al. 2020).[28]

[28] In their two articles Karaman et al. (2020) and Streule et al. (2020) develop the concept of "plotting urbanism" to explain the shift from self-help gecekondu construction to its commercialized version. In this research I stick with term "commodification of gecekondus" instead, as in the case of Istanbul I do not agree that "plotting urbanism" is a distinct process of urbanization. Most of urbanization processes in Turkey whether state-led or people-led "either escape or bypass—at least partly—comprehensive planning efforts", are "based on various ambiguities that are temporarily stabilised by some sort of a territorial compromise between landowners, plot-owners and state actors", "includes the commodification of housing" and inevitably creates distinctions between property owners and users of space, (Karaman et al. 2020: 19). Thus, the core characteristics of "plotting urbanism" as described by authors inform beyond the production of certain low-income housing and is common thread in building the unplanned cities of Turkey.

Second, the decrees entrenched personal and informal patron-client relationships in opposition to the development of formal redistributive mechanisms of a social welfare state. The capability to make profit through the "commodification of *gecekondu*" continued to depend upon the successful manipulation of political decisions (Bugra 1998: 313) Such a context inhibited the development of an active understanding of citizenship as a claim to equal rights and encouraged citizens to seek private gains through patron-client relations (Tekeli 2009: 103). This in turn strengthened the political culture of seeing democracy as a means to access the state resources for greater number of people.

Finally, within the context of emerging large-scale developers, commodification of *gecekondus* changed the center – periphery relations inside the city itself. Even though allowing multi-story *gecekondus* made it possible for newcomers to find relatively cheaper accommodation in the city and "made urban poverty problems less stressful for society as a whole" (Işik & Pinarcioğlu 2008), it nevertheless created a hierarchical and exploitative relationship between *gecekondu* dwellers. Older *gecekondu* owners who had access to land and housing either sold their lands or rented their newly added units to late comers. For example, according to an official survey conducted in 1990, 56.22 per cent of *gecekondu* dwellers in Istanbul, bought their lands from other residents who initially appropriated it, while 19.20 per cent bought it from a relative or a real estate agent (Bugra 1998: 311). Thus, an evident hierarchy emerged between regularized multi-story *gecekondu* neighborhoods and the more recently appropriated ones. Those who lived in multi-story neighborhoods started to distinguish themselves from other *gecekondu* dwellers whose houses were not yet modified or regularized (Erder 1996). In this sense, commodification of informal housing led *gecekondu* infrastructure cease to be 'self-help housing' and made it a capital

accumulation strategy for the prior informal settlers at the expense of the more recent migrants (Balaban 2009; Bugra 1998).

Overall, the top down implementation of neoliberal policies diverted flows of urban rent towards big capital at the expanse of small-scale capital, while the commercialization of *gecekondu* extended rentier practices to small scale capital and middlemen. Furthermore, the neoliberal policies led to further economic difficulties among the middle classes. In order to soften the effects of neoliberalization in Turkey, the government made the struggle against inflation - the masses' common enemy- a priority. However, because of the government's populist and inconsistent policies, this turned out to be a failure. The annual rate of inflation after 1983 did not fall below 40 per cent; on the contrary it showed a marked increase above 80 per cent in 1988 (Tünay 1993: 24). Low wages, unemployment, and a lack of organized labour impoverished the majority. There was a steady decline in wages.[29] The breakdown of the traditional form of economic organization in agriculture caused serious discontent in rural areas (Tünay 1993). It was clear that by the 1990s Turkey was facing the consequences of structural adjustment programs forced by the IMF after the 1980 coup d'état and only a small section of society benefited from the export led growth model.[30] Overall, these dynamics deepened and entrenched existing inequalities, pushing the majority of citizens to peripheries.

3.4. The Rise of Political Islam and the Launch of Mass Housing Projects

The Islamist movement responded cleverly to this economic and social crisis in society. After having received few votes during the 1980s, the Welfare Party (RP) came up with the slogan

[29] Eligür (2010: 141) notes that "the share of wages and salaries in national income (GDP) declined from 32.7 per cent in the late 1970s (1974 - 1977) to 20.8 per cent in the late 1980s (1988 -1991)".
[30] From 1990 to 2002 Turkey's GDP per capita was the lowest among the 29 OECD member states and the fifteen EU countries and unemployment which was only 0.3 per cent in 1975 rose to 4.7 in 1985 and then to 9 per cent in 1993 (Eligür 2010: 141).

of "Just Order" (*Adil Düzen*) in the 1990s and shifted its focus to the ongoing problems of high inflation, corruption, inequality and unemployment (Eligür 2000: 154). With a strong campaign resonating with the grievances of the urban poor, the party gained the electoral support of the citizens living in the shantytowns of Ankara and Istanbul. In 1994, Recep Tayyip Erdogan became the first Islamist mayor of Istanbul in the history of republic. This electoral victory was important, because in political Islam, Istanbul held a special role. It was believed that Istanbul's conquest by "a great commander and his soldiers" had been promised by the prophet Muhammad as the beginning of Muslims' supremacy over Europe (Bora 1999: 48; Cinar 2001). As the promised land and the capital of the Islamic Ottoman Empire, Istanbul was thus a symbol of Islamic civilization and Muslim victory over the world. Yet at the same time, Istanbul was believed to have degenerated and become corrupted due to the Western oriented and secular policies of the Kemalist regime. It was disconnected from its 'real' roots, and had lost its 'true' essence. As a result, it was degraded from its prior imperial glory and power. Indeed Erdogan, as a mayoral candidate, argued that Istanbul needed to be "re-conquered" from the Kemalist elite and brought "into light from darkness" (Bora 1999: 48).

A crucial way of bringing Istanbul from darkness to light was through infrastructure development. As the new conqueror of Istanbul, Erdogan prioritized provision of infrastructure and municipal services in his policies. In an interview before the 1994 elections, he had proposed building mass housing units in satellite cities to formalize and upgrade *gecekondu* neighborhoods in Istanbul. In this vein, Istanbul Housing Development Planning Firm (KIPTAS), was established in 1995 and as the manager of the company, a contractor friend of Erdogan, Erdogan Bayraktar (who later became the head of TOKI was appointed) (Çavdar 2016). The same year, KIPTAS launched the Basak-Hilal Mass Housing Projects with the goal of building 50,000 affordable units

in peripheral lands. The projects were not merely to upgrade the *gecekondu* neighborhoods and but also to save the urban poor from depending on small capital entrepreneurs and middlemen for their infrastructural needs (Çavdar 2016). This was an issue left unaddressed by the prior governments, resulting in increased hierarchy among the urban poor.

Basak-Hilal Mass Housing Projects were important in three perspectives. First instead of either blaming the urban poor for appropriating public land or merely allowing them to build their own infrastructure in return of their electoral support, the mass housing projects offered an alternative route. It reframed politics of infrastructure as the realm of state action and responsibility, blaming the lack of political will on the part of the prior governments for existing problems. In the same interview mentioned above, Erdogan criticized the prior politicians for failing to produce long term urban policies and falling behind of people. He argued that "when the state falls behind the people [to provide infrastructure] and people lead the way, there can be no chance to build a peaceful future" (Görüş 1994: 42). Instead he claimed that there was a need for "an urgent intervention" and concrete steps to make the state the primary actor in infrastructure provision, while ensuring that "people happily followed from behind" (Görüş 1994: 42). [31] In this way, the projects highlighted the duty of the state to provide adequate infrastructure, raising the standard of living of the average citizen.

Second, it signaled the end of self-made infrastructure era in Turkish urbanization, opening the gate to full formalization of land. In the post-1980s neoliberalization era, even though large

[31] It is important to note that the goal of making the state the primary actor in infrastructure provision did not necessarily mean public ownership of infrastructural investments. On the contrary, Erdogan was a fierce defender of privatization of public services such as the municipal transit system, claiming that "if you own your bus, then you will take better care of it and provide better service" (Görüş 1994: 42). KIPTAS was also a joint private-public venture where the Istanbul municipality provided the land and cheap credit by public banks and private developers carried construction.

scale capital became more involved with the construction sector, the commodification and formalization of urban lands remained incomplete. This was due to political resistance from various civil society organizations as well as other priorities of the central governments (Aksoy 2012). The ambiguities and gaps in the land tenure, coupled with commercialization of *gecekondu*, extended rentier practices to small scale capital and middlemen, allowing them to directly appropriate urban rent without any state intervention. Yet an end to self-made infrastructure would mean complete formalization of land, allowing the state to exercise greater control over urban development and rent flows. In this context, Erdogan had argued in the aforementioned interview that "if you go to an area before anyone and build its infrastructure, you take it under control; you have the right to intervene" (Görüş 1994: 43). An end to self-made infrastructure would mean that a centralized, stronger, and benevolent state could protect its citizens against rent exploiters and defend the common good while exercising a greater control over urban rent flows.

Finally, the projects were situated in a neo-Ottomanist and Islamist discourse of building new social ethics and community. As such one of the RP politicians, Arif Ersoy called Basak-Hilal mass housing projects as *Islam Kent* (Islam City). He commented that:

> If a civilization cannot produce an original urbanization model, it is not a real civilization. Islam, Rome, Ancient Greece and Egypt all had an original urbanization model. However, Islamic civilization has not been able to renew itself and produce new cities since the 15th century ... Now we try to develop an urbanization model based on Islamic principles, it will be the Islam Kent Model (cited in Çavdar 2016: 519).

This statement clearly explains that for political Islam infrastructure development was not merely a means to deliver a shared prosperity and material well-being to citizen beneficiaries but was also a means to provide them with a sense of identity and belonging. By using and inhabiting the newly planned housing, roads, transit systems, citizens were integrated into a community which

assumingly shared the same goals and ideals. Basak-Hilal mass housing projects, in this sense, were the new regime's first trials of building the seeds of a new social ethics and a contract between the state and its subjects.

As a result of effectively using municipalities to distribute the state resources to lower middle- and lower-income groups, the Islamist WP became the leading party in the 1995 general elections, receiving 21.4 per cent of the votes. However it was forced out of its coalition government by the Turkish military in 1997, due to being suspected of having an Islamist agenda. The party itself was banned from politics in 1998 by the Constitutional Court of Turkey for violating the separation of religion and state as mandated by the constitution. Its successor Virtue Party (FP) was established immediately in December 1998 which was also banned on 22 June 2001 for violating the secularist articles of the constitution. After their party's ban, the reformist groups in the Virtue Party, headed by the prior mayor of Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, separated themselves from the traditional wing and established the Justice and Development Party (AKP). Entering to the early elections of November 2002 as a fresh face, the AKP won two-thirds of the seats in the parliament in 2002 national elections and established the first single party government since 1991. Coming into power as a single party government, provided the opportunity for the AKP to continue and further its new social contract embedded in infrastructural politics.

3.5. Conclusion

Overall, this section provided the historical and social context of infrastructure development in Turkey. In the early years of the Republic, the development of a standard, extensive and centralized web of national infrastructure was crucial for the state to forge its own unitary and homogenous time-space. The expansion of the railroad system helped to integrate the

national space and economy along with the goal of industrialization which was seen as a leverage for regional development to erase the socio-economic differences between western and eastern Anatolia. The newly built town centres along the railroads were important places for development of national bourgeoisie in material and cultural terms, while with the modernization of countryside the Kemalist elite hoped that the distinct identities of rural vs. urban would co-exist harmoniously.

Yet, state-led infrastructure construction entailed its own contractions, heightening regional disparities instead of producing a homogenous and integrated state-space. There was especially an emerging disparity between urban and rural areas which became the focus of the rival parties' opposition to the Kemalist regime. First, the Democrat Party in 1950s and then the Justice Party in the 1960s and 1970s exploited these patterns of uneven development to appeal to electorates. The Democrat Party significantly expanded infrastructure provision to the countryside, in a claim to bring the rural into the centre of the nation while using infrastructure as a reward and punishment system to distinguish between good and bad citizens. Yet the mechanization of agriculture and expanding rural infrastructure sped up the urbanization process, unleashing flows of rural migrants into cities in the pursuit of improved living standards. The state's capability to meet the demands and needs of its growing urban population was far from sufficient. Its failure to provide necessary housing infrastructure led citizens to challenge and contest state-spaces, by taking over public lands and producing their own infrastructures.

The spread of informal settlements transformed the social contract between the state and its citizens. Recognizing their failure to provide necessary infrastructure and affordable housing options, the ruling parties from the 1960s to the 1980s, allowed the new migrants to appropriate urban space in exchange for their political support. Such a policy helped the urban poor to meet their housing needs, yet it was also a lucrative deal for the state, since monetarily it did not have

to invest in infrastructure for those in need while ensuring the continuing supply of cheap labor for import substitution industrialization. The deepening income inequality and polarization due to top down implementation of neoliberal policies in the aftermath of 1980 coup were attempted to be eased by continuing such urban policies, yet this time in the form commercialization of *gecekondu* settlements. In the short run, the commercialization of *gecekondu* made it possible for newcomers to find relatively cheaper accommodation in the city and reduced the intensity of urban poverty problems. In the long run, however, it created a hierarchical and exploitative relationship between *gecekondu* dwellers, deepening inequalities in the society. In a way, citizens were left to find their own entrepreneurial ways to make a living and survive the city through the use of self-made infrastructure.

The rise of political Islam made good use of these contradictions in the city. While blaming the ongoing poverty related problems onto the corrupted Western oriented secular policies, it encouraged for a more involved state and stronger political will responding to the growing needs and demands of citizens. It created a new story about infrastructure, employing it as a means to foster a new social contract based on enactment of a universal elevation of living standards. Gaining power as a single party government in 2002 gave the AKP the opportunity to launch mega infrastructural projects, including urban transformation and mega transit projects. As I argue in this dissertation, these projects transformed the infrastructural politics in Turkey and restructured state-citizen relations.

Chapter 4 - Moving the New Turkey: Mega Transit Projects

4.1. Introduction

The ruling party AKP entered the 2011 national elections under the slogan of 'Turkey is Ready: Vision 2023'. In their election campaign, the party promised to make Turkey a regional and global power and the 10th largest economy in the world. Istanbul, an emerging global city held a strategic position in achieving the party's anticipated vision of growth. Under the motto of "Let the stability continue, let Istanbul grow", the then prime minister Erdogan introduced three mega transit infrastructure projects to put Istanbul on the map: a new bridge over the Bosphorus (the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge), an artificial strait to connect the Marmara Sea to the Black Sea (Canal Istanbul), and a new airport (Istanbul Airport). Interconnected by the proposed Northern Marmara Highway, these three mega projects are supposed to open lands to new settlement areas and give birth to 'a new city' with one million population and 400,000 new employment opportunities (AKP 2017).

In the summer of 2017, almost one year after the pompous opening of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, I took the ferry along the Bosphorus to visit the two surrounding villages near the project. It was a long and tedious journey. Coming from the Asian side, it took me two and a half hours to get there. The ferry was not crowded. Next to me there was a man who wore a cap emblazoned with "Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge/I was there". As we got closer to the bridge, everyone turned their heads to take a look at it. There it was, standing as a monument of defiance that had been built against all the opposition and resistance. Some people changed their seats to take selfies with the new bridge behind. After the ferry, I needed to take another bus to visit the surrounding villages. The bus stop was crowded with working-class people who were returning to their villages after a day of work in the city. We waited almost fifty minutes for the next bus to

arrive. Utilizing the waiting time, I asked some of them if they saw any improvements in their lives thanks to the third bridge. Talking publicly about mega projects in Turkey is highly divisive and politically loaded. People are reluctant to reveal their 'sides'. To my question only one of the women responded by rolling her eyes and ironically said "Yes, sure. We are coming from 100 years behind." And then she set back into silence. It is not comfortable to criticize the government's policies in public. You can be disrupted and shamed by Erdogan supporters at any time. The long journey to reach the new bridge, the crowded bus and long waiting hours, indicate that the third bridge did not bring much benefit even to the people who live nearby and need to take public transit. Truck drivers who are forced to use it protest and ordinary citizens do not bother to use it. Then how was this bridge which was apparently so ecologically destructive and not even useful for many people built despite the opposition and resistance? How did it so easily become a part of daily life in Istanbul that people rarely use it, but it is in the background of our selfies?

This chapter looks at building and moving 'the new Turkey' under the AKP leadership through the lens of three mega transit projects: Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, Istanbul Airport and Canal Istanbul. In doing so, it first analyzes how the projects are framed within a Neo-Ottomanist discourse and justified to the public. Building on this, it explores how the projects contribute to the (re)configuration of state-citizenship relationship, by framing citizens largely as state beneficiaries rather than productive citizens per se. The next section demonstrates that the projects further act as tools for expanding the Turkish state's power by increasing its rent-revenues from infrastructure development. The chapter concludes by highlighting how the politics of infrastructure development generates its own contradictions. The state's failure to deliver its

promise to create a shared sense of prosperity and material well-being puts its under new pressures and open ways for citizens to challenge its state-space.

4.2. Infrastructure, National Belonging and Neo-Ottoman Fantasies

The importance of mega projects as representational spaces is embedded in a neo-Ottoman ideological context. As explained before embraced by the AKP, neo-Ottomanism denotes to the ruling party's attempts to link the contemporary Turkey to the 'glorious days' of Ottoman Empire. As an alternative to Kemalist nationalism which distanced Turkish nationalism from its Ottoman history, neo-Ottomanism constructs an alternative national identity and emphasizes Islamist and imperial elements of its civilization centered in the city of Istanbul (Cinar 2001, Öncü 2007). Doing so challenges the Kemalist narratives of seeing Turkish and Western values as compatible (Çavuşoğlu & Struzt 2014; Ongur 2015) and instead calls for technological innovation and development based on cultivating of Turkey's "*yerli ve milli degerleri"* (native and national values). In this sense, the Canal Istanbul project is advertised as the centuries' old dream of the Ottoman Sultans by Erdogan (Hurriyet 2011), while the third bridge was named "Yavuz Sultan Selim", a controversial figure in Ottoman history, known for his massacres of Alevi people in Anatolia. The publication of the book *Osmanli'nin Cilgin Projeleri* (Crazy Projects of the Ottomans) in 2012 by a conservative publisher contributed to this trend and spread the Islamist-nationalist discourse (Dikeç 2017).

In this neo-Ottomanist discourse, the story of Fatih Sultan Mehmed (the Conqueror), who conquered Constantinople in 1463 as promised by the prophet Muhammed and brought the Byzantine Empire to an end, is exalted (Bora 1999, Cinar 2001). In this sense, the groundbreaking ceremony for the third bridge was held on 29 May 2013, the 560th anniversary of the "conquest" of Istanbul by Fatih Sultan Mehmed and opening to the public was planned to be on 29 May 2016

(though it lagged behind). Both ceremonies incorporated the Mehter anthem, played by Ottoman style dressed musicians and the official speeches were marked with heavy references to the legacy of Fatih Sultan Mehmed. Erdogan, for example, started his speech at the groundbreaking ceremony as such:

> Exactly 560 years ago today, Fatih Sultan Mehmed conquered Istanbul and changed the flow of the history. He closed a dark period and opened doors to an enlightened one. He did not only leave us magnificent cities, but also the spirit of the Conquest… We are here yet again to launch one of these mega projects. The world will talk about these projects and the third bridge as we are putting a third necklace to Bosporus (Hurriyet 2013).

The appropriation of Istanbul's imperial past and its conquest is important to understand the representational spaces of the mega projects in three main ways. First, in this perspective the term conquest does not merely refer to the conquest of Istanbul, but to a reconquest of the nation and to an end to 'the old Turkey'. "Everyone should know this: Turkey is not the old Turkey" Erdogan stated, referring to the construction of the Istanbul airport (Hurriyet 2014). "Turkey is not a country that accepted failure, waiting for others to decide its fate… It tore the dress that it was forced into... Turkey is achieving what seems to be impossible for others… I hope each member of our nation will be conscious of this fact. I hope you will be in this self-confidence" (Hurriyet 2014). Just like Constantinople was alienated, corrupted and in decay, waiting for Fatih Sultan Mehmed to liberate it, according to neo-Ottomanist discourse Turkey has been deprived of its true potential, its imperial glory under the corrupt rule of the Kemalist elite who overlooked the demands and needs of its citizens. The mega transit projects, in this sense, are representatives of the rising power of the whole nation, tools for building the self-confidence of a neglected nation. "You deserve these works" Erdogan cited in another public speech "these infrastructural works suit only to you… This nation deserves such works… We have a duty and we will continue to carry out this duty…" (Hurriyet 2016).

In this context, from their official announcements to completion, government circles and mainstream media advertised the projects as engineering and architectural marvels - in Erdogan's words as "star projects" for Istanbul. For the third bridge for example, the famous French architect, Michel Virlogeux, who was called in the media "the French master of bridges" and worked on bridges such as Normandie Bridge and Vasco da Gama Bridge in Lisbon, was brought to Istanbul. Various newspaper articles talked about the technological and architectural innovations involved in the construction of the bridge which was referred as "the bridge of the firsts". It was claimed to be the longest and widest suspension bridge with four incoming, four outgoing lines as well as a high-speed train track. The towers of bridge, each above 322 meters, were also to be the tallest in the world. Being the tallest, widest and longest – the most of everything – the bridge was claimed to be "one of its kind in the world" and the symbol of a strong and modern Turkey (Hurriyet 2010). As Erdogan put it in the opening ceremony in 2016:

> The Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge is not only a bridge, but it is also an artwork, a wonder of engineering. It is widest bridge in the world and the longest one that has rail track on it… To reach the level of high civilizations, one cannot do it just by talking. One can do it only with actions and we will do it (Hurriyet 2016).

Second the rhetoric of reviving the conquest spirit reflects the neo-Imperialist desires and calculations to make Istanbul a regional and global transit hub along the Silk Road. In that sense, it was portrayed that the construction of the third bridge would improve the east to west highway trade. Once fully completed, the new airport would become the center for transit flights around the world, playing a crucial role in the economic development of Turkey and the achievement of the country's 2023 economic goals (Hurriyet 2013a). In a similar way, Canal Istanbul is promoted to surpass the Panama and Suez Canals, reinforcing Turkey's preeminent role as Eurasia's energy transit hub since all the commercial traffic in Bosphorus (including oil transportation which makes 10 per cent of the total traffic volume) would be moved to the new Canal once completed (Keller

2011). Linked together the projects are claimed to make Istanbul an attracting center for its surrounding geography through its social, cultural, and economic activities (Keller 2011). Thus, the projects are defended in terms of their existential importance to make Turkey a global power and the lynchpin of a networked system of trade and transit routes (Akhter 2015). While announcing the third bridge construction in 2010 Erdogan claimed:

> The transit issue of Istanbul is not about this city. It is an issue for all Turkey. Istanbul is a summary of Turkey. All these projects are concern to even other countries who are located along the silk road. Istanbul is the most important stop along the modern Silk Road (Hurriyet 2010).

The neo-imperialist desires and calculations of making Istanbul a transit hub is inseparable from the rhetoric of fighting against 'the infidel and corrupted West'. Indeed in 2015 the then minister of Environment and Urbanization argued that thanks to the third airport he felt like an Ottoman raider forcing the gates of the city Vienna (Hurriyet 2015). In this respect, the projects are supposed to bring back the past glories of the Ottoman Empire and remind the rest of the world the strength of Turkey. As the then Ministry of Transportation Binali Yildirim was cited at the groundbreaking ceremony of the third airport as:

> They ask why is Turkey building the world's biggest airport? What is the necessity of such mega projects? I ask them why would we fall short of other countries? We come from an imperial tradition. Not so much time ago, just a hundred years ago we were the world's number one nation!... Our history is our honor. We will bring that past experiences into our future and leave a better country for next generation (Hurriyet 2017).

Such a nationalist and imperialist discourse also penetrates into the everyday life of citizens such as in the form of ordinary TV commercials where two English speaking businessmen pass through the third bridge and one of them states with concern that "Wow this is an engineering marvel. Never seen anything like this before… I wonder what Turks are up to next?" or of daily newspaper articles claim that Europe's best cities are jealous of

Istanbul (Hurriyet 2017a, 2017b). Such claims are also often repeated in Erdogan's speeches that "The west is jealous of us. Why? Because of these dams, because of the Yavuz Sultan Selim bridge, because of Marmaray, subways…" (Birgun 2016).

Finally, building on these dynamics, the neo-Ottomanist discourse is central to consolidating the national regime and a unified imaginary of nationhood centred around the charismatic leadership of Erdogan. Both groundbreaking and public opening ceremonies of these projects are turned into mass spectacular events and political rallies for the AKP (see Figure 4.1). Masses of supporters are carried to the ceremony areas via free shuttle buses, are provided with complementary lunches and distributed Turkish flags, t-shirts, and hats. In some cases, they were also gifted 'paper certificates' that stated that 'they were there' witnessing the historical event to take place. Such ceremonies occupy significant space in Turkish media. Images of thousands of people waving Turkish flags, dressed in the same t-shirts and hats, applauding the president Erdogan in his stage are served to the press as the confirmation of the leader and his nation's unity… the 'we' who is carrying the neo-Ottomanist Turkey to its future. Masses who wave to the cameras and record the ceremonies with their phone cameras all become parts of this spectacle (Hurriyet 2016a). In other words, mass bodies become a part of the infrastructure, the mega project, a part of a monument that solidifies Turkey is strong, successful, and united. Infrastructure as 'spectacles of glory' help citizens to imagine a nation and create a sense of national unity, a consensus, a whole that reached to its perfection.

Figure 4.1 Opening Ceremony of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge

Source: (ICA Consortium, 2016)

Figure 4.2 Citizens watching the opening ceremony behind the fences Source: (Bayhan 2016)

Figure 4.3 A young man taking a photo, wearing a fez and carrying a flag of the Ottoman Empire[32] Source: (Bayhan 2016)

[32] The three crescents on the flag symbolizes the three continents the empire was spread to, while the color green is the symbol of Islam.

4.3. Serving to the People: Infrastructure as Shared Prosperity

Placed before a neo-Ottomanist background, the AKP government underlined the projects' benefits for all citizens through provision of higher-quality transit services. With regards to the third bridge, the government claimed that the growing population of Istanbul and increasing traffic congestion at the existing two other bridges required construction of a new bridge (Hurriyet 2005). Both the then prime minister Erdogan and Istanbul mayor Topbas repeatedly claimed heavy vehicles such as international road transportations (TIRs) caused significant traffic jams in the central areas of Istanbul. The argument followed that a new bridge to be built in the northern part of Istanbul would relieve the downtown traffic by enabling heavy vehicles and cars to bypass the city (Hurriyet 2006). The state officials similarly defended the construction of the third airport, by arguing that the capacity of Istanbul's two existing airports was not sufficient to accommodate the current levels of high air traffic. They proposed to build a new airport with a capacity for 150 million annual passengers, to be located near the Black Sea (Hurriyet 2012, Hurriyet 2012a). For Canal Istanbul, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization reiterated that approximately 50,000 sea vehicles annually pass through the Bosphorus with numbers expected to increase to 65,000 in 2030 and 100,000 in 2050. Thus, the ministry concluded that in order accommodate these rising numbers and reduce possibility of sea accidents in the Bosporus a new strait was required (Vatan 2017).

Such rationale was used to justify commodification of public lands and transformation of forest areas into parcels of *arsa*. "Public lands belong to the people" claimed Erdogan, defending the construction of the projects on the northern forested areas of Istanbul. "If we will not use these lands for infrastructure, then what are we going to use them for?" he continued. "Highways and all other infrastructure projects are for the public benefit… Otherwise are we going to pickle

them?". According to this rhetoric, the public benefit could be only realized when land was parceled and commodified for construction of infrastructure development. Otherwise, it would be pickled". This way commodification and *arsa* production are not barriers for serving to the citizens, but on the contrary they are its precondition. Indeed, along with the persistent economic growth and other ongoing transit infrastructure investments to Istanbul, the government managed to legitimize this discourse and the commodification of large-scale public forest lands. Many of the locals supported the construction of third bridge and even commented that "they should build not one but five more new bridges… because in order to use cars one needs roads", "it is a great service for Turkey" and "in place of the trees cut down, new ones could be planted" (BBC 2015). Furthermore, according to a research survey conducted in 2013, 68 per cent of the participants thought the construction of the third bridge would alleviate the problems of Istanbul traffic while 64 per cent approved its construction (Beykozses 2013). [33] Thus, a majority of Istanbulites or at least a silent majority seemed to support the projects.

The rationale of providing expanded and higher-quality transit service is innately linked to processes of extended urbanization, whose benefits are often highlighted by the ruling party to justify the projects. Defending the construction of the projects on the northern forested areas of Istanbul, Erdogan criticized the prior regimes' "unproductivity" and stated that "if it were up to them, everywhere would remain as villages" (Hurriyet 2013b). "Space becomes beautiful with infrastructure" he continued, "when our villages are urbanized, they will be more beautiful… the city is where a civilization rises" (Hurriyet 2013b.). Along with the transit rationale, the

[33] The survey was conducted by Beykoz Logistics Practices and Research Centre (Beykoz Lojistik MYO Lojistik Uygulamaları ve Araştırma Merkezi) under Prof. Dr. Okan Tuna between August 26 and September 3, 2013 by in person questionnaire with 1200 participants in 39 districts.

government has especially emphasized the benefits of the revalorization of the land and the built environment as a particular aspect of infrastructure-led urbanization. Indeed, the content analysis of the newspaper *Hurriyet* reveals that a significant portion of the news articles about the mega projects focus on their anticipated effect on land and real estate prices. The media has printed hundreds of stories of calculating the rising exchange value of Istanbul, speculating on which neighborhoods would be the new real estate heavens and circulating rumors from various real estate firms, resulting in a real estate frenzy among citizens. The rising land prices of Istanbul are often compared to the land prices in other metropolitans such as London and New York and used as a proof that Turkey is becoming a global power. In this context, the media often describes the projects as "a stroke of luck" for the locals, a gift from Erdogan to his citizens, since residents are expected to realize substantial increases in their land values (Hurriyet 2011a, 2016b). These articles often quote from the "lucky villagers" whose land and houses "doubled" in value since the announcement of the projects and who finally can see an end to their struggle. This media narrative presents as if the benefits of the revalorization of the land and the built environment would be equally distributed, raising the standards of living for ordinary citizens. It contributes to production of a landscape of anticipation, desire, and anxiety regarding real estate speculation.

The rationales to provide higher-quality transit service and to extend the benefits of urbanization to ordinary citizens resonate well with the conquest spirited neo-Ottomanist discourse. If Turkey was becoming a regional and global power, improved access to infrastructure through urbanization was a concrete way for citizens to experience the elevation of their living standards. Indeed, the AKP often explicitly associates provision of higher quality of infrastructure with offering full-fledged citizenship to its subjects. Their election campaigns geared up for 2011 national elections portrayed citizens who used an airplane for the first time, talked about the

difference high speed trains made in their daily life as well as commercial truck drivers who were grateful for the recently opened highway tunnels (Turk 2014: 216). In this context, regarding the construction of a new airport in the Black Sea region Erdogan commented that:

> I told my transportation minister that this will not be called an airport it will be called *people's port*. I mean soon my citizens will stop using buses and will be flying. In the old days airline travel was only accessible the elites. Now *my citizens* can also use such infrastructures. Thank God we have seen these days too (T24, 2011).

Infrastructure, in this context, becomes the state's primary mechanism for overcoming past inequalities and addressing the citizenship gap that is attributed to prior 'elitist' regimes. Each road, each highway and each new airport is an attempt to "conquest" the landscapes of the old elitist rule and return them to their 'real owners', ordinary citizens, by making their everyday more comfortable.

4.4. Unplanning Istanbul: Infrastructure as a Tool of Authoritarianism

The Istanbul Metropolitan Planning and Design Centre (IMP) was established in 2004 under the leadership of Kadir Topbas, the then mayor of AKP-led Istanbul municipality. The centre worked on a much-needed master plan for Istanbul, called Istanbul's Constitution (*Istanbul'un Anayasasi*) by Topbas (Göktürk et al. 2010). Completed in 2009, the master plan strictly restricted any further urbanization towards the north of Istanbul and stated steps to slow down the city's population growth (IBB 2009). While the centre was still working on the master plan, during a visit to Istanbul in 2005, the then prime minister Erdogan announced that they had planned to build a third bridge over the Bosphorus (Hurriyet 2005a). [34] The announcement contradicted the Istanbul

[34] In 2002, the General Directorate of Highways suggested discussing the possibility of constructing a third bridge over the Bosphorus to the metropolitan municipality. However, this was not taken seriously by the city council and pushed aside.

master plan which was under preparation and in contrast proposed increased use of rail and sea transit systems to decrease the city's dependency on automobiles.

The tension between the local and central authorities – both led by the AKP, intensified as immediately after Erdogan's remark, a proposal for the third bridge was brought forward to the metropolitan municipality, yet without Mayor Topbas' knowledge and in his absence. During the meeting, the AKP city councilors voted and accepted the proposal to be added to the 1/5000 plans of Istanbul. In the absence of the mayor, the decision was taken and signed by his deputy chairman Idris Gulluce. When found out about the proposal, Mayor Topbas vetoed the change in the city plans and sent it back to the parliament, admitting that he had not been informed about it beforehand. He argued the decision did not take the 1/25.000 plans of Istanbul into consideration and thus could not be accepted (Hurriyet 2005b). Indicating a crack in the AKP-led Istanbul politics, the following month Idris Gulluceand his co-workers were made to resign (Hurriyet 2005c).[35]

However, soon after the mayor's initial rejection, Topbas deemed that the city required a new bridge and its location was going to be decided by Erdogan (Hurriyet 2008). During a helicopter flight with the mayor, Erdogan determined the bridge and its connecting roads to pass through the northern shore of Istanbul, the city's greenbelt (Hurriyet 2005b). The construction of the new bridge meant the forestlands would be destroyed, yet the mayor warded off such concerns by assuring the public of "Erdogan's well-known sensitivity towards nature" (Hurriyet 2006a). The other two projects, the third airport and the canal, were planned in a similar ad hoc manner. Erdogan acted as the major decision maker from their announcement to final steps (Hurriyet

[35] Idris Gulluce later became the Minister of Environment and Urbanization

2010a). Within a short time, the master plan, once called Istanbul's Constitution was disregarded and replaced by the orders from Ankara. The bypass of the local authorities by the central government was defended by Erdogan as "Ankara carrying its responsibility for Istanbul". During opening of another infrastructure project Erdogan stated: "Ankara did not intervene into Istanbul. It did what was its responsibility to Istanbul" (Hurriyet 2006b). In other words, Erdogan's authority as the unquestionable leader of the ruling party, lessened the ability of the elected local authorities to challenge the central government. By disregarding both the master plan and the elected mayor's authority, the central government shaped Istanbul in line with its own goals.

The tightening control of the central government over local politics has been central to building the paternalist state – passive citizen dynamic as well as pre-empting organized opposition to the projects. Sidelining all the democratic processes, as Ankara "carries its responsibility for Istanbul" under the leadership of Erdogan, the citizen-subjects are expected to be respectful and grateful to the benevolent state for its accomplishments. In this "democracy of gratitude" (Moudouros 2014: 183), any oppositional groups who question the state's achievements are deemed to be "outsiders" and/or "foreigners". In that respect referring to the Gezi Park Protests in 2018, the then prime minister Binali Yildirim stated:

> By using 'trees' and 'greenery', they [Gezi protesters] wanted to disrupt Turkey's stability and topple its government. At those times, youth in countries such as Brazil and Venezuela were protesting their governments to demand construction of roads, airports, railways. Those Gezi people here, on the other hand to wanted to prevent the construction of roads, airports, and bridges. This shows that whenever Turkey grows, there are some games played on it… However, the son of this nation, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said 'We would not give in to Gezi people. We would build roads and airports and win the heart of our nation (Hurriyet 2016c).

Thus, the opposing demands and requests of citizens cannot be tolerated or even listened to. What separates 'right' from 'wrong', who can be a political subject and who cannot, depend on

the personal ways of knowing, seeing, and interpreting of the state (Moudouros 2014). Overall, by using the mega projects as vehicles to establish exceptionality measures in planning and policy procedures (Swyngedouw et al. 2002), the state also reproduces a state-citizen relationship in a dynamic of a benevolent-compassionate state and receiver-grateful citizens and legitimizes sidelining of the democratic processes.

4.5. The Uneven Political Economy of Infrastructure Development

Despite the official rationale of providing expanded and higher-quality transit service, a careful analysis lays out how these projects are not necessarily crucial for improved transit provision. Regarding the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) revealed that Istanbul's transit traffic equals only 2 to 3 per cent of all the traffic volume (Çalışkan 2010). The chamber's reported that 82 per cent of vehicles that used the existing two bridges were private automobiles and carried only 24 per cent of daily passengers (Çalışkan 2010: 15). In other words, the construction of the third bridge would serve mostly individual car owners rather than the needs of public transit (Çalışkan 2010: 15). Furthermore, the increased dependency on automobiles would possibly require construction of fourth and then fifth bridges (Çalışkan 2010: 15). Similarly regarding the new Istanbul airport, in his book "From Local to Global: The Rise of Turkish Airlines", the prior CEO of Turkish Airlines, Hamdi Topcu, explained that the construction of an additional runway and a new terminal to the existing airport would have been sufficient to accommodate the increased amount of air traffic through Istanbul (2019). He revealed that they had been, however, pressured by the Minister Transportation and Infrastructure, Binali Yildirim, to support the much more costly construction of the new airport in the northern part of Istanbul (Topcu 2019: 243 - 245). Finally, regarding the Canal Istanbul the statistics from the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure reveal that the total number of

vehicles passing through the Bosphorus has been steadily declining since 2007, instead of increasing as the officials claimed (Teyit 2019).

In these respects, the construction of mega transit projects in Istanbul is certainly motivated by image-building and rent-extraction rationales rather than the claimed transit concerns (Swyngedouw et al. 2002). Indeed, even before their construction began both national and global developers had been watching for investment opportunities around the projects' circumjacent lands. Thus, the land prices in the districts surrounding the mega project locations have been steadily rising (see Figure 4.4). Arnavutköy, one of the newly created districts, has seen land price increase in value by about 60 to 110 per cent between 2015 and 2017 after the construction of Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge and Istanbul Airport (Ekonomist 2017). Property prices in the Eyüp district, adjacent to Istanbul Airport increased by about 46 per cent between 2012 and 2015 (Reidin 2016). The districts of Basaksehir, Kucukcekmece and Avcilar which surround the proposed location of Canal Istanbul have also seen property increase in value by about 230, 200 and 120 per cent respectively between 2010 and 2018 (Ekonomist 2018) (see Figure 4.4). The rising prices in these districts pushed investors looking for cheaper lands to Catalca area which is juxtaposed next to the planned Canal Istanbul project (PRM Emlak N/A).

The rapid escalation of land prices offers the ruling party unique opportunities and challenges in developing new strategies to manipulate the real estate sector and gain greater control over urban change (Shatkin 2016). In order to usurp the rising land prices, the AKP government created new legal and institutional vehicles for state land acquisition, developed public-private partnerships in land development, and came up with new means to sell state land to corporate developers. The restructuring of the Mass Housing Administration (TOKI) which is discussed in more detail in the next chapter is a crucial part of this process. For the purposes of this chapter it

is sufficient to state under the AKP party TOKI was allowed to establish companies in the housing sector and engage in partnerships with private firms and financial trusts. This meant that as a public institution TOKI would engage in profit-oriented projects under the so-called 'Revenue Sharing Model' (*Hasilat Paylasim Modeli*) (Law 2985, N/A). It has also been turned into a central bank for accumulation of all the public lands. Thus, as a centralized state institution TOKI is responsible land acquisition for these mega projects (Guney 2019). In 2018 with through joint protocol Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality transferred its land stock around the Canal Istanbul project to TOKI, making it the sole agency to regulate the zoning and sale of almost all state land (Sozcu 2018). Furthermore, on August 18, 2012 the Council of Ministers designated a 42,300 hectare land around the mega projects as "Reserve Construction Area" for development of new settlements (see Figure 4.4). Thus, as the mega projects drive the land prices up, the value of TOKI's land stock rises and contributes directly to the state's financial power.

In cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and Urbanization, TOKI is also responsible for planning, zoning, and land development procedures in these lands (Cumhuriyet 2018). In order to develop 'profit-oriented projects' through the 'Revenue Sharing Model' as described above, TOKI sells a significant portion of the land around the projects to another state agency, Emlak Konut REIT.[36] Emlak Konut REIT is a recently reconfigured state-agency and the biggest subsidiary of TOKI. As a state-owned enterprise Emlak Konut REIT purchases TOKI's land at a cheaper price and makes revenue sharing projects with the private sector. Its projects are exempt from tax obligations like title deed fees and stamp tax and thus have great advantages

[36] Emlak Bank – a state-owned real estate commercial bank – was transformed into Emlak Konut REIT as one of the promised conditionalities of Turkey's letter of intent to the IMF in 1999. It continued with the same assets and officials of the Emlak Bank, but started as a REIT in its operational mandate. In 2001, Emlak Konut REIT went through another major institutional transformation and became a subsidiary of TOKI with Law No. 4684. For more detailed analysis of Emlak Konut REIT and its transformation under the AKP era see (Doğru 2016).

compared to other REITS (Doğru 2016). Through public-private partnerships Emlak Konut REIT has significantly developed its portfolio and increased its assets within the last 10 years (Emlak Konut 2020). It is one of the most profitable public institutions in Turkey (Guney 2019). Its total value in 2018 was 33 billion TRY and ranked the fourth biggest REIT among Middle East, Europe and Africa regions (Emlak Konut 2019b). By the end of 2018 it had its portfolio it has 3.9 billion worth of land and made 1.8 billion TRY in profits in 2018 (Emlak Konut 2019b). The agency has 4.6 million square meters of land stock near the mega project areas and thus is one of the biggest beneficiaries of the rising land prices (Bakirkoy 2018). It has 28 different high-end real estate projects surrounding the future Canal Project (see Figure 4.4). Some of the projects are already completed, some are partially completed, and some are planned to be built in the future.

In partnership with the Turkish Airlines (THY), Emlak Konut REIT is also developing a mini-airport city. Targeted to airport workers and general public, the project consists of housing stock for ten thousand independent units, parks, public squares, education, and religion facilities (Insaat 2019). Located at the intersection of the third airport and the third bridge, it covers 3.6 million square meters of public land (see Figure 4.4) (Emlak Konut 2019b). "We are not only building an airport but actually building a new city with hospitals, hotels, congress centers and sanctuaries" stated Erdogan during the groundbreaking ceremony of Istanbul Airport in 2014 (Kos 2015: 18). The Istanbul Airport is planned to function as aerotropolis with its oversized area and estimated capacity of 150 million passengers per year (Interview 15, July 2017).[37] Thus, as the

[37] The latest Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in 2014 claimed that Istanbul was a great fit for an Aerotropolis. The report stated that "Aerotropolis: comes from the merging of the words "aero" (air) and "tropolis" (metropolis, big city). Istanbul, which is the locomotive of our country's economy, fits into this definition perfectly" (cited in KOS 2015: 11).

mega projects open up new public lands to development, the Turkish state extends its financial power and control over the urban form via Emlak Konut REIT.

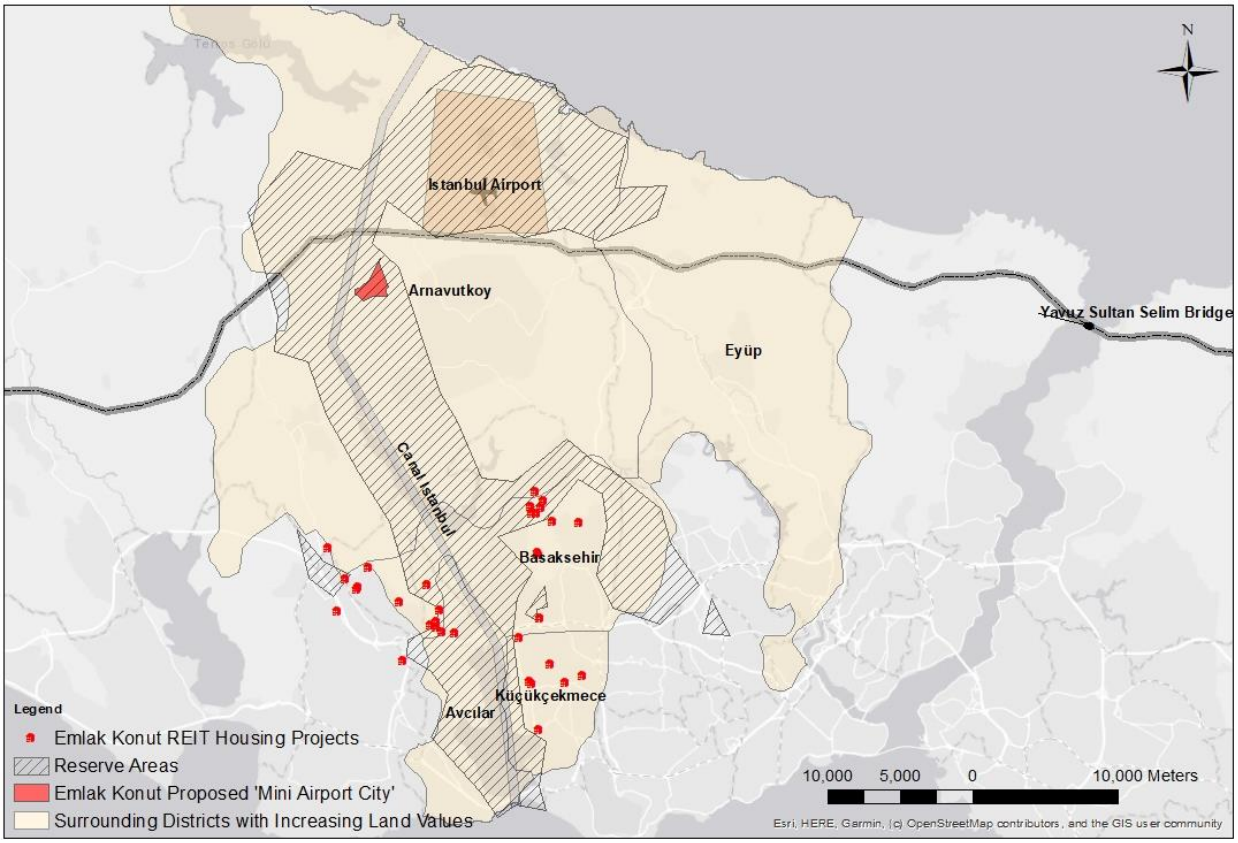

Figure 4.4 Map of the State-led Initiatives around the Mega Projects in Istanbul Area (Drawn by author)

Another strategy used by the government to extend its power is the transfer of profits from land development to pro-government companies through public procurement (Shatkin 2016, 2019). According to Gürakar (2016: 3) "one-fourth of annual public spending goes to public procurement", accounting 8.5 percent of Turkey's gross domestic product (GDP). Thanks to the increasing scale of TOKI's projects and wide public land stock, the AKP government developed close relations with certain large-scale developers and created small and medium scale pro-government construction firms (Doğru 2016). As TOKI investments have been exempted from Public Procurement Law, large developers such as Agaoglu, Varyap, GAP and Ascioglu who are

known for their close relations to the AKP government are among the most significant partners to the Emlak Konut REIT projects mentioned above (Sönmez 2012). Through the Revenue Sharing Model developers buy land from Emlak Konut REIT below the market prices and are exempt from various taxes. [38] Thus, they have access to unique market opportunities and monopolies. The total value of construction projects with such firms reach to 81 billion Turkish Lira (Emlak Konut 2019b). This way the government awards unique market opportunities to its supporters in return for political backing.

Such clientelism extend beyond real estate projects. Under the AKP both the number and the value of high price infrastructure procurements drastically rose (Gürakar 2016: 9). Analyzing the distribution of construction contracts through public procurement, Gürakar (2016: 10) found that "the highest value contracts seem to be awarded particularly to the AKP firms", accounting for "65 percent of the value of all procurement contracts". It is not surprising thus the project developers for both the third bridge and the airport are tycoons which grew under the AKP era and are known for their personal closeness to the president Erdogan (Özgur 2018). This closeness goes beyond mere 'friendship', as a corruption scandal in 2013 wiretapped conversations of Erdogan revealed that the president had put pressure on the tycoons behind the IGA consortium to acquire a media group formerly run by his son-in-law.[39] The IGA consortium accepted to buy the media group on the condition of being awarded the new airport project which they did (Financial Times 2015). The table from the World Bank data, for example, shows that most of the 3Ps are conglomerated by a small number of companies. It is also important to point out that other than

[38] All responsibilities for construction and sale belong to the developers and the profits are shared between Emlak Konut REIT and the developers (Emlak Konut 2018a, 2018b).
[39] It has become an important pattern that such tycoons acquire the media organs (New York Times 2018)

the Sabanci and the foreign Astaldi SPA, all other corporations grew and gained power during the AKP era and helped the party to create its own national Islamist bourgeoisie.

Table 4.1 List of Top 10 Companies Sponsoring Infrastructure Projects in Turkey

Company Name	**Total Investment (TRY in million)**	**Number of Projects**	**Projects Include**
Limak Holding	330	17	Istanbul New Airport Northern Marmara Highway
Cengiz Holding	288	9	Istanbul New Airport Northern Marmara Highway
Kolin Group	275	12	Istanbul New Airport Northern Marmara Highway
MNG Holding	120	2	Istanbul New Airport
IC Holding	106	10	Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge and Northern Marmara Highway
Astaldi Spa	92	7	Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge and Northern Marmara Highway
Kalyon Group	84	2	Istanbul New Airport Northern Marmara Highway
Ozaltin	36	6	-
TAV Airports Holding Co.	32	9	Istanbul New Airport
Sabanci Holding	30	11	-

Adopted from https://ppi.worldbank.org/snashots/country/turkey

From these perspectives, mega project development is useful for production of state-space as it contributes to neo-Ottomanist rhetoric, underlines the role of state as a public service provider, enables the state's financial power through rent extraction and supports the formation of pro-government cronies. However, the emerging politics of rent-based infrastructure has its own contradictions. First of all, such high-risk speculation projects require highly rewarding capital accumulation which inevitably leads to increased social and economic inequality among citizens (Goldman 2011). For the tycoons to be involved in the projects, significant profit margins are guaranteed by the state. Thus, in contrast to how they are promoted to the public, such projects indeed provide lots of profit for the private sector. The case of the Yavuz Sultan Selim illustrates this fact well. At its first bid, held in January 2012 after being delayed a few times, no developer made an offer (Hurriyet 2012b). One of the companies, Varyap, who had bought the tender specifications but decided to make no offer, claimed that the project was too risky for the private sector. The company said the project had high costs, but low prospects of profit and demanded more attractive conditions (Hurriyet 2012c). The reluctance in the private sector pushed the government to change the bid's conditions, to take more risks on behalf of the public and to increase profit margins for the private sector. As such, the government decided to divide the project into two parts: the construction of the actual bridge and the construction of the connecting roads. While the construction of the actual bridge was to be bid by the private sector, the state took most of the responsibility and costs for the construction of the connecting highways (which would not yield profit as much as the bridge itself). This reduced the cost of the project from 6 billion to 3,5 billion TL for the private sector. The government also increased the daily guaranteed number of the vehicles from 100,000 to 135,000 per day and provided a treasury guarantee. If the guaranteed number of vehicles did not use the bridge, the state would pay the difference from its treasury

(Hurriyet 2012d, 2012e). As of 2019, the number of vehicles crossed the bridge is less than one third of guaranteed number (Bianet 2019). The government refuses to release how much money was paid to the companies due to the difference between the numbers, yet as the main opposition party MP Adiguzel calculates "if we consider that 40 thousand vehicles cross the bridge daily, our citizens pay 1 million 800 thousand TRY every day for the 95 thousand vehicles that did not cross the bridge" (Bianet 2019). As another a newspaper article reveals the combined income from both of the bridges do not meet the third bridge's daily passes (Hurriyet 2017c). Thus, rather than 'printing money for the state' as it was portrayed earlier on, the bridge has placed significant burden on the state treasury whether citizens use it or not.

Second, the increased land speculation due to the projects leads to the dispossession of those working and living in the rural periphery. In order to facilitate capital accumulation, the state needs to acquire land in at its cheapest from rural citizens, many of whom are engaged in agriculture and stock breeding. The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization charged TOKI with the task of expropriating land from rural owners (KOS 2015). Contradicting the discourses of rural citizens getting rich, the expropriation prices offered by TOKI to landlords were well below the market price. TOKİ "appraised a price of 22 TRY per m2 for the village lands within the scope of expropriation in the region where land prices soared up to 400 TRY per m2 with mass purchases" (KOS 2015: 79). When the villagers started to bring lawsuits against it, TOKI asked for authority from the Council of Ministers to urgently expropriate the locals' land. As a result, TOKİ expropriated lands in six of the villages from the districts Arnavutkoy and Eyup (İmrahor, Tayakadın, Yeniköy, in Arnavutköy District and Ağaçli, Akpınar and İhsaniye, in Eyüp District) in January 2014 (KOS 2015). Thus, despite the rhetoric of equally distributing the benefits of the revalorization of the land and the built environment, the mega project development function as a

mechanism of land and rent transfer from the peripheral rural residents to major developers, increasing in social inequality.

The unevenness in rent distribution is further exacerbated by the increased and uncontrollable speculation of land. The rapidly rising land prices led to the proliferation of middlemen speculators and real estate brokers in the regions (Cengiz 2014). As large investors await to purchase consolidated land tracts, individual brokers who pressure the rural citizens to make deals with buy lands initially. Such brokers gather a few plots of land, and then sell to the next level of brokers. Till the final transfer of land to actual developers, lands are bought and sold up to seven times (Tuvimer 2018). The rising land prices generate a 'land acquisition management economy' which becomes a source of income and wealth accumulation on its own (Shatkin 2016). In this economy local citizens are the most marginalized and disadvantaged ones, as many of them cannot guess how much their fields will appreciate in value in future; thus, are deceived and give up their lands easily (Interview 15, July 2017). For example, according to the *muhtar* (elected leader) of the Yassioren village, adjacent to the connecting roads of the third bridge: "1.5 years before the projects' announcement real estate brokers and businesspeople came to the village looking to buy individual plots of land" (Sabah 2011). As of 2011, 1,900-hectare land out of 2,800-hectare purchasable land in the village has been sold to outside investors, each time doubling and tripling in price after the villagers lost their ownership (Sabah 2011). Thus, the villagers who are framed as "the lucky citizens" are not only deprived of the use value of their land through displacement but also cannot share the benefits of the revalorization of their land.

The displacement and dispossession of the rural citizens should be evaluated in the context of public lands being are privatized for high-end real estate projects which are not accessible to most of the citizens. As discussed above the Emlak Konut REIT projects developed in partnership

with the pro-government capital are luxurious developments targeted to upper middle-class customers and investors. According to the Turkish Statistical Institute, only 10% of the national population is able to buy what are classified as luxury homes (Doğru 2016). Thus, aside from displacing and dispossessing rural populations, the rising land prices and land speculation make Istanbul for the majority of citizens a highly unaffordable city. According to the Emlak Konut Reit between 2003 and 2018 the real estate prices in Istanbul has increased by 49 percent (Emlak Konut 2019a: 11). [40] As an indirect result of the rising living costs, we can now talk about an outwards migration from Istanbul to rural areas. According to the data from Turkish Statistical Institute since 2016 Istanbul is increasingly out – migrating. In 2018 150,000 people migrated out of the city, leaving Istanbul's annual growth rate at 0.26 per cent, way lower than the national average of 1. 21 per cent (Kahveci 2019).

The unevenness of the rent distribution is further exacerbated by the difference between the use value and exchange value of the infrastructure projects. With time the mega transit projects fail to raise the living standards of Istanbul's citizens. The case of Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge illustrates this point well. As mentioned above the number of vehicles crossed the bridge is less than one third of guaranteed number (Bianet 2019). In order to increase the number of vehicles that cross the third bridge, the government banned heavy vehicles from using cross the bridges. However, due to the long distance from Istanbul's centre this ban led to significant discontent among such vehicle users. They complain that using the third bridge triples the length of kilometers they need to drive and thus raises their overall gas costs. Also, as a privately-operated bridge, its fees are significantly higher than the other publicly owned bridges. As a protest, the heavy vehicle

[40] Though it must be highlighted due to increasing housing stock the real estate prices in Istanbul are in decline in the last two quarters of 2018 (Emlak Konut 2019: 11).

users organized rallies on the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, continued to use the second bridge at the expense of being fined, and when those fines were significantly increased preferred using car ships along another route (Hurriyet 2016d, 2017d, 2017e). As the non-user-friendly aspects of the mega transit projects are revealed the state's efforts to build a coherent social contract around rent-based infrastructure fails.

4.6. Conclusion

This chapter looked at building and moving 'the new Turkey' under the AKP leadership through the lens of three mega transit projects: Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, Istanbul Airport and Canal Istanbul. It demonstrated that the government uses the projects as a means to transform state-citizen relations at local and national levels. Located in a neo-Ottomanist discourse, the projects are claimed to make Istanbul an international transit hub, to render Turkey a regional and global power against the (infidel) West as well as to improve the citizens' living standards. The construction of mega transit projects is presented as the primary duty of the Turkish state towards its citizens. In the meantime, citizens are largely framed as 'beneficiaries' of the state-led infrastructural investments rather than active citizens per se. As citizens are supposed to be proud of their nation and exploit the opportunities to material enrichment from the windfalls of the projects, they are also expected to be obedient and grateful to the government for its accomplishments.

On the one hand, the projects are crucial for the Turkish state to produce its state-space and extend its social and economic power. They provide the state with opportunities to represent itself as a homogenous whole, underlines the role of state as a public service provider, enables its financial power through rent extraction and supports the formation of pro-government cronies. On the other hand, however, despite the rhetoric of neo-Ottomanism and providing socio-economic

benefits to all the citizens, the projects fail to deliver shared prosperity, accelerating social and spatial inequalities. They act as mechanisms to transfer wealth and control of peripheral urban lands from smallholders to major developers, dispossessing rural citizens. The prioritization of exchange value over use value prevented the state from delivering its promise of higher quality transit, leading discontent in transit users. Despite being legitimized as profitable initiatives, revenue guarantees given to the undertaking pro-government companies have placed significant burden on the state treasury. Thus, the state-space produced via the projects are ridden with conflicts and cracks leading to alternative formulation of citizenship as explored in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 5 – Housing the New Turkey: Urban Transformation Projects

5.1. Introduction

Walking on the streets of Sarigol neighborhood with Ahmet *Amca* (Uncle Ahmet) one feels they are in a dystopian movie.[41] Among dilapidated and rundown apartments, kids play football in their bare feet while their mothers sit in front of their doors and chat. Sarigol, located in the busy inner district of Gaziosmanpasa Municipality (see Figure 5.2), is one of the poorest neighborhoods in Istanbul. A significant portion of its population consists of Roma people who were relocated to the neighborhood in the 1950s. While most of the neighborhood consists of one to three story rundown apartments, - many of them in concrete, as we walk I can see the rising series of condominiums that are totally at odds with the rest of the neighborhood (see Figure 5.1). Walking towards his home where we will conduct our interview, Ahmet *Amca* points to these high-rise buildings and says "Look at this ugliness! They started these buildings a few months ago and they wait on us like death angels (Azrael)" (Interview 6, June 2016).

Figure 5.1 The view of the rising apartments from Uncle Ahmet's home
(Photo by author, June 2016)

[41] The name has been changed to protect anonymity.

With its dilapidated housing stock and already stigmatized and marginalized Roma population, Sarigol was one of the first neighborhoods to be declared an urban transformation area (then called informal settlement prevention area) in 2005. The project was presented as the first step of a greater transformation of Istanbul's informal and unplanned settlements.[42] The plan was to demolish around 700 *gecekondus* and develop modern housing units in their place. The government called the project as "social housing" because the newly developed units were to be sold to their original occupants on "affordable" terms. Similar to the promotion of the mega transit projects, the urban transformation projects (UTPs) were portrayed on the media as "stroke of luck" for the local residents. As Turkey was becoming a global power, UTPs proved that it could offer "luxurious housing conditions" even to the poorest and the most marginalized (Hurriyet 2012g, 2013c, 2013e).

A house is both a dwelling and a primary investment for most people. It is a crucial part of the social contract between the state and people since the state's failure in housing provision would point to a legitimacy crisis (Allweil 2012). This chapter focusses on the UTPs, targeting relatively inner-city neighborhoods. It demonstrates that through these projects the ruling party promises full-fledged citizenship to its subjects. If the mega projects are the monuments to the rising prosperity of the Turkish nation, UTPs can be conceptualized as their everyday materialization. In doing so, the chapter first explores the changing parameters of the legal and institutional framework of the Turkish housing system. I illustrate that under the AKP government the national housing system radically shifted from the prior populist policies of tolerating incomplete commodification to strict commodification albeit in a new populist form. I also demonstrate that similar to the promotion of the mega projects, this privatization and commodification of land is

[42] Starting with Sarigol, the IBB has decided to demolish 85,000 *gecekondus* in Istanbul.

legitimized as the only means for the state to properly fulfill its responsibility for housing citizens. The second section looks at how the changing dynamics of the housing system play out in specific neighborhoods. I assess how these dynamics create the contours of a rent-oriented social contract, imposing specific rights and duties on citizens. Here I look at how the government connects the anxieties about the future of urban land to the future of the nation and in doing so marginalize and criminalizes those who refuse to be a part of the projects. The last section questions the coherency and effectiveness of the rent-oriented social contract by highlighting its structural contradictions.

5.2. The Changing Parameters of the Turkish Housing Regime

As it was explored in the historical context chapter since 1950s Istanbul grew exponentially and unplanned. The dominant politics of right-wing populism allowed informal settlements to expand via patron-client relationships. Various governments tolerated the partial application of property and zoning rules and overlooked the incomplete commodification of urban lands. As a result, by the early 2000s almost half of the housing stock in Istanbul was informal with a complicated and ambiguous land tenure (Hurriyet 2000). From a rent gap theory perspective this meant a significant potential unrealized urban rent waited to be incorporated into capitalist accumulation process (Kuyucu & Unsal 2010; Smith 1987). However, until 2002, no party dared to challenge this social contract, which was a crucial means of vote seeking and wealth redistribution (Kuyucu & Unsal 2010).

Once the AKP came into power in 2002, however, it launched a series of legal and institutional reforms and radically restructured the governance of real estate markets in Turkey. The first step of the government to transform the housing sector was through expanding the duties and responsibilities of the Mass Housing Administration (hereafter TOKI) in 2003. TOKI, founded in 1984, aimed to prevent unplanned urbanization and the spread of informal settlements

by responding to the need for affordable and quality housing (TOKI 2020). During this time, its main responsibility was to provide financial credit for cooperatives and mass housing production. Between 1984 and 2002, it provided credit for the construction of around 950,000 houses and constructed 43,145 houses (Perouse 2013). Through TOKI, the state became involved in the housing market, but this involvement was minimal and mainly related to provide funding for construction (Serin 2016: 8).

In May 2003, Law No. 4966 enabled TOKI to provide funding not just for mass housing but also for the newly proposed 'renewal projects'. 'Renewal projects' were a precursor of the urban transformation projects. They targeted inner city squatter areas and aimed to transform them from "unhealthy decaying areas" to "modern living spaces". Following the passage of Law No. 5237 in 2004, for the first time *gecekondu* construction became a criminal offence to be punished with up to five years in prison (Kuyucu & Unsal 2010). This signaled the government's "zero tolerance approach" to informal housing and land tenure in cities. Indeed, in 2006 the then Prime Minister Erdogan referred to renewal projects as surgical tools that would remove the "tumours that have surrounded our cities" (cited in Kuyucu & Unsal 2010: 6). "*Gecekondu* demolitions, which had been rare in Istanbul, sped up afterwards; between 2004 and 2008, 11,543 units in Istanbul were demolished, a record high for any period" (Kuyucu & Unsal 2010: 6).

Law No. 4966 also allowed TOKI to establish companies in the housing sector and engage in partnerships with private firms and financial trusts. This meant that as a public institution TOKI would engage in profit-oriented projects under the so-called 'Revenue Sharing Model' (*Hasilat Paylasim Modeli*) (Law 2985, N/A). With this TOKI acquired a new entrepreneurial role as a facilitator of urban development. Its new entrepreneurial role was further advanced in May 2004. Law No. 5162, enabled TOKI to act not as a mere funder for profit seeking projects but also

become a developer for urban renewal and mass housing projects. Hereby moving beyond acting as a facilitator to development, TOKI started to actively pursue and reap profits generated by such projects, and took "the role of an active capitalist fully engaged in the real estate market, with the expressed intent of seeing a return on its investment" (Chapin 2002: 570).

Corresponding to the restructuring of TOKI, the roles and responsibilities of municipalities were also changed. Law No. 5216, enacted in July 2004, gave authority to district municipalities to designate urban renewal areas within their borders. Soon afterwards Law No. 5366, passed in May 2005, allowed district municipalities to carry out 'urban regeneration projects' in historical areas in partnership with TOKI. The law paved the way to gentrify inner city historical neighborhoods. Furthermore, Law No. 5393, passed in 2005, gave district municipalities authority to change the zoning plan and sell municipal lands to generate funds. Since then especially in Istanbul many of the district municipalities first increased developmental rights of their lands and then sold those lands to private developers (Karaman 2013).

Here it is important to emphasize that even though these legal changes provided relative autonomy to the district municipalities to zone and privatize municipal land, the overall authority in planning was gradually centralized. For example, before 2004, the authority to prepare the city level planning in Istanbul was under the control of the Greater Istanbul Municipality (IBB) and the district municipalities. With the passage of Law No. 4966, for the first time TOKI received special planning and expropriation powers. It was authorized to change zoning rules and prepare plans at any scale for the designated mass housing zones, taking over the rights of municipalities. Law No. 5162 also enabled TOKI to expropriate the buildings owned by real and legal entities. Furthermore, Law No. 5793, passed in July 2008, gave TOKI planning powers beyond mass housing zones, and expanded its authority to plan any land owned by the institution which again

before was under the authority of municipalities. In this way the law effectively curtailed the ability of any dissident district municipality to reject or alter TOKI's grand plans if they were to be built on TOKI owned land (Karaman 2013: 39).

In order to provide land for such projects, between 2002 and 2008 TOKI has been turned into a central bank for accumulation of public lands. In May 2003, Law No. 4966 permitted all the treasury land to be used by TOKI with the permission of the Prime Minister while authorizing TOKI to sell its land without any further permission. The following Law No. 5273, December 2004, passed all estate and authority that had belonged to the General Directorate of Land Office to TOKI, making TOKI the sole authority over 64.5 million square meters of public lands including those in the metropolitan areas (TOKI 2020a). As a result of the numerous legal reforms passed between 2002 and 2008, TOKI became the sole agency to regulate the zoning and the sale of almost all state-owned urban land (excluding military land). Finally, after the 2016 failed coup attempt and with the government's decision to move military facilities outside city centres, all existing urban lands belonging to the military were transferred to public institutions including TOKI. In Istanbul, military owned land equals almost 10 per cent of the city's land stock and it is one of main sources of green space though they are closed to the public (Ahval 2018). All these developments made TOKI crucial in introducing vast amounts of public land into the real estate market.

One final and crucial legal/institutional transformation of the national housing system came after the earthquake in 2011 in the city of Van, eastern part of Turkey. Following an executive order in June 2011, a new ministry, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, was established. The then head of the TOKI, Erdoğan Bayraktar, was promoted as the new Minister of Environment and Urbanization. The executive order gave both the ministry and TOKI

extraordinary powers.[43] The establishment of the ministry meant centralization of all urban planning under one roof. This ministry had authority to intervene in any zoning or planning decisions that had been taken by local municipalities which in practice made local authorities ineffective. Therefore, all the zoning and development decisions that would be taken by local authorities (metropolitan and district municipalities) were to be at the disposition of the new ministry.

Subsequently, Law No. 6306, passed in May 2012 and known by public as 'Urban Transformation Law' (*Kentsel Donusum Yasasi*), allowed the ministry to designate "risky areas" subject to the approval of the Council of Ministers. It also gained authority to plan "reserve areas" to develop new neighborhoods and transfer residents from the transformation areas if on-site housing cannot be provided (Gökşin et al. 2016). If a neighborhood or building was also assessed as risky (i.e. earthquake vulnerable), then the ministry and TOKI had rights to expropriate and demolish it, provided two-thirds of the residents accepted the project. With the passage of the law the government announced that more than 6 million unhealthy and risky buildings would be demolished and rebuilt (Hurriyet 2015a).

Rejuvenated by the institutional reforms, TOKI and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization became the most powerful players in Turkish real estate markets, launching the most aggressive housing program in the history of modern Turkey. Between 2002 and 2018, TOKI produced around 830,000 units, equaling 11 per cent of total housing developed during this period (Yeşilbağ 2019: 13). This new understanding of state-led urbanism based on provision of quality and affordable housing, is portrayed by the party as their main mechanism to overcome past

[43] The law also transferred the authority over 'naturally protected areas' to the new ministry.

inequalities implemented by the prior elitist regimes. At the "demolition" ceremony in Sarigol neighborhood, for example, Erdogan stated that:

> Here we witness history together. We are implementing a transformation that none of the prior governments could neither dream nor achieve. While we demolish [informal settlements], we also demolish an outdated mentality. A mentality that was detached from the nation and used to look down on its people… We have a new understanding of urbanization. We cannot let our beloved nation to live in rundown buildings which are not properly isolated, whose roofs are made of tin, doors and windows are falling apart. Those places are not good enough for my Ayse sister, Hasan brother or our little children (Hurriyet 2013c).

The government's ability to implement these projects is tied to Turkey's rising power as a global force and its tangible benefits for ordinary citizens. As Erdogan continued to his speech:

> Cities, houses, living spaces that we plan to build will be the core of Turkey's rising future. Turkey cannot have a place in the globalized world if its housing stock is dilapidated and its architecture does not provide people with a peace of mind. While Turkey is growing and becoming a regional and global power, we cannot leave our citizens behind to live in unhealthy buildings (Hurriyet 2013c).

In building and housing the new Turkey, TOKI and the ministry of Environment and Urbanization follow three distinct models (see Table 5.1). First, on its own peripheral lands TOKI builds mass housing units which are sold at below market prices to citizens with lower income levels.[44] In order to assist citizens in buying these units, TOKI also provides state-subsidized mortgage paying schemes in cooperation with the state banks (TOKI 2006). In this sense, TOKI advertises its projects as follows: "Buying a house via mortgage will be like paying rent monthly!" (TOKI 2020b). Since there is usually more demand than supply, eligible candidates are chosen through a lottery system where winners earn the right to buy a TOKI unit. The head of TOKI,

[44] TOKI calls these mass housing units as "social housing" since the projects are non-profit in nature and state-subsidized mortgage paying schemes are offered to potential buyers. However, as the system sells dwelling units to residents in contrast to typical social housing models of providing rental units at affordable rates, I refer to this system as mass housing.

Turan, claimed in 2013 that 5.5 to 6 million people will be living in mass produced TOKI housing by 2023 (TOKI 2020b).

Second model is urban transformation projects (UTPs). In this model usually through joint protocols TOKI and the district municipalities designate "urban transformation areas" to be approved by the ministry and the Council of Ministers in "derelict", "obsolescent" and "risky" parts of cities (TOKI 2020a). Following the signing of a protocol with the local government, TOKI either develops a new project to demolish and rebuild the area or contracts it to private developers (although few, local governments have implemented their urban regeneration projects through the private sector). Once the project is completed each right holder, TOKI, the local government, the homeowners, and the developers are expected to receive their respective shares. Depending on negotiations with TOKI and municipalities, the prior residents are either moved to social housing units built by TOKI on the periphery or expected pay rent gap difference and buy the new units (TOKI 2020a).

The final arrangement is the revenue sharing model geared towards production of luxurious housing in cooperation with the Emlak Konut REIT. As explained in the previous chapter, in this model, TOKI provides land for developers below market prices and developers meet all the investment costs. Gaining land at no cost, getting the needed legal permissions in the shortest term under TOKI's public guarantee, the shareholder firms have the advantage of high marketing and sales capabilities (Celik et al. 2014). By 2014 Emlak Konut REIT had developed 43 branded housing projects in Istanbul alone (TOKI 2016a). The profit driven nature of the revenue sharing model is legitimized as means to provide necessary funds for construction of mass housing units.

TOKI claims the funds raised by these developments are invested in mass housing construction.[45] Therefore, revenue sharing model is often referred as "the Robin Hood Model", taking money from the rich to invest in for the poor (Yenisafak 2005). During the 'A Home for Each Family Fair' (*Her Aileye Bir Ev Fuari*) in 2005 the AKP general secretariat Idris Naim Sahin stated:

> In order to provide for those who are in need and to transfer funds into lower income groups' projects, we inevitably need to produce some luxurious housing projects. This is natural. However, the ultimate goal [of TOKI] is to address housing demands of the lower middle- and lower-income groups (Yenisafak 2005).

This statement explains clearly that the government frames commodification of public lands as a precondition to carry out its responsibility for housing citizens. According to this rationale, unless land is parceled, commodified, and sold to developers for profit-oriented projects construction, the state cannot provide affordable housing. As emphasized by the vice president of TOKI in 2005 in the following terms:

> In order to finance housing for the lower income groups… We increased TOKI's land stock through various legal adjustments. We are working hard to utilize these lands in the best possible way. Thanks to the revenue sharing model we are turning our valuable lands into money and investing this money into [TOKI's] budget (Haber7 2005).

Table 5.1 Housing Models Produced under TOKI and Their Shares, 2002-2018

Model	Number of Completed Units	Share in Total (%)
Mass Housing	554,827	69.22
Urban Transformation	143,021	17.24
Revenue Sharing	112,265	13.54
Total	829,419	100

Source: Mass Housing Administration (TOKI 2018)

[45] However due to the non-transparency of TOKI's budget management, it is not possible to confirm how profits from UTPs are spent (Guney 2019).

Such a radical shift in the governance of urban land and housing markets in Turkey has been interpreted in the academic literature as a move from a populist mode of governance to a neoliberal one due to privatization of state-owned lands (Kuyucu & Unsal 2010; Serin 2016). As this section explored, however, the official circles, frame the projects as the proof of the rising power of the Turkish nation and provision of proper and affordable housing to its citizens. So how do these meta-narratives resonate in neighborhoods and homes? The next section explores this question by looking at different neighborhoods which have been put under the urban transformation model.

5.3. Urban Transformation Projects as a Citizenship Right

This section explores everyday politics when a neighborhood is declared as an urban transformation zone, based on the data derived from the content analysis and the field work. For an easier grasp of the section, Figure 3 illustrates the location of neighborhoods that are mentioned in the section and their respective districts.

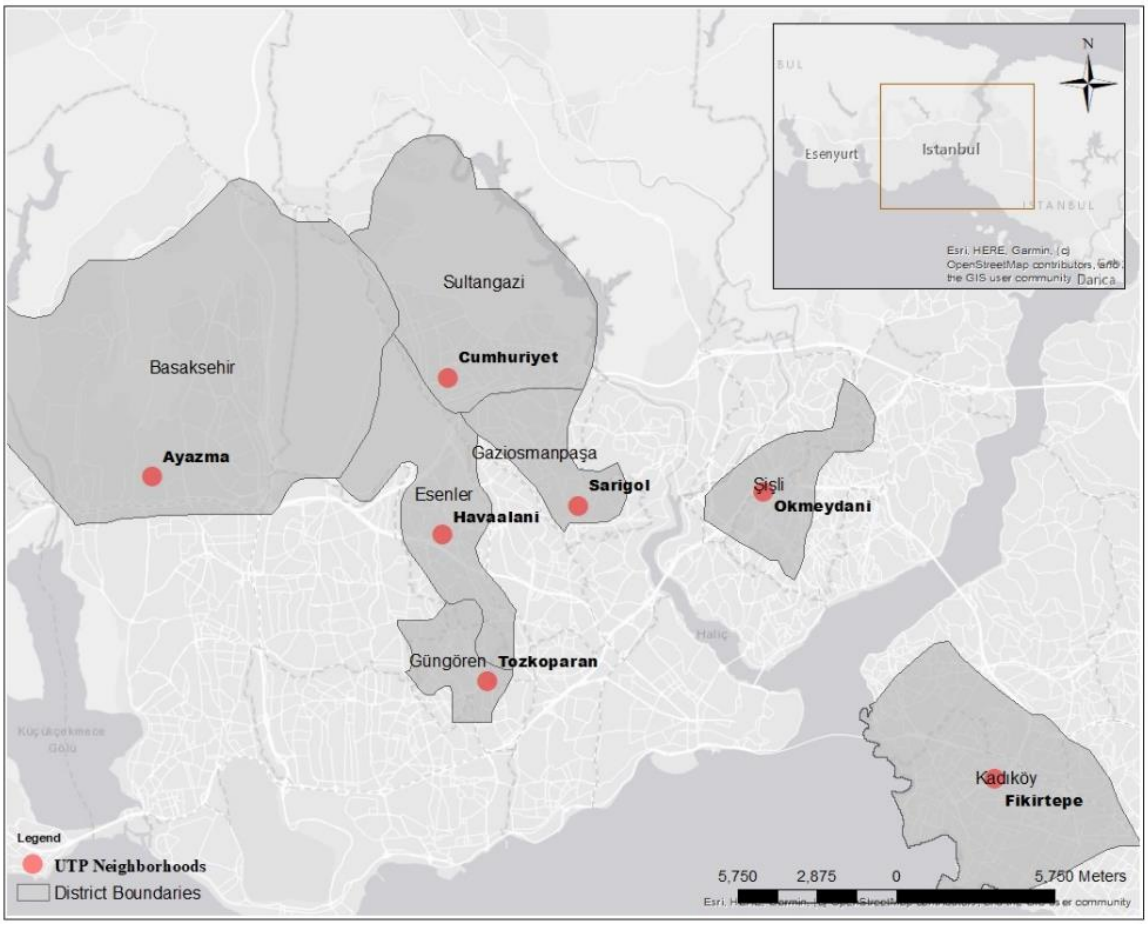

Figure 5.2 Location Map of the UTP Neighborhoods and District Boundaries[46]

(Drawn by author)

As described in chapter 3, one of the most crucial shortcomings of the Turkish state has been its inability to provide affordable and decent housing to its citizens. As a result, Istanbul grew like an oil stain via informal expansion without central planning and proper infrastructure (Tekeli 2013: 154). A significant portion of the existing housing stock is dilapidated and needs upgrading. In this context many of the participants did not hide their initial anticipation and aspiration in their support of initiatives to improve their neighborhoods and housing conditions.

[46] Note that Ayazma and Havaalani neighborhoods are not included among the field sites; however, since they are mentioned in the section, I also added them to the map for better visualization.

> We were overjoyed when we first heard about the project. We thought we would move into modern apartment units. (Sarigol, Field Notes, June 24, 2016)

> Urban transformation is a good thing and needs to be done, because there should be a way for the state to transform its cities by using its own public resources. People need to live in a more comfortable and joyful city. For example, if we had elevators in our apartments, it would be great for elderly people who live in upper floors. (Cumhuriyet, Interview 8, July 2016)

> There was no plan when our neighborhood was built… The roads are narrow; the infrastructure is not sufficient; there is not enough communal facilities… The housing stock is dilapidated; so, it makes sense that there will be a renewal project. (Fikirtepe, Interview 13, July 2017)

These statements clearly explain the importance of living in upgraded housing units for most of the residents.[47] Once a neighborhood is designated as an urban transformation project area, the relevant district municipality start to work with residents on the project. The job of the district mayors is literally to sell the projects in the best way and convince residents into signing papers to sell their units to TOKI or developers.[48] Thus, their first step is to open a "fancy" urban transformation office in the neighborhood and hold information sessions to which the mayor attends in person (see Figures 5.3 and 5.4). At this initial phase, many of the residents are usually confused and not sure how to proceed further. A large majority of them attend these sessions to be informed. These sessions often portray UTPs as golden tickets for improving residential neighborhoods and housing conditions. During one of session in the Sarigol neighborhood, for example, the district mayor of Gaziosmanpasa promoted the project as:

> We are doing urban transformation for our citizens. We present an opportunity for you. We are working hard, so that you can live in the best and most comfortable

[47] Also, not in every neighborhood, but in those such as Fikirtepe which are closer to the earthquake zone, people worry about earthquake and are suspicious of strength and resilience of their buildings. One interviewer from Fikirtepe cited earthquake danger as one of the reasons why they gladly accepted the project in their neighborhood. However, the concern about earthquakes does not seem to dominate the minds of people, probably also because many of the urban transformation projects are not declared on earthquake zones as explored below.

[48] Indeed, the Minister of Urbanization and Environment, Mehmet Ozhaseki stated in 2017 that the first and foremost of the duty of the district municipalities should be to transform the housing stock in their neighborhoods (Hurriyet 2017e).

> way. We are all under your order… If you ask what the benefit of this project is for public; it is the fact that without spending one penny from our pockets, we are transforming and renovating every aspect of our district. From schools to mosques, from electrical infrastructure to its roads… The only benefit of this project is for our residents (Hurriyet 2015b).

As it can be deduced from this quote, the projects are framed as the start of a new life for citizens, offering full packages of urban lifestyle from housing, social services and to recreational facilities without "spending a penny". During these meetings mayors often use a personal language and they show themselves as the assurance for the projects. For example, the district mayor of Sultangazi for Cumhuriyet neighborhood told residents that:

> I closely followed up with everything to check whether the project would bring any cost to my citizens. No, it will not. We will give one [unit] and take one [unit]. Friends this my promise… Your second concern: will we stay in our neighborhood? Yes, you will stay in the neighborhood. You are not going anywhere. I do not know who would buy the extra units, but we are not sending you anywhere. You will reside here in your new units (Hurriyet 2015b).

Speaking to an elected official and getting their questions answered is not an everyday experience for many of the Turkish citizens. Seeing a real politician in the flesh and talking face to face instills trusts into the relationship. As a resident from Cumhuriyet neighborhood explained:

> First people in the neighborhood did not understand what was really happening. With the first meeting of municipality, people thought they would get new houses… Because people trust whom they elect. They saw the mayor's promises as an assurance (Interview 7, July 2016).

Here we see a parallel between trusting the president Erdogan as the guarantee to get 'a great deal' on mega projects and district mayors' assurances that UTPs would be a good deal for residents. If Erdogan as the leader of the country brings prosperity and reputation to the Turkish nation, then under his leadership district mayors are expected to bring this prosperity's tangible benefits to citizens. Whether that benefit is to live in 'modern apartment buildings with elevators' or 'in a

neighborhood with proper services', it certainly connects to residents' desire to have dignified life and become full-fledged citizens of Turkey.

Figure 5.3 The UTP office in Tozkoparan Neighborhood

(Photo by author, June 2016)

Figure 5.4 The view of the UTP office from the side street

(Photo by author, June 2016)

The defense of the projects, however, goes beyond merely underlining their physical and social benefits. The content analysis of the newspaper *Hurriyet* reveals that one of the most cited aspects of UTPs are how they add economic and monetary value to neighborhoods and houses. The news between 2012 and 2017 often advertised the newly declared earthquake zones as the rising districts of Istanbul (Hurriyet 2013d). They claimed that housing prices in transformation areas are expected to increase in value almost by 50 per cent and in 5 years housing prices in Istanbul are expected to compete with the world's metropolises (Hurriyet 2013e). In such a context, investment in the housing sector is framed to be the safest (Hurriyet 2013f) and most profitable investment method for ordinary people (Hurriyet 2013g). 'Women' are advised to not keep their savings and gold 'under their pillow' but use them to buy housing units 'as if they pay rent' (Hurriyet 2010b). It is also important to note that investment partnerships and developers are among the top groups who advertise in such newspapers.

In this context, the state officials underline how the projects would increase the real estate values in the respective neighborhood, encouraging residents to look at the projects as 'investment opportunities'. As the then mayor of Gaziosmanpasa stated at the time:

> If we sold these houses in the market, one single unit would cost between 250 to 300 thousand Turkish liras. But we are giving them for 160 thousand TRY to the rightful owners. So, we are just selling them for what they cost to us and leave the rent gap to the citizens' pocket. If the citizen would like to sell their new unit, they can. If they would like to stay, they stay in their renovated neighborhood (Hurriyet 2012g).

By framing UTPs as investment opportunities the officials maintain that if citizens are not content with the project's final outcome, they can sell their units and capitalize on the rent gap. This rationale is also used to explain displacement of certain residents from the original neighborhoods. In 2010, the head of TOKI, Bayraktar commented that:

> Some citizens choose to sell their new units and move somewhere else… Citizens, in this sense, use urban transformation as a means of accumulating and saving money. They find a more fetching investment somewhere else and move their savings there. They think of [the project] as a moneybox because we provide them with immediate cash which makes selling the house alluring (Hurriyet 2010c).

As discussed in the next section, Bayraktar's statement is partially a cover up story to legitimize displacement led by UTPs. However, it also partially reflects how some citizens perceive the projects as opportunities to reap of benefits from revalorized built environment as such anticipation and expectations on the side of the residents surfaced during the field work.

> When they will give us the new units, we will have to pay extremely high maintenance fees. We cannot pay that. Also, the environment will be different. There will be doctors and lawyers who will live there. We would not feel comfortable with them. So, if we can, we plan to sell the upgraded unit and buy two other houses somewhere else. One for winter and one for summer… We knew that we could not reside in those new units from the very beginning (Fikirtepe, Interview 14, July 2017).

> This is a one-time opportunity… I do not like high rise developments, but I can sell the new unit and move outside of Istanbul to finally retire (Okmeydani, Field notes, July 15, 2016).

> People thought they would make money from this… They did not really care about the details of the project because they thought they can sell their unit anyway and capitalize on the rent gap (Housing Activist, Interview 2, May 2016).

As these quotes illustrate some residents perceive UTPs mainly in terms of their exchange value and see them as means to raise their general living standards by relocating to more affordable places. Thus, while the first layer the depiction of UTPs relates to their tangible benefits, such as healthier and safer housing conditions, the second layer is associated with the state's redistribution of urban rent. The then Minister of Urbanization and Environment, Mehmet Ozhaseki defended the rent-oriented nature of UTPs by arguing "without 'rent' there would be no life. The key thing is to distribute this rent in a just way" (Hurriyet 2016e). The role of the state, in this case, is shifted from providing housing as a use-value to transforming houses into assets with higher exchange

values. Indeed, even though people may be displaced, it is claimed that they can still use their units as investments. Thus, the social contract between state and citizens is reconfigured where the duty of the state to provide housing as a commodity with exchange value is deemed more important than providing it as a right with use value.

Overall, as the Turkish nation becomes a regional and global power, UTPs serve as tools to bring tangible benefits of that growth by upgrading the nation's housing stock and providing citizens with an increased share in the urban rent. The projects are portrayed as an opportunity to foster a new social contract based on the enactment of a universal elevation of living standards through a state-sponsored housing and neighborhood development Thus they are ultimately connected to citizens' aspirations to become full-fledged citizens of a prosperous nation. However, such promised rights also come with attached duties as the next section explores.

5.4. Urban Transformation Project as a Citizenship Duty

This section argues that the government also imposes UTPs on public as a citizenship duty. Citizens are expected to dutifully participate in the UTP schemes in order to prepare Turkish housing stock for an earthquake threat, to contribute to national economy and to prove their assimilation to the rest of the corpus body. The section explores these dynamics in respective order. The ruling party employed earthquake focused "disaster risk discourse" to justify the ongoing implementation of the projects. As explored earlier "the Law of Transformation of Areas under the Disaster Risks no. 6306" was passed in May 2012. Reminding the devastative impact of Marmara earthquake in 1999 to the public, the officials began to emphasize the urgent need to rebuild cities, especially Istanbul earthquake resistant. In this context, the urban transformation process took a national campaign character where citizens were expected to show national solidarity and make sacrifices if necessary, to ease the state's efforts to rebuild the country. The

then governor of Istanbul, Avni Mutlu, launched the "get moving" (harekete gec) campaign to raise public awareness about the city's earthquake vulnerability and the importance of UTPs. As he maintained at the launch of the campaign:

> This [disaster] law is vital… I cannot even say how horrible it would be if Istanbul was hit by a significant earthquake as experts predict. The loss of lives and infrastructure… We are launching a big campaign to raise awareness for earthquake disaster and invite Istanbulites to join us… We are a big family of 14 million living in Istanbul. Each member of this family has *responsibilities* (Hurriyet 2012f).

The threat of an earthquake to Istanbul is not just portrayed as a danger to the lives and safety of individual households as in the quote above, but a threat to the very existence of the fatherland and even the sovereignty of Turkey. Both the district mayors and the officials of the central government have often framed urban transformation as a fatherland issue (*vatan meselesi*) (Emlak 2013). In 2015, the then minister of Urbanization and Environment Ozhaseki who expressed his discontent with the slow rate of urban transformation claimed that if Istanbul underwent a big earthquake before the transformation of the city is complete, Turkey's national sovereignty would be in danger. It has been further maintained that the urban transformation is as important as the struggle against terrorism (AA 2019). Thus, the public service broadcastings often called for a massive mobilization, 'hand in hand against earthquakes' (*depreme karsi elele*) and reminded that it is citizens' duty to take responsibility. On this account the citizens are expected take full responsibility for transforming their housing units. As such the Urbanization and Environment Ministry even promoted and pushed for implementation of "Demolish and Build It Yourself Model". Through this model citizens are encouraged to take initiative, apply for necessary permits, and then demolish and rebuild their own units with cheap credits provided by the Ministry itself (Hurriyet 2017f). Had the citizens fail to fulfill their duty to transform their

houses and/or refuse to participate in the ongoing projects, the state would carry out this duty for them and enforce the transformation. Erdogan stated that:

> Now, we will come and—if necessary—we will demolish houses. Do we have the authority to do so? Yes, we do! We have done the legal regulations accordingly. Therefore, I call out to my whole nation 'make our job easier'. We will not leave you out in the streets (Sabah 2012).

As a result, by the end of 2016, 1300 hectare of land was been declared as risky areas in Istabul alone Hurriyet 2016f).

Another way UTPs have been framed as citizenship duty is through their alleged contribution to national economy. The real estate sector is portrayed to be "the way out of an economic crisis" (Hurriyet 2008a). Erdogan had often claimed that if TOKI had not existed, Turkey would have been hit by the global mortgage crisis (Milliyet 2008). The construction sector is praised to be "almost 100 per cent native" and seen as the main locomotive of Turkey's economic growth. It is deemed to be crucial whether in form of "creating jobs for more than 250,000 people" or "bringing in 40 billion dollars' worth economic activity to the country" (Milliyet 2008). Thus, the ministry of Urbanization and Environment commented that:

> Urban transformation process is useful. It has an incredible contribution to the economy and will bring an income of 40 to 50 billion dollar. It stimulates 250 other side sectors which are all local and native. Millions of people will be employed in these projects (Sozcu 2017).

This depiction of construction sector as a remedy to national problems was especially visible after the 2016 coup failed coup attempt. In solidarity with the nation" and to "show their faith in Turkey's future", real estate developers launched promotional campaigns to reduce housing prices. Under the slogan of "Real Estate United, Stronger Turkey" (*Gayrimenkulde Guc Birligi Daha Guclu Turkiye*), 39 large scale developers joined the campaign and "sacrificed in

their profits" in order "to contribute to the national economy and reinforce the spirit of unity and solidarity" (Emlakta 2016). As the leader of the real estate association stated:

> After the traitors' coup attempt on July 15, we launched our biggest campaign ever. Our nation was still in the streets defending the country and worried about their future… If we [construction sector] move, our country moves. If we stop, our country stops. 30 per cent of industry in Turkey works thanks to us. So, we made sacrifices [reducing housing prices] (Hurriyet 2017g).

This strong discursive parallel between production of anxieties regarding 'the future of the nation' and 'the future of urban land' is underlined especially for ethnic neighborhoods targeted by UTPs, The neighborhoods where the majority of residents belong to minority groups such as Kurds or Roma people (Ayazma and Sarigol among others) are often portrayed as spaces of criminality and urban decay (Lovering & Turkmen 2011; Tansel 2019; Uysal 2012 among others), jeopardizing the nation's security and development goals. The neighborhood of Sarigol, for example, with its Roma population is often depicted as home to 'criminals', drug dealers and prostitutes by the mainstream media and was labelled as the 'non-enterable' neighborhood by the mayor when the project was launched (Hurriyet 2012g). Such stigmatization creates resentment in local populations, reminding them that they are not a part of "the imagined corporatist body of society" (Çavuşoğlu & Struzt 2014: 140). As a resident from the neighborhood explained:

> It is not fair that they call here as the non-enterable neighborhood. When TOKI and municipality officials came, no one treated them badly. People invited them into their homes and offered tea. Then when they launched the project, they claimed the neighborhood was dangerous… We have been stigmatized a lot because we are Romani citizens (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

While reminding ethnic minorities of their unfitness for the imagined corporatist body of society, UTPs are simultaneously portrayed as opportunities for them to finally shed their implicit *otherness* and assimilate into Turkish society by living in a proper house and having a proper job (Çavuşoğlu & Struzt 2014: 140). It is no coincidence in this sense that TOKI's housing projects

were first introduced in 2010 during the government's 'Roma initiative'.[49] In front of a crowd that included 12,000 Roma at the Abdi Ipekci Sports Hall in Istanbul, the then prime minister Erdogan apologized to the community for the discriminatory acts they had faced and vowed to tackle their treatment as second-class citizens. He stated his wish not to see Roma people living in "tents and self-built dwellings" but "in modern units as normal citizens" (T24 2010). Thus, targeting Roma neighborhoods for transformation projects became the main tenet of ensuring their rights as Turkish citizens were properly observed and respected. In conjunction with the ongoing stigmatization, such a patronizing and condescending approach creates further resentment in such communities. For example, when I went to conduct my first field trip in the neighborhood of Sarigol, the resident participants told me upfront that they were not going to answer questions regarding their 'lifestyle' (i.e. how often they take showers, if their houses have inbuilt toilets etc.), claiming that they been implicitly insulted by TOKI and municipality officials with such questions.[50]

> We are Muslims as well. We always said we are Turkish citizens… but when officials and journalists came to talk to us about the transformation process, they always ask inappropriate questions about our lifestyles…implicitly look down on us, just because we are Roma people (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

If dutiful participation in the projects is required of ethnic minorities to assimilate into the imagined corporatist body of society, refusing to do so is seen as a proof of their unfitness and even threat to the national body. Labelling citizens as 'illegal groups' and 'terrorists' when they oppose to the projects has been prominent in the official discourse especially for Alevi and Kurdish

[49] The goal of the initiative was to recognize the discriminatory acts faced by Roma population in Turkey and end their treatment as second-class citizens.

[50] A similar process took place in the Ayazma neighborhood whose original population mostly consisted of Kurdish migrants. The municipality launched training courses, targeted for Kurdish residents titled "How to Live in an Apartment Building". The training was "publicized as a civilization project" by the municipality (Baysal 2014).

neighborhoods. As such the state launched many of its initial UTPs in informal Alevi and Kurdish neighborhoods such as Ayazma and did not hesitate to call the dissident residents as "illegal groups" who wanted to block the transformation as a whole. In the words of the then ministry of Environment and Urbanization, Erdogan Bayraktar (2012):

> There are people who want to block the urban transformation process. There are canny people, there are provocateurs. There are illegal groups who want ghettoization of urban transformation areas [to use as their crime base]. They want to block the transformation process (Hurriyet 2012h).
>
> According to our point of view *gecekondu* is behind terrorism. The main problems of our country are first terrorism, second the budget deficit and then irregular urbanization (Emlak 2007).

In claiming that *gecekondu* is behind terrorism and terrorist organizations block the transformation process, Erdogan Bayraktar makes an implicit correlation between Kurdish inhabitants and PKK organization in the public mind and legitimizes possible state intervention into minority neighborhoods (Baysal 2014). Such criminalization of dissent makes it difficult especially for racialized citizens to organize against the projects, and gives the authorities added leverage to implement the projects (Lowering & Turkmen 2011) As put into words of by a Kurdish resident in the Ayazma neighborhood during the transformation project:

> Our fear, as the media films us and broadcast the situation, is that if the municipality comes tomorrow, or the day after tomorrow with machine guns, they will say 'They were terrorists, they were PKK'. How many times have they already come in, raided us, thrown us out? And the media only report that 'They are Kurdish'. We are living with this fear (From TV documentary Peril En La Demure, dir. Derya Ozel, Istanbul 2008 cited in Lovering & Turkun 2011: 84).

To sum up, from the Turkish state's perspective minority neighborhoods are criminal and anti-social places that pose a threat to the city and its civilized residents. Thus, they need to be redeveloped via UTPs to be "guarantee the safety and well-being of the city" (Baysal 2014: 89). This puts an extra duty on racialized citizens shoulders to prove their worthiness and be equals to

Turkish – Sunni Muslim citizens. For them to participate in the transformation projects is a double citizenship duty: first to finally assimilate into Turkish society and become civilized and second to prove that they are not among those 'bad Kurds' or 'bad Alevis' who pose a threat to national unity and security.

The state utilizes UTPs as a test to distinguish between its good and bad citizens. The good citizens are expected to eagerly participate in the transformation process and responsibly prepare Turkish housing stock for an earthquake threat, to contribute to national economy and to prove their assimilation to the rest of the corpus body. In return they are expected to enjoy their right to live in modern housing conditions and take their share from the rising prosperity. Those who refuse to do so, also refuse "the offer to become members of moral community" (Rose, 2000: 1407). Thus, they lose their legitimacy to be political subjects. In the words of Rose (2000: 1407) "citizenship becomes conditional on conduct" and participation in the projects. However, as the next section explores even confirming to the projects and eagerly participating in urban transformation does not guarantee a safe spot under the good and rewarded citizens category.

5.5. Uneven Spaces of Exclusion and Inclusion of UTPs

This section explores how the rentier understanding of citizenship generates a differentiated, and hierarchical space-time (Goswavi 2014: 40). To do so, it first looks at how the tenants are excluded from the category of "right holders". Second it assesses how the "right holders" themselves are deceived during the process and socio-economically marginalized. Overall I argue that despite the state's claims to build a coherent social contract centred around UTPs by universally elevating citizens' living standards and providing access to material enrichment, their implementation actively generates new forms of socio-spatial inequalities and sharpen the lived unevenness of everyday life.

Most of UTPs only recognize residents who already possess some kind of ownership rights (official title deeds or documents of use rights) as 'right holders'. Thus, most tenants in the targeted neighborhoods have no right to participate in the projects and often "face direct eviction" (Karaman 2014: 297). Only in some cases, depending on the negotiations between TOKI/municipality and residents, the tenants may be entitled to certain rights to compensate for their displacement, such as the right to buy a mass housing unit.[51] Otherwise under the law No. 6306 they are only compensated for their moving costs (Hardal 2014). Thus, the state's promise to deliver collective prosperity often "applies to those who already enjoyed secure tenures via the possession of deeds or use rights, while tenants who lacked such legal claims are further pushed to a perpetual state of 'rental housing insecurity' (Tansel 2019: 10-11). In the words of one of the housing activists:

> The projects give no rights to tenants…There is no space for consideration of use value in the city… We tried to work with tenants in the neighborhoods such as Ayazma. These were mostly internally displaced Kurds who could pay little in terms of rent. With these projects they were displaced for a second time… and were pushed to find housing away from the city while rents were skyrocketing (Interview 4, June 2016).

In contrast to tenants, informal residents who do not have official title deeds, but have some form of legal documents such as *tapu tahsis belgesi* are designated as right holders.[52] However, the state officials often exploit the legal ambiguity in title deeds, accusing residents to be "occupiers" and threatening to bulldoze their houses if they do not fully agree to the projects.

> The municipality calls residents to talk face to face in their offices. People go and then they tell them their dwelling is illegal, you do not have a formal title deed etc. People get scared and think that if they do not sign the contracts right away then their house would be taken away. They think if I sign the contract now at least I

[51] See the case of Tarlabasi neighborhood (Kuyucu & Unsal 2010). However, this is not a common practice.
[52] Tapu tahsis belgesi is "obtained in the 1980s with amnesty acts that successive governments had passed" and "provide the owners with 'de facto use right' and some legality" (Kuyucu & Unsal 2010: 8)

> would get some debris price. They involuntarily sell their land to TOKI (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).
>
> I asked them [the municipality]: How could pay for the new unit's installments? They responded that I have been living on the state's land for years and I was an occupier (*isgalci*) (Sarigol, Bianet 2013).
>
> They showed me a bulldozer and told that it would take my home away. Out of fear I sold my house [to municipality] (Sarigol, Bianet 2013).

As it can be understood from the quotes, despite being right holders with de facto use rights informal residents are accused of being occupants, threatened and are forced to sell their houses to TOKI and/or municipality. As such the state exploits the legal ambiguity in title deeds and accelerates the residents' dispossession (for similar cases see Uysal 2012, Lelandais 2014, Lovering and Turkmen 2011 among others). Moreover, once they sell their houses to TOKI/municipality many residents are unable to pay the installments imposed by the project to buy the new units in their original neighborhoods (Interview 10, July 2016). Many of them end up "abrogating their resettlement rights and selling their 'entitlement' to the new TOKI properties to third parties" (Tansel 2018: 10). As such during the period of my field work in Sarigol neighborhood, most of the newly built units were up for sale and there were only a handful of the original residents who continued to reside in the neighborhood (Interview 6, June 2016). Most of the original residents were forced to sell their homes at rates below the market price to the municipality and leave the neighborhood, along with tenants who had no property rights. Thus, by excluding tenants and marginalizing informal settlers, the projects leads to involuntary displacement of residents and reproduces the uneven patterns in the city through class lines.

It is important to highlight that racially marginalized residents experience this dispossession and involuntary displacement more acutely. Historically racialized citizens often find themselves at the lowest rank in the urban social hierarchy (Keyder, 2005) and thus

disproportionately make up tenant and informal settlement populations. Consequently, it is no coincidence that the tenants who were evicted in Ayazma were internally displaced Kurdish migrants while Sarigol neighborhood, one of the first transformation sites, is populated by Roma people. Second due to the entrenched racial prejudices in Turkish society, once displaced it is more difficult for ethnic and religious minorities to find new neighborhoods with supportive networks that act as a buffer zone between them and the society.

> We are not the same as other neighborhoods… For us having close ties with neighbors is crucial… We are all together here and we live our Roma traditions and culture without any outside prejudices… Go somewhere else and people will not want to rent their house to you because you are Roma. Here the shopkeeper is Roma, the butcher is Roma, the coffee house owner is Roma. Thus, we can live here together without any prejudices (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

Thus, the displacement and dispossession affect minority groups deeper since their solidarity bonds and neighbor relations which are vital mechanisms for their survival are dissolved after the relocation (see Bartu Candan-Kolluoğlu 2008; Baysal 2014).

If the UTPs create new forms of new forms of socio-spatial inequality by excluding tenants and informal settlers, many homeowners who dream of capturing their share from rising urban rents gradually discover that signing contracts with TOKI and municipality does not secure a 'good deal'. Officials promise "one to one deal" to most of the residents but these promises are often not realistic and contradict TOKI's actual practices. For example, in the Tozkoparan neighborhood where most of the existing units are around 45 square meters, TOKI verbally committed to provide one to one deal to the residents without demanding any extra cost. However, as my interviewee from the neighborhood pointed out as a rule TOKI does not develop units smaller than 60 square meters. When there is a size difference between the old and newly built units, TOKI requires the right holder is either to pay for the difference or relocate to a mass housing unit at periphery. Thus,

despite the given promises by the officials, many of these promises are unrealistic and contradicts the actual practices of TOKI. In the words of the resident:

> People think whatever the municipal officials or TOKI officials say is true… The last July TOKI came here and had a public meeting with the residents. There they claimed that the residents will receive one to one deal and they would not pay anything extra.[53] For our neighborhood this is not even possible as many units are 45 square meters and as a principle TOKI does not manufacture that small apartments. It will manufacture 60 to 70 square meters units and then ask the difference m2 in cash from us. It will both take our land and make us financially indebted (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

Such discrepancies in the officials' discourse are often covered under ambiguous and incomplete project plans that are presented to residents. The laws No. 4964 (2003) and Law No. 6111 (2011) exempted TOKI from many rules and restrictions of the procurement law that applies to the tendering processes of private companies. Unlike private companies, TOKI can initiate its housing projects "without providing project details, without having environmental impact assessments, without having the tenure, expropriation, or procurement of the land, and without preparation of development plans and zoning" (Doğru 2016: 216). Thus, while the residents are verbally promised many things by the district mayors and TOKI officials, in practice, most of them do not know project details when they sign the contracts.

> They came here and opened a fancy urban transformation office, but the office has nothing regarding the actual project. No plans, no sample contracts… It only had a plastic model of the future neighborhood (Cumhuriyet, Interview 9, July 2016).

> People had such big expectations… Newspapers headlines claimed that Fikirtepe residents would be rich… But in reality, we saw no official plan, no contracts regarding our rights in the projects… Everything depended on sayings and promises (Fikirtepe, Interview 12, June 2017).

> No one provided us with satisfying information about the projects. I went to the urban transformation office to inquire about the project and they scolded me

[53] 'One to one deal' means that in the end of the neighborhood transformation, the right holder shall receive the exact same size unit as their previous one only rebuilt and updated. For 100 m2, 100 m2 for 50 m2 50m2 and so on.

> claiming my mind would not grasp the project details (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

As it can be understood from the quotes, the legal exceptions granted to TOKI are used by the officials to institutionally promote uncertainty and ambiguity in the residents minds, pushing them to rely on interpersonal relations and promises. Those who demand more official information are scolded and intimated by the officials either by being forced to officially identify themselves to the municipality and fill forms before they can ask any questions (Interview 5, June 2016) or being told that their mind could not grasp the scope of this transformation.

In this uncertain and secretive atmosphere many residents are pushed to sign contracts without really understanding their conditions. Indeed, it is not only the project plans which are uncompleted and open-ended but so are the contracts signed between the residents and TOKI. In the case of Cumhuriyet neighborhood, for example, the residents were sent a contract where the square size of their post-transformation units were left blank while they were asked to unconditionally transfer their title deeds to TOKI (Interview 7, July 2016). In Tozkoparan neighborhood in a small footnote it was noted that the municipality could change the contract conditions unilaterally and the residents do not have a right to oppose these changes (Interview 5, June 2016). In other words, even though district mayors personally promise one to one deal to the residents and encourage them to sign the papers, the contracts do not protect the rights of the residents at all. In the words of an interviewee "the contracts do not even have the value of a tissue paper" (Interview 8, July 2016). Thus, the residents are pushed to sign contracts without knowing the size, floor number or even the type of unit they would acquire after the transformation.

> They never show you the project; just make people keep signing contracts. You sign the contract and you do not really know what will happen to your unit till the actual construction begins (Fikirtepe, Interview 12, June 2017).

As a result, the residents who sign the contracts voluntarily or non-voluntarily find themselves in a difficult situation as they slowly realize that their dreams to have upgraded units and increased assets are far from being realized. In most of the cases, after TOKI secures the signatures of the two thirds of a neighborhood and become authorized to expropriate the rest of the housing units, the conditions of the initial contracts are changed in favor of the TOKI and developers. Usually the development rights are increased to provide more units for the developer, while the residents are prevented from benefiting these changes since their initial contracts forbid them to make claims in the increased rent once the contracts are signed. Instead they often find that the size of their units is decreased, and they are indebted further to acquire their units.

> When the then prime minister (Erdogan) came here to launch the urban transformation process, what did he say? He showed with his hand all our houses and said the new renovated ones would be only at the height of basement plus four floors. Now look at those ugly 17 stories buildings they erected… the units are like coffins (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

> Look at the people in the Havaalani neighborhood.[54] They trusted the officials and happily signed those vague contracts, thinking they would get at least modern and upgraded units. Once the deal was done, the ban on development rights on the area was lifted and TOKI built 17 stories ugly buildings, all for the benefit of the developer. The size of the rightful owners' units was significantly reduced. Now the people in the neighborhood are crying and damning the municipality (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

> We went to land registry office in 2015 to get our joint tenure while our building was still under construction. That is when we found out that the size of our unit was reduced (Fikirtepe, Interview 14, July 2017).

> People who received their units are not happy. Why? Because the developer had told them I would build you a 3 + 1 unit. When people think of a 3 + 1 unit, it is usually around or over 100-meter square. Once the building was done, they went

[54] Havaalani neighborhood in Esenler district was declared as earthquake prone zone in October 2012. It is one of the first urban transformation projects that is completed, and the new units are delivered to the prior residents. That's why it is good example of the residents' disappointments and marginalization during the process. The construction of the new project was delayed more than one year; the project plan changed significantly after the contracts were signed and as a result the size of residents' units was reduced to 58 m2 from 94 m2. The right holders units were also significantly different than those built for the market, leading the residents to call their new units as "coffins", "pigeonholes and "coops" (Gazete Esenler, 2014).

> and realized that their units were way smaller. You cannot fit a double bed into those bedrooms. When people realized this, they were of course disappointed (Fikirtepe, Interview 13, July 2017).

As such the high volume of lawsuits filed against TOKI by the rightful owners shows the level of discontent and disappointment with TOKI units once they are delivered. Between 2002 – 2018 there were 46,448 lawsuits filed against TOKI of which the institution lost 26, 115 and obliged to pay around 166 million TRY in compensation (Birgun 2012a). On average this equals 7,9 lawsuits filed against TOKI every day and 28,000 TRY paid by TOKI in compensation. Most of the cases concern late delivery of units and faulty or defective structure of the buildings resulting in a profound disappointment for the residents who had dreamed differently.

> Both the state and the developer deceive residents with various tricks, but the citizen is not aware of this process. Whenever they start moving in their new units and they cannot fit in the furniture, then they understand they have been deceived (Fikirtepe, Interview 13, July 2017).

The common response of TOKI and the developers to the disappointment and complaints of the residents is often to claim that the original housing stock was not sustainable and if they are not happy with the new units, they are free to sell them. However, for the residents the new units are not just disappointing from a use value perspective because of their small and defective structure, but also do not fare well as assets in exchange value. In most cases the rightful owners' units are built significantly lower quality in material and size than those for the market. Thus, while the units produced for the market can find buyers up to 1 million Turkish TL, those produced for the residents within the same neighborhood have difficulty in finding buyers for less than the prior's half or even one thirds price.

> We hear that in the second section of the project are, one unit is sold for 1 million TL. However, for our section we cannot sell our units for 400,000 or even 300,000 TL (Havaalani, Hurriyet 2016g).
>
> I showed my unit to possible tenants. When they saw inside, they said it was not a good unit and left. It is difficult for me to rent the unit now (Havaalani, Hurriyet 2016g).
>
> At the launch of the project, the developer wanted to buy our future unit and offered a really good amount of money. When my husband heard that amount, he thought the unit would be worth even more once it was delivered. Thus, he did not sell it then… Since the developer went bankrupt and the construction stalled, we wanted to sell the unit again and move elsewhere. We put it on internet to sell, but no one wants to buy it now (Fikirtepe, Interview 14, July 2017).

Another factor that contributes to the declining exchange value of the newly constructed units is the rapidly growing number of similarly manufactured housing stock in Istanbul. Housing prices in Istanbul steadily rose, peaking in 2016. However as more UTPs are completed and enter real estate markets, the number of excess housing supply grows.[55] As a matter of fact, since 2019 real estate assets have been losing value in real terms since annual price increase is lower than the increase in consumer price index (Yeşilbağ 2019: 3). Especially the districts with more than one ongoing UTPs, such as Gaziosmanpasa, have been hit hard by declining prices, losing value more than 20 per cent (Hurriyet 2016j). In other words, instead of realizing increased rental values as promised, ironically rightful owners realized a depreciation of rental value once their building is completed. Therefore, Istanbul's housing market with its growing supply of manufactured housing gradually becomes an impediment for those residents who dreamed of cashing their new units and building their wealth.

In the meantime, the number of households indebted to TOKI (both through urban transformation projects and the sale of mass housing units) increases. According to the current

[55] By the end of 2019, it was estimated that 1.3 million housing units were waiting to be sold in Turkey (Gündoğdu 2019).

Environment and Urbanization Minister, Murat Kurum, there are 270,548 households/workplaces who are indebted to TOKI (ABC 2019). If the indebted units cannot pay their monthly installments three times in a row, they are evicted, and their houses are confiscated by TOKI. According to Doğru (2010) the main source of TOKI's profits comes through the long-term receivables from the indebted working classes who are incorporated into the debt system through new credit mechanisms. This makes TOKI one of the biggest reapers of circulating rent in the city, since it both sells public land and receives the indebted masses' payments for the housing stock built on such lands. Thus, while citizens become indebted to TOKI through urban transformation projects, they also become dependent and vulnerable to fluctuations in the global economy (Çavdar 2016). In the meantime, TOKI, and its REIT Emlak Konut get the lion's share from Istanbul's rent. As an activist resident put it:

> Before urban transformation projects people were not tenants. They used to live modestly for better or worse in their units without paying rent, without paying condo fees. However now due to the projects people are depressed; they became tenants; they cannot pay their condo fees and they are forced to leave their neighborhoods (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

On the other hand, similar to the construction of mega projects, urban transformation projects are also used as means to create and support pro-government capital. As explained in the previous chapter, TOKI is exempted from Public Procurement Law and often favors large real estate developers who have close connections with the government (Sönmez 2011, 2011a). In return for political and financial backing., TOKI sells public land to such companies at a rate lower than the market average and provides tax exemptions. According to TOKI's own accounts between 2002 and 2018 TOKI sold 55 million square meters of public land for 5,5 billion TRY to its partner developers, averaging 100 TRY for one-meter square of public land, which is way lower than the market rate (Birgun 2012a). Along with the tax exemptions provided to such partner firms, TOKI

produces a lucrative rent gap for the developers. Moreover, by diving large projects into pieces and doling out some of the necessary work to small scale and local companies TOKI also initiates "collaboration amongst various sized contractors" (Doğru 2016: 226) and thus expands the web of rent accumulation in the city.

Along with TOKI and its affiliated developers, propertied citizens who can pay the difference between the valuation of the original land and the newly constructed house also reap of the benefits of land valorization. Indeed, such divisions along class lines are geographically visible through the different shares of rightful owners in transformation areas. In wealthier neighborhoods such as Bagdat Caddesi, where the profit margin is high and many developers compete with each other to transform the neighborhood, rightful owners are entitled to 72 per cent of rent sharing, whereas in poor neighborhoods such as Sarigol the same percentage falls to 32 per cent (HT Emlak, 2015). As a matter of fact, despite TOKI's claim to make every citizen a homeowner, the homeownership rates since the 2000s remained around 60 per cent (Güney, 2019) while the percentage of tenants in Turkey rose from 18.7 in 2002 to 28.7 in 2018 (paying annually 60 billion TRY to their landlords) (Gündoğdu 2019). Considering that over 11 million dwelling units were added to the housing stock during this period (Gündoğdu 2019), it becomes obvious that a considerable share of real estate had been purchased by already propertied citizens for exchange value concerns (Yeşilbağ 2019). Thus, in many ways urban transformation projects function as a tool of wealth creation for already propertied and wealthier sections of the society while dispossessing and indebting working-class neighborhoods (Çavuşoğlu & Strutz, 2014; Karaman, 2013a; Türkün 2011, Gündoğan 2018). Instead of addressing the citizen gap created by the prior elite groups as portrayed by Erdogan, the projects deepen and entrench the already existing differences and hierarchies.

5.6. Conclusion

Based on field work and newspaper content analysis data, this chapter looked at the urban housing transformation process in Istanbul, and argued that through such projects, the ruling party distills the promise of being a first-class citizen of a 'great nation' to the people. If mega projects are the monuments to the prosperity of the rising nation, urban transformation projects are promises of the everyday materialization of that prosperity. In building the new Turkey, the housing regime has been promoted as an opportunity to foster a new social contract and an equalizer for elevating the citizens living standards through neighborhood development. The emphasis on exchange value and rent extraction, implicitly and explicitly, simultaneously transformed the state's duty from providing housing as shelter and use-value to an asset and exchange value. As responsible citizens, the stake holders are expected to gauge their options, choosing either to stay in their neighborhoods or cash in their houses and invest their 'rent' somewhere else. Thus, the state's promise of access to economic opportunity and material enrichment through urban transformation projects go hand in hand with its neo-Ottomanist discourse of building a strong Turkish nation and act as a marker to the end of the nation and citizens' struggle.

The redistribution of urban land and rent has always been a core policy under the right-wing populist regimes in Turkey. The difference under the AKP government, however, is the scale and comprehensiveness of the novel mechanisms of rent – distribution thorough housing policy. "The Law of Transformation of Areas under the Disaster Risks" passed in May 2012, made urban transformation a national duty for each citizen whether in wealthier areas or informal settlements (with uneven outcomes). Preparing the country for a possible earthquake disaster while contributing to the growing economy and cleaning the criminal areas from the cities, legitimized

UTPs as one's moral obligation to the nation and the state as well as justifying the state's use of 'urgent expropriation law', reserved for war and disaster times. In this way the state generalized a state of exception usually reserved and exercised in the eastern Kurdish parts of Turkey to the whole country and rendered UTPs a test for everyone (but especially for ethnic and religious minorities) to prove whether they belong to the nation and are worthy citizens.

However, the rent-based model of citizenship is not without its contradictions. Even though the model promises to address the citizenship gap and deliver the long-desired belonging to a homogenized nation, it cannot fulfill its promises even for those 'good citizens' who dutifully stay in the contract. For the rent extraction model to work and be "commercially viable", the state needs to assemble the land and transfer to the developers at the lowest possible cost; the developers needs to maximize the number of post-construction units within the given restrictions, increase their share of units and lower the cost of construction materials (Gökşin et al. 2016). As a result, the projects immediately exclude tenants from being rightful owners, pressure informal settlers to sell their land at cheap prices despite their legally recognized de facto use rights and finally exploit incomplete and ambiguous contracts to lower the rent share of the rightful owners. Furthermore, as the system relies on continuous production of manufactured houses to maximize profit and exchange value rather to meet the actual demand for affordable housing, as more 'transformed' units enter the market, the less exchange value they have. In the end, despite of the officials shiny promises of a better life for citizens and of creating a perfectly unified whole (Lefebvre 1996), the state actively generates new forms of socio-spatial and sociocultural unevenness, sharpening the citizenship gap and their uneven lived experience. As explored in the next chapter, such cracks and differences pave way to the resistance and a different understanding of citizenship.

Chapter 6 - Building Infrastructures of Resistance: Spaces of Hope and Despair

6.1. Introduction

As discussed in the two previous chapters, the construction of infrastructure projects is presented as the primary duty of the Turkish state towards its citizens who are largely framed as beneficiaries. As the citizens are supposed to be proud of their nation and exploit the opportunities of material enrichment from the windfalls of the projects, they are also expected to be obedient and grateful to the government for its accomplishments. However, despite the rhetoric of neo-Ottomanism and bringing socio-economic benefits to all the citizens, these state-led infrastructure projects accelerate social and spatial inequality and fail to deliver shared prosperity and material well-being to citizens. The national belonging as a unified and homogenized space cannot be delivered through the commodified, parceled and speculated urban land. The state-space produced via the projects are ridden with conflicts and cracks which "produce contentious political spaces within which communities negotiate, resist, or comply with state-imposed, pro- market rationales" (Gündoğan 2016: 1) leading to alternative formulation of citizenship from bottom to top.

This chapter consists of three sections. In the first section I talk about opposition against the mega projects. The second section talks about the resistance against the urban transformation projects in the inner settlement areas. Finally, I conclude by bringing these two movements together and discuss the future possibilities for these resistance movements.

6.2. Resistance against the Mega Transit Projects

This section explores the grassroots resistance mobilized against the mega transit projects. It first illustrates how rural citizens, as users of space, experience the projects and then describes

some of their main tactics and spatial strategies to produce counter hegemonic spaces. It concludes by shedding light on some of the limitations of such resistance movements.

6.2.1. Mega Projects and the Peripheries: Lands of grievances

In June 2016, along with activists from the Northern Forest Defense (KOS) I visited Agacli *Koyu* (Agacli Village), a small village located in the north of Istanbul (see Figure 6.1). The goal of the visit was to organize a protest against the opening of another quarry near the village. In order to head to Agacli *Koyu*, we met in Besiktas, a central district of Istanbul, where two shuttle buses took us to our destination. It was a long two and a half hours trip. As I watched from the bus window the margins of Istanbul dissolved slowly, and we were travelling on the muddy roads, headed to the periphery. The village of Agacli, is famous with its beautiful beach which often host residents of Istanbul who look for quick getaways from the city. Its wetlands are crucial for water buffalos to graze which are the main income source of the locals along with subsistence agriculture. The village of Agacli is only one of the many to be absorbed by the expanding mega projects construction. Since the launch of the construction of the third bridge, a significant portion of natural land has been expropriated by the municipality and cleared to build connecting highways to the third bridge. Many of its small ponds dried due to accumulation of construction debris. A significant portion of sands at its beach had been illegally taken by construction companies. The village is also a crucial natural resource provider for construction materials from with its already existing two quarries and sand dunes.

Once we arrived to Agacli, we met with our guide Cengiz a young local of the village.[56] Cengiz cooperates with KOS to organize a collective resistance within the village against the

[56] The name has been changed to protect anonymity.

transit projects and their side spills, quarries. He did a field trip for us, showing the ripped-up areas and how both the highways and mining areas displaced forest cover and ecology. He pointed out to some distant spots which he said were once natural lakes but now were filled with debris from the construction sites. As he explained:

> The village roads are always blocked because of the construction trucks. They come and go and dump the construction debris into small ponds and wetlands… Because the land is vast, it is difficult to see where they [the companies] cut trees and clear the land. Thus, we cannot always effectively intervene… The animals are severely affected. Stockbreeding almost came to end in the village. Many of the breeders had to sell their herds, because there is no more available land for animals to graze. Animal farming will die. The villager's occupation will go away. What will he do? He does not know any other occupation (Field Notes, 11 June 2016).

The villages around the Istanbul Airport such as Imrahor, Tayakadin, Yenikoy, Akpinar, Ihsaniye (see Figure 6.1) correspond to around 6 per cent of all water buffalo breeding in Turkey. The animals' milk and other related dairy products are mainly sold to Istanbul's residents. As the president of Water Buffalo Breeding Association of Istanbul warned in 2014, the change of landscape with the mega projects force the majority of breeders to leave their occupation and migrate to other parts of the city (Ince 2014, Mumay 2014). In addition to the loss of their income source, the ongoing process of construction and the high number of construction trucks that pass through the village create an unhealthy environment for the locals and limit their everyday interactions. During our visit, many of the villagers complained how they were not able to go outside as they wished because of the constant dust in the air. As our guide Cengiz explained the mining company uses dynamites to extract aggregates from the nearby quarries and all the related toxic dust and dirt mixes into air. The dust then settles on the vegetables and fruits the villagers grow and cause them to wither, resulting in another loss of source for the village. He also described that wild animals such as pigs and foxes began to come into the village to raid in the afternoons, since there was no more enough forest land to feed them.

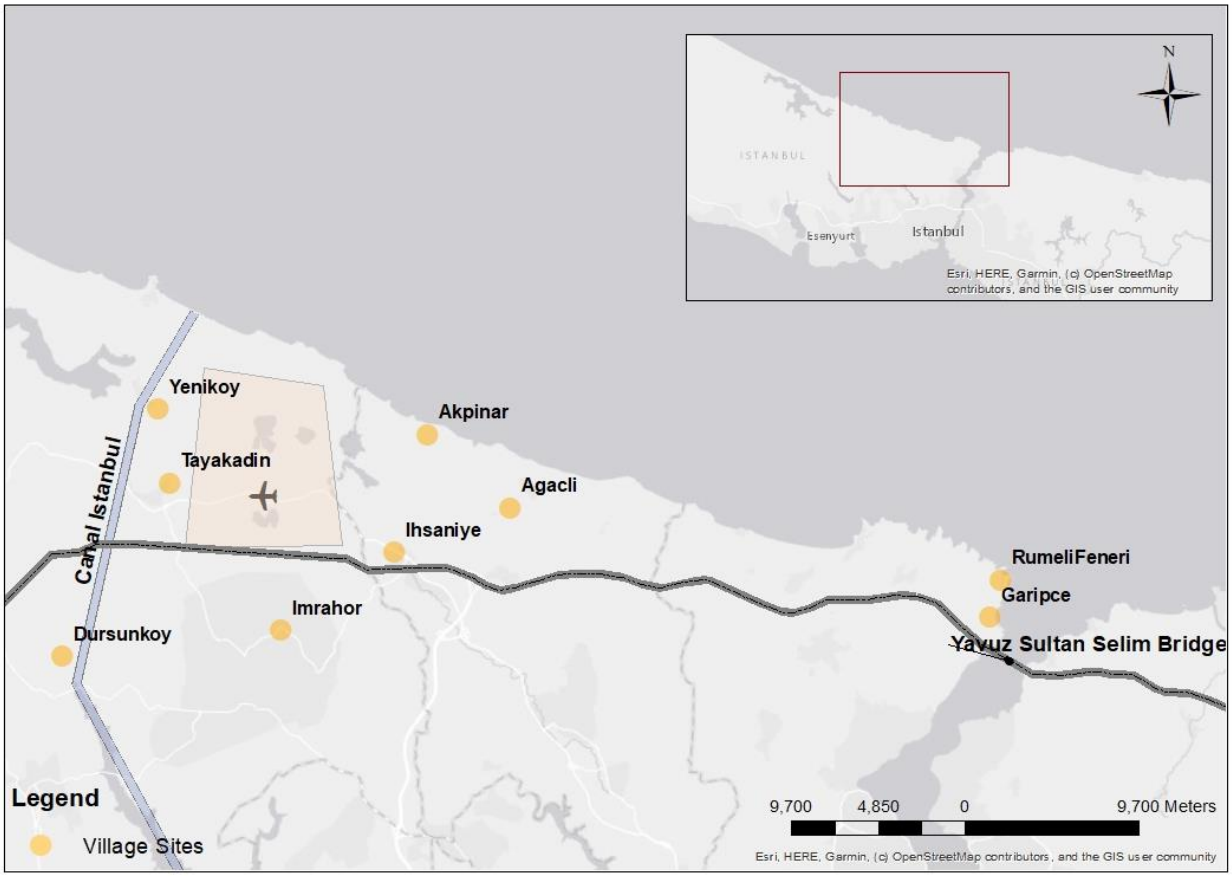

Figure 6.1 Location Map of the Villages surrounding the Mega Projects
(Drawn by author)

Concerning the mega projects and their detrimental effect on the surrounding villages, Cengiz was not alone in his worries. The state's failure to deliver a shared prosperity and material well-being puts its rent-oriented social contract under unique pressures and leads to formation of alternative visions of citizenship. These alternative visions erupt in forms of small-scale protests around the villages. As we continued our exploration of Agacli *Koyu* we joined one such protest and met the villagers at the main village square. Most of them were worried that they would lose their source of income, the municipality would expropriate their land, they would be displaced, or at best, life in the village would become unbearable due to the projects and they would have to leave (in)voluntarily. In that respect they were ready to fight what they perceived as "a huge injustice". As one of the older female villagers feverishly stated to me:

> We cannot live in Istanbul. The quality of air we have in our village is the among best in the world. We cannot live in apartment buildings. We are comfortable here… They tell us to go back to our village, but this is *our* village. They are the one who should leave (Field Notes, 11 June 2016).

In her defiance of the municipality and their threats, this local woman voiced a sentiment that was shared in the village square and beyond: an emotional attachment to land and a refusal of the city that was planned top-down by the state and the capital. As in many other cases, there was none to little public consultation with the locals near the project areas. Indeed, according to the household survey in ESIA report of the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge, 58 % of the respondents were informed about the project by newspapers and media, 39 % by friends or immediate surroundings, whereas only 0.9 % were informed by government officials (AECOM Turkey 2013). In the absence of being considered as an active citizen who has a "kind of shaping power over the processes of urbanization, over the ways in which our cities are made and re-made…" (Harvey 2008:2), the villagers transformed their small public square into "a polis, a political collectivity, a place where public interest is defined and realized" (Gilbert & Dikeç 2008: 251).

From the perception of the protesters what legitimized their actions and their right to be political was the simple fact that they *inhabite*d the village long before the infrastructure projects. Addressing the president Erdogan, in another village rally held in 2014 in Agacli Koyu a rural citizen stated that:

> Even though for the last 150 years we have lived just next to Istanbul, we have minimally benefited from the state's services. We have been forgotten here, but we have not abandoned our villages neither our animal stocks. We ask you now where these people [if displaced] would live? (Bianet 2014). [57]

[57] This was a joint rally with participants from the villages of İmrahor, Tayakadın Yeniköy**,** Ağaçlı, Akpınar and İhsaniye (see Figure 6.1)**.**

Echoing a similar resentment, the female villager quoted above further commented that:

> For years we have paid the taxes of the land here. We lived here when there was no water, no electricity, no infrastructure. We brought life here…Now the municipality threaten to cut our electricity and water if we do not sign their contracts. Let them do it. We are not scared, because we already lived without electricity or water. Who is the municipality without us? (Field Notes, 11 June 2016).

Summarized in the words "who is the municipality without us" is a direct challenge to the benevolent – grateful state-citizen relationship as framed by the AKP government and its projects. In contrast to the government's intentions to create "grateful citizens" by equalizing the value of land to its exchange value and then (unevenly) distributing, the villagers who are under the threat of displacement reject the legitimacy of the state (in the form of municipality) and thus the rent oriented social contract. The fact that they 'inhabit' a place (Woods 2017) whether in the form of 'paying their taxes', 'bringing life' or simple by 'not abandoning their land' negates the state's rights on their land.

Figure 6.2 Marching on the Roads of the Village of Agacli. Source: (KOS 2016a)

For the activist residents, the increasing land prices and the exchange value of the village indicates the real estate orientation of the projects and thus further erodes the state's legitimacy even further. In Turkish the word "rant" refers to profits accrued through rent seeking behavior. Socially it is used in a pejorative manner, highlighting the lack of labor and effort in making quick money. The term of *rant* was one of the most frequently used words the project areas to accuse the state and TOKI. In 2014 when TOKI had sent expropriation papers to six of the villages surrounding the mega projects, including Agacli Koyu the villagers who were interviewed in Agacli at the time by a TV channel did not hesitate to call out on *rant* motivated behavior of the state.[58] One resident whose main source of income was water buffalo raising and was among those

[58] At request of TOKİ, the Council of Ministers issued an emergency expropriation of six villages from two districts (İmrahor, Tayakadın, Yeniköy, in Arnavutköy District and Ağaçli, Akpınar and İhsaniye, in Eyüp District) that are located in the area of the third airport project in January 2014 (KOS 2015) (see Figure 6.1).

who received an expropriation letter from TOKI explicitly questioned the rationality behind the Istanbul Airport, stating:

> They added these lands into their *rant* making trend… At first the airport was not located here at all. They draw maps and then did something. Now TOKI wants our land… TOKI is the in pursuit of *rant*. From a seven-years old to a seventy-years old one everyone knows this. I know this as well. Where did TOKI buy land but did not make the residents cry? Whom did TOKI ever make happy? As a *citizen* I question this… We do not want anything from the state. Till very recently we did not even have proper roads. They came here; they filled our lakes with excavation; they digged our forests with mining. They made trillions of monies from these. Now as if those were not enough, they set their eyes on our small amount of land (Seymen 2014, Feb 27).

After almost two years, the same sentiment was still shared by the locals. When I asked an older male villager about the mega projects, he quickly and firmly responded: "They are building them, so that they would kick me from here for 100 Turkish Liras and then sell the land to an Arab for 500 Turkish Liras. It is this simple, but we will not leave" (Field Notes, 11 June 2016). In response, the residents filed court suits against the Council of Ministers for authorizing TOKİ for urgent expropriation (KOS 2015). Around 100 inhabitants of the Agacli Village maintained in their case that there was no public benefit in the construction of Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge and the project was a great hazard the forests and the agricultural lands. Furthermore, they claimed that the authority for urgent expropriation can only be realized under exceptional circumstances such as national defense and is being abused to seize the lands of the citizens, violating citizens' rights (KOS 2015).

Such a critique is important because it attacks the heart of the official discourse that *rant* is a common good and is essential for the nation as a whole. It sheds light on the state's tactics to exploit the rent gap at the expense of the current residents. In doing so, it presents a glitch, a breakdown in the social contract between the citizens and the state by pointing out to the uneven

distribution of the rent and how it reveals a national regime of citizen inequality and differentiated citizenship. This breakdown is not brand new as there has always been a long-time neglect of these peripheral rural areas by the state. However, if before it was the lack of the state, now it is the intervention of the state with the construction of mega infrastructural projects that further entrench such inequalities. In the end what awaits the locals is not a first-class citizenship as it had been promised by the ruling party, but rather a material and affective displacement from their land and homes. In response, the citizens engage in acts of citizenship by constituting themselves as political subjects and attempt to open new spaces of thinking about land, urbanization, and the city.

6.2.2. From peripheries to the centre: Developing infrastructures of resistance

Agacli is only one of the villages whose natural lands and traditional lifestyles are threatened by the mega transit projects. Since the Gezi Park protests the ecological movement in Turkey has been on the rise. Northern Forests Defense (KOS), the group who I visited the Agacli Village with, is one of the most prominent and visible grassroots organizations in this regard. Building on the grievances of the locals, KOS tries to bring the fragmented forms of resistance in coordination with each other and build a momentum against the mega projects (Interview 4, June 2016). The organization defines itself as "a movement that advocates for the protection of the ecologically interconnected and diverse areas extending from Sapanca to Strandzha Mountains consisting of the last forest lands, watersheds, and farmlands along with many endemic plant and animal species" (Kos 2015: 3). It was established in July 2013 "as part of the rising struggle against the urban and environmental plunder that has become even more visible after the Gezi Park resistance" (KOS 2015: 3). It comprises of volunteer experts, academics, activists, and locals who are affected by the projects. The members call themselves as "defenders of life" against "the creative destruction of the capital" and "all kinds of projects that destroy ecosystems, including

but not limited to the "mega transit projects" (KOS 2015: 3). The group holds weekly meetings where they take collective decisions.

In their campaign, KOS highlights the fact that the northern part of Istanbul is home to "crucial forest areas, water basins, sand dunes, dams, natural parks and endemic plant and animal species" (Çalışkan 2010: 24). These forests are also located on one of the most important bird migration paths in the world as birds can rest here during their journeys (Gurtler 2016). The forests play a crucial role in "water production, protection and regulation of existing water stock, protection of the soil, development of biological diversity, climate effects" and are also sources of employment and income for the local people" (Gurtler 2016: n.p.). Thus, opening these areas to infrastructure and construction projects not only means threatening the forests themselves but also the very sustainability of Istanbul (Kos 2014, Üçoğlu 2019). As one of the members of KOS stated: "if we lose this place, we will lose the city. It will not be sustainable" (Interview 4, June 2016). In doing so, KOS offers an alternative understanding of land and the city. First, they provide a different paradigm to think 'land' not in terms of economy but rather in terms of its connectedness to the ecology. As a KOS member explained:

> They [the construction company] swept the sea [to extract sand] in Agacli. For them sea is only its sand. For us it has a right to be on its own… We had a banner before which said, "nature belongs to the people". Now we removed that one, because even with that banner we were reproducing the capitalist order to a certain extent. Nature does not belong to anyone (Interview 10, July 2016).

In this discourse land is not valuable only when it is put in the service of capital accumulation, but it has an intrinsic value as a part of wider network of ecological relations. In contrast, the construction projects commodify and displace land from its ecological context. It fractures the city and its dependence on this ecological hinterland and assigns exchange values to these fractured and displaced parts (KOS 2015). The activists also underline the ongoing dispossession of the

residents, by pointing out that the land of the villagers is usurped by urgent expropriation in violation of their property rights (KOS 2015). Accordingly, what we witness is not transformation of land into the service of the polity as the state portrays but instead its privatization and destruction. If the official discourse presents land as the symbol of a unified nation and its commodification as the precondition of serving to the polity, KOS claims the opposite: it is the commodification of the land that privatizes and secures the interests of the few. As the KOS activists stated during the Istanbul City Rally in 2014:

> We are confronted with a real-estate war that in pursuit of its own interests destroys our public spaces, our shores, breaks down historical fabric and locks our green spaces in plant boxes… While the land and vegetation decreases, the concrete is on the rise… From here we call to the capital groups and to the political power who are willing to sacrifice our nature and city for profit: Leave our forests, city and lives alone (KOS 2014).

Echoing the villagers' demand of the inhabited city, KOS contends that what makes the land and the city to belong to polity is its use and the living experience. They ask for a new social contract of membership in which city residents have a say in governing their own living spaces. As it was cited in the Istanbul Rally:

> If we live in this city together – even though we may be born somewhere else- if we drink this city's water and breathe its air, then it means that we are the subjects of this city. If we are affected by the planning decisions in this city, then as its subjects we have things to say! (KOS 2014).

Under the slogans like "Become breath to Istanbul' *(Istanbul'a nefes ol*), "Defend Life" (*Yasami Savun*) KOS activists organized social media campaigns, rallies and protests as well as direct actions. Social media campaigns range from collecting signatures in opposition to the projects to hashtag campaigns to raise awareness about the detrimental ecological consequences of the projects. In order to emphasize the interconnectedness of urban and non-urban areas KOS activists hold rallies both in the villages like Agacli, and in Istanbul. They also provide legal

support to the villagers in their battle against the projects and also research and publish reports, such as the one on the Istanbul Airport covering the project and its problematic implications. As one member explained once their name became known in Istanbul, now they are invited to support struggles in rural areas all over Turkey expanding the horizons of their struggle (Interview 15, July 2017).

Though such acts might be limited in their scope, they nevertheless contribute to the disruption of the dominant narrative that presents the mega projects as the common good. For example, in 2016 just before the Agacli protest, the activists visited Fatih Forest, a southern patch of the Northern Forests ecosystem in Istanbul. The forest is one of the rare green spaces in the city and is frequented by residents of Istanbul for their leisurely activities. It has also been steadily deforested in order to expand the ongoing mining activities and to provide necessary raw materials for the mega transit projects. Standing in front of the sharp contrast of the cleared areas and the remaining forest cover, the activists held a banner stating, "The perpetuator is Veysel" (*Faili Veysel*) referring to the then Forest and Water Works Minister Veysel Eroglu (see Figure 6.3). The startling visual attracted media coverage and raised questions about the impact of the mega projects not just in the peripheral areas but also regarding the green spaces in Istanbul. Faced with the media coverage, the aforementioned minister was forced to respond the issue arguing that they would rehabilitate the area once the mine stopped working (Interview 15, July 2017; Sendika 2016).

Figure 6.3 KOS Members protesting the Minister of Forest and Water Works Source: (KOS 2016b)

Through these acts of dissidence both the local residents and the environmental activists disrupt the official narratives. They point out that the land question is not only an economic question, but also a moral, social, and political question (Haila 2016). They stretch "the frame of what is sayable and possible" and in doing so improve the material and discursive culture of urban every day (Wood 2017: 71). I argue that these are all important acts of citizenship and build a fabric of resistance into the city.

6.2.3. Challenges facing the Resistance

However, as it was indicated in chapter 4 these acts of resistance have not managed to politicize wider segments of the society and spiral into a larger movement yet. Both the Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge and the Istanbul Airport are now completed and opened to public. Despite the criticisms Erdogan continues to insist on building the Canal Istanbul. Though resistance

movements put pressure on the government, their impact remain limited. Why this has been the case? In this section I explore some of the main challenges to building a wider resistance base against the mega transit projects. I demonstrate that the extension of *rant* politics, the continuing trust in Erdogan's leadership, the implicit anti-urban approach of KOS activists and the increasing authoritarian politics prevent the transformation of many citizens' grievances into a wider movement against the projects.

The rent-based nature of the mega projects shapes many rural citizens' expectations and anxieties around the project areas. As it was explored in chapter 4, the benefits of the revalorization of the land and the built environment are almost exclusively reaped by the elite. However, when the projects are first announced many villagers still conceive themselves as the 'beneficiaries' of state-led infrastructural investments. A certain section of the locals perceives these projects as 'development' finally coming to their villages (Interview 11, July 2016). During a field trip to Garipce, a fishing village with approximately 600 inhabitants, the majority of whom support the ruling party, I noticed how many of the houses were dilapidated and not maintained (see Figure 6.4). This was both due to the working-class character of the neighborhood but also because the village was a site that was not allowed for construction. As such, there was no permit to renovate or construct further buildings in the area which decreased land prices considerably. In this sense, the news of the third bridge gave hope to the locals that it would open the village to development, enable them to upgrade their houses and increase land prices. In the words of a local fisherman the new bridge was their hope "to finally have a beautiful house" (Oguz 2010). Similarly, as a resident of the Dursunkoy village (see Figure 6.1),explains that in a context where many have to give up on animal stock breeding due to the low profits, "the rising land prices becomes a hope for everyone" (Dursun 2017). Thus, for a section of rural citizens the projects present an opportunity

to address the lived unevenness of their rural space and the desire to become citizens of a mega city.

Figure 6.4 A scene from the village of Garipce
(Photo by author, July 2017)

The anticipation of further development and the rising land prices shape the geographies of resistance in the mega projects areas but does so in an uneven manner. In some villages, the association of the projects with access to economic opportunity and material enrichment is so high that locals turn even against the environmental activists. In the village of Yenikoy (see Figure 6.1), for example, the KOS members and their lawyers who had come to organize a panel on the environmental consequences of the projects were chased away by the locals, since the locals perceived them as "a threat to the development of their village" (Interview 11, July 2016). "The villagers thought they would make money" the activist explained "But they did not. One year later this time they called us back saying they want to work with us, but it was too late. They had already

signed contracts with TOKI" (Interview 11, July 2016). In most of the cases, however, it is the dire need of many villagers that pushes them to sign the contracts with the municipality.

> Each villagers' condition is unique. For example, in the Agacli village there are villagers whose land might worth a million, but they need immediate cash. When offered some money by the middlemen, the villager thinks that if he sells his land then he can hold a marriage for his son and buy a flat for himself. Then it becomes luring for him to sell his land and leave… even though in the longer term he loses. (Interview 10, July 2016)

In that respect even though the windfalls of the projects are not evenly distributed, and the lions' share goes to the speculators and investors, the rising land prices may offer relatively better conditions to a certain section of the villagers. This uneven distribution of the windfalls blurs the lines between who are the winners and losers of the projects and makes it difficult for the activists to convince more residents into taking a stance against the projects.

Second the close association of the projects with the charismatic leadership of Erdogan and the continuing strong trust of his followers in the party legitimizes the projects in the eyes of the many residents. As a recent qualitative research finding reveals for many pro-AKP voters there is a close association between the state and the charismatic leadership of Erdogan (Konda 2017: 24). In their eyes Erdogan is perceived as leader who "whatever he does, does it for the benefit of the country" and whose "past accomplishments guarantee his future successes" (Konda 2017: 102). Such a personal trust in Erdogan's leadership is also echoed around the mega projects areas who traditionally vote for the ruling party and believe that the projects are indeed essential for Turkish nation's future success. In that respect in 2010 when the construction of the third bridge was being discussed, a significant portion of the locals supported the project, arguing that "they should build not one but five more new bridges… because in order to use cars one needs roads", "it is a great service for Turkey" and "in place of the trees cut down, new ones could be planted" (BBC 2010).

> There is a section of villagers who tell us that "the state is good. The state would not disadvantage its citizens". We explain them that "look these families sued the municipality against urgent expropriation decision". They look at us suspiciously and tell that they will wait and see what happens to those trials. Till they make their mind, it becomes too late. (Interview 11, July 2016)

> It is difficult to reach to the AKP voters in the mega projects areas. There are some pro-AKP voters in the area who are not happy with the projects. They criticize some things, but would not let you say something against Erdogan and are defensive. (Interview 10, July 2016)

> The logic that we need bridges, roads, highways etc… The government made people internalize this logic well. This was especially prominent around the third bridge areas. The villages like Rumelifeneri and Garipce are strong AKP voters. [Before the construction] we organized panels in those villages to explain how the bridge would cause noise, pollution and disrupt their everyday lives. Some locals responded that they would allow the projects for "the sake of the state". They said that it would be their sacrifice for *their* state. (Interview 4, June 2016)

As these quotes reveal for a section of the rural citizens', their trust and royalty to the ruling party legitimizes the projects and puts a distance between them and the KOS activists. The fact that Erdogan is personally involved with the projects from their planning to haggling with the developers instills a certain trust to the rural AKP voters. Their initial belief that "the state is good" or their continuing trust in Erdogan's leadership despite "some problems with the projects" makes it difficult for residents to get organized against the projects. In this sense, opposing the projects is perceived to be anti-polity and implicitly anti-nation, because the citizen, in the end, "is supposed to separate himself (always himself) from the 'narrower interests" (Wood 2017: 14) and "sacrifice for their state". This totally resonates with the AKP's claim that what distinguishes their party from others is that "they do not do politics but only focus to serve the nation" and further narrows the space as the activists are marginalized as pursing their private interests. Indeed, KOS members whom I talked formally and informally indicate that in most of the villages they are perceived as "a political group". As one member explained: "A certain section of the village people perceives us as a political group. However, we are not. That is also why it is difficult for us to penetrate into

the village" (Interview 11, July 2016). When I asked her about what she means as 'a political group', she explained that it might mean as belonging to a certain party, like belonging to the CHP or the HDP and thus advancing their own particular agenda in opposition to the serving the interests of the polity (Interview 11, July 2016). The difficulty of the activists to reach more residents indicates the close association of the projects with the national interests as defined by the charismatic leadership of Erdogan and his "serving the nation" discourse.

I demonstrate that the perceived distance between the activists and many rural citizens and their inability to establish a united front against the projects are further exacerbated with their different conceptions of land. As aforementioned, the KOS activists and some residents value land as an ecological unit rather than an economic one which open new possibilities to think about the land. Yet, in a rural context where the main source of income is animal raising, land is also dominantly an essential means of production and considered a valuable asset.

> The villager sees forests and water buffalos as his means of production (*mal*). But for us nature is something to be protected. For example, he [villager] would cut his cow if it stops providing milk. However, we would not do that. We would take care of the cow for its lifetime. Because there is such a difference [of opinions], it becomes difficult to get along with the villagers (Interview 10, July 2016).

The rejection of incorporation of land as a means of production into KOS' movement is also reflected in the organization's implicit anti-urban stance. One of the main concerns of the opposition is how the mega projects serve as the catalysts of further urbanization and accelerate the growth of Istanbul in the north. Pointing out how the opening of the first and second bridges (1973 and 1988) led to new settlement areas to emerge along the newly built highways and a rapid population increase, the activists have warranted worries about further loss of the forest cover in

Istanbul.[59] Thus, they call for "a case for cities not drawing upon productive lands outside their immediate political boundaries" (Braun 2005: 637). Based on this, the group contends that the further growth of the city puts more pressure on resource use and environmental change, overwhelming Istanbul's natural ecology to the point of threatening the sustainability of the entire country. As it was stated in 2014 during the Istanbul Rally:

> The biggest enemies are the growth of the city from South to North, new settlements and the unnecessary mega projects that will trigger these movements. The third bridge on its own will bring 7 million new population to the north of the city, will destroy 2,5 million trees and despite this will not be a solution to the traffic jam. That is why we are here, and we will defend an ecological lifestyle instead of the bridges and the asphalt (KOS 2014).

Though such concerns over urban consumption are without question warranted, they nevertheless present urbanization as "the end of nature" and define it "in advance as the problem" (Braun 2005: 638). In doing so the movement takes an 'anti-urban' stance where an increasing percentage of the urban population is seen problematic (Braun 2005: 638). This approach was also evident during our fieldtrip to the village of Agacli. As we walked into the village, I could see the joy of the KOS activists in being in the "natural" environment. One of the activists picked a few plums from one of the trees and cheerfully offered them to others. Another one inhaled the fresh air deeply into his lungs and happily declared that "Ohh the air is fragrant with cowpat. This is life!". In a similar way as I was informally chatting with an activist on our way and he said that "The villager wants to be urban person. There is a secret inferiority complex going. Thus, it is difficult to work with the villagers. They see this as development coming to their village" (Field Notes, 11 June 2019).

[59] In their report TMOBB emphasized how new settlement areas appear along highway areas and along the bridges, pointing out to the afterwards of the construction of the first two Bosphorus crossings (1973 and 1988). As described in Chapter 3 their opening resulted in a northward grow of the city and in a destruction of forested areas north of Istanbul.

While it is understandable for environmental activists to value "a village lifestyle" and attempt to limit the rate of urbanization, such an anti-urban attitude also misses the point that for many of the villagers "the fragrant of cowpat" is not authentic and they may desire a new life without it. The romanticization of a more 'natural' lifestyle overlooks the fact that urban natures/metropolitan natures are not exempt from capitalist mode of production processes. They may not be commodified and parceled in the same way as more urbanized areas, but they are still socio-spatially produced and reflects hierarchies in society. Thus, they cannot be "separated from processes of gender, race, and class formation" (Braun 2005: 641) and especially from citizenship formation. As it was discussed in the historical context, the Turkish nation building process prioritized the urban as a relatively privileged site of citizenship. There has always been a citizenship gap between those who were given access to the city and those who were not. The lived realities of citizens inhabiting peripheral/rural areas have always been relatively more disadvantaged in terms of access to infrastructure, services, and opportunities. Indeed, the areas that were opened to urbanization via the first two bridges have acted to buffer this citizenship gap since they have been traditionally occupied by lower income groups and new migrants who overwhelmingly vote for the ruling AKP now. An anti-urban approach to land, ignores these patterns of uneven development and the historically accumulated layers of social and economic exclusion. It fails to see that the villager's desire to become urban is more than about 'his inferiority complex' but is a deeply political demand embedded in the wider tensions of society (Braun 2005: 640).

The anti-urban approach also raises issues with the positionality of KOS activists. Despite the participation of some of the local residents into their protests and the group's keen efforts to incorporate more locals into their organization, the group mostly consists of the activists who live

in Istanbul. In order to organize protests many activists are carried back and forth via shuttle buses. They make use of the villages for meeting up in its coffeehouses and at open public spaces to organize the residents and for protest, but do not inhabit them. Opposing the projects, then, becomes "an ephemeral spectacle" that appears and disappears and cannot reflect the daily injustices and thus the demand for a new citizenship (Wood 2017: 39). This casts the urban activists as ultimate outsiders to the village, to the nation and to the reality of the everyday life. It fails to address the citizenship gap embedded in differentiated access to resources and the fact that the urban activists inhabit the city otherwise in a privileged manner.

However, the inability of the KOS activists to work closely with many of the rural citizens also should be evaluated in an increasingly authoritarian context where questioning the legitimacy of the mega projects is often criminalized. The limitations to opposition do not solely come from the internal dynamics of the activist groups. The environmental groups such as KOS are often intimidated by the police and gendarme forces who also exert significant pressure to the local residents around the mega projects. As we walked to the village square in Agacli to meet the villagers, I had noticed that that many – if not the most – villagers were watching us in their homes behind of their half-closed curtains. When I asked about it, I was told that:

> The people of Agacli are opposed to the projects. Only a small group from the village will benefit from the projects. In the beginning they regularly came to our meetings. Then the gendarme scared them by saying "do not become so visible" [by attending the meetings], otherwise it would badly influence the court decision. People are scared (Interview 10, July 2016).

This is not surprising, as during our time in Agacli, we were followed by the gendarme forces who appeared within the first five minutes after our shuttle buses arrived. The gendarme did not ask anything, but watched every move of the group carefully. There was no illegal activity to require the gendarme to be there and they did not intervene to the protest. Their mere presence,

however, was an intimidation tactic to the activists and acted as a means to 'criminalize' them in the eyes of the rest of the village. The gradual erosion of law and the increasing police state further produce fear in both the local residents and activists. From 2007 to 2012, only the Chamber of Architects filed some 75 lawsuits against the development projects initiated by the government. It takes long time for courts to reach a final decision by which time many projects are already completed. There are also many cases where the projects were not halted despite the decision of the court in favor of cancellation as well as cases where cancellation decisions were overturned by higher courts (Dogan & Stupar 2017: 287). This creates hopelessness and an aversion to action in many people's mind and make the act of resistance futile in the eyes of many citizens. This is especially evident around the mega project areas since the projects are directly associated with Erdogan's personality.

> When we went to the village of Yenikoy, one of the most affected villages from the third airport, an elderly uncle asked me "How can we resist? What can we do? The one at the top [Erdogan] is crazy, he does whatever he sets his mind to do. Now he is obsessed with this airport. Why would I risk myself for futile efforts? Maybe he imprisons me, maybe he sends me to exile." People are really scared (Interview 4, June 2016).

The combination of fear with expectation of *rant* works to prevent people from engaging a long-term uncertain battle against the projects. Indeed, it seems impossible or unrealistic to many ordinary citizens:

> Two or three weeks ago we took some foreign researchers to visit the villages near the third airport where KOS works regularly. We sat in one of the coffeehouses in the village. One uncle from the coffee house asked me if I had land in the village and if that is why I opposed to the projects. I said "no" and responded that if we lose this land, we lose Istanbul. We would lose our space to breathe. He would lose that too. He told me that "I am a dreamer and I live in a dream" … The right to use, the right to the city unfortunately seem like impossible pursuits to the people (Interview 4, June 2016).

In a context where commodification of land is the prevalent form, the state is authoritarian, "doing politics" is stigmatized, it seems more realistic to most of the locals who are already economically and socialized marginalized to try to shape the process in their own favor and engage in "politics of compensation" (Roy 2016). In the words of an activist "He says 'Ok. They expropriated my land; I filed a legal case against it; from now on it is about how much I could gain from the process?" (Interview 4, June 2016). The defiance of the state and their threats, the demand of an inhabited city raised by the minority of the locals wither away and get lost in the logic of compensation politics. In many of the cases, the residents are not happy with the end result and know they have been wronged, but still think they did their best. As another Kos member explained:

> There is both fear and anticipation in the villages. The fear of losing their land through expropriation and anticipation of an increase in the value of their lands… When they receive the official expropriation letters, they sue TOKI. With each case the court raises the base value for expropriation, after some point people give up, take the money, and leave the village (Interview 15, July 2017).

The rising land prices and the continuing trust in the charismatic leadership Erdogan, combined with anti-urban approach of the environmental activists and the criminalization of dissent prevent the emerging discontent with the projects to transform into a wider movement. Despite the disruptions and fractures in the dominant social contract, the state seems to successfully convey the message that "the mega projects are inevitable, and the best deal one can make is to be part of it and share their relative *rant*. However, this does not mean that the mega project development is a smooth, coherent, and united process as the state aims to present. From the citizens who defy the municipality and refuse to be displaced to those who support Erdogan but criticize the projects and those who want to resist but see it as a futile effort, the social contract is full of cracks and contradictions. In contrast to the official discourse, the state builds its mega

infrastructures on the citizens' refusal, anxieties, grievances and (failed) expectations. Thus, I contend that the question for the resistance movement is how to exploit these cracks and to reach those in between especially as these contradictions become sharper. In doing so, we need to develop politics that understands urban development and its contradictions especially as it relates to uneven experiences of citizenship.

6.3. Resistance against Urban Transformation Projects

This section explores the grassroots resistance mobilized against the urban transformation projects. It first illustrates how residents, as users of space, experience the projects and then illustrates some of their main tactics and spatial strategies to produce counter hegemonic spaces. It concludes with shedding light to some of the limitations of such resistance movements.

6.3.1. From 'Urban' Transformation to *Rantsal* Transformation: Re-defining the terms of citizenship

Despite their hegemonic presence, UTPs has also led to the emergence of an active scene of community resistance against the appropriation of these spaces and faced with significant challenges regarding their implementation. Similar to the opposition to the mega projects, one common theme that runs through these dissident groups is their struggle against what they dubbed as *rantsal donusum*. The resident activists played with the term urban transformation which is *kentsel donusum* in Turkish and turned it into *rantsal donusum. Rantsal donusum* can be translated as "for profit transformation".[60] It refers to the dissidents' claim that the so called 'urban transformation' is not about providing better housing infrastructure, but is rather about reorganizing property relations in the pursuit of maximizing opportunities for the political and

[60] The term first emerged in 2006 as a response to the initial transformation projects that were launched in 2005.

economic elites. As such, the term *rantsal donusum* became a core slogan of the many dissident groups who waged a struggle against the projects.

> When the state contemplates how can it transfer citizens' resources and means into the service of certain groups' interests and launches the transformation project within this logic, using various tricks and cheats; then it is no more *kentsel donusum* but is *rantsal donusum*. And who is this *rant* for? Obviously not for the poor (Cumhuriyet, Interview 8, July 2016).

The dissidents' use of the term *rantsal donusum* and their attempt to organize community resistance around the concept of *rant* are important in a few crucial ways. First, the discourse of *rantsal donusum*, as it also can be deduced from the quote above, directly targets the state's claim that the projects are for the public good and well-being of citizens. It redefines the projects as a class project whose goal is to transfer citizens' assets into the service of economic and political elites while dispossessing working-class neighborhoods. The emphasis on *rantsal donusum* highlights the fact that developers need empty lands, and in the absence of availability of such land in Istanbul, working class houses are being taken away to provide for the upper-class consumption.

> The construction sector needs empty lands, but there is no such land in Istanbul anymore. Where will it get it then? From the poor neighborhoods (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

> According to their mentality we do not deserve to live in such a beautiful neighborhood [his own neighborhood]. They basically say you are not worthy of it (Cumhuriyet, Interview 8, July 2016).

> Why they do not do these transformation projects in the rich neighborhoods… on the houses around the shore, the Bosporus? They keep telling us "earthquake [risk], earthquake [risk]", but those houses almost swim in the sea?... This is all because of that thing called capitalism (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

> They took away the poor's hut and built building for the rich (Sarigol, Siteder 2013 May 23).

> We are the victims of capitalism here. They sold these lands to bankers and developers (Sarigol, Siteder 2013 May 23).

In defining UTPs as a class project serving upper-class consumption, the opponents challenge the state's rent-based social contract and debunks the myth that that the projects serve as a means to close the citizenship gap. They challenge the myth of the unified and homogeneous rising nation, by exposing the state led fragmentation of society across class lines and the dispossession of *citizens* at the expense of the political and economic elite. As such, the communities redefine the concept of citizenship in opposition to the government's definition as an all-encompassing homogeneous form. They give a new body and substance to the abstract concept of *citizen* by juxtaposing it against the elite groups, specifically against the *rich* who is perceived to be the main beneficiaries of UTPs.

> [Pointing towards a small green area] This is the park. They plan to squeeze the *citizens* [original residents] into this small park into newly constructed, low quality, 5 or 6 high rise buildings and then sell our lands as *arsa* to their *rich* customers… They will drive us away. Of course, they do not say so, but looking into the plans we can understand that (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

> They see our lands cheap as dirt because we have lots of green space and parks between our buildings. They love building concrete in every possible parcel. This is a great opportunity for them, because they can put *us* [original residents] into a corner, in units like coops for chickens. Then they will build luxurious residentials, recreational areas and malls for *the rich* on our existing neighborhood (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

> They will give a separate place to the *citizen* [himself] and a separate place to the *rich* (Okmeydani, Field notes, July 15, 2016).

> This process is nothing else but the dispossession of the goods and property of the *citizens* (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

As the quotes illustrate in opposition to the official discourse, the citizen is not the one who dutifully takes part in the projects, receives their share in *rant* and feels grateful to the state. On the contrary, the citizen is the one who is marginalized, wronged, and dispossessed in the process.

They are the ones who are given "a separate place", "squeezed in a small park", or "driven away" to make space to the non-citizen, the *rich*. Citizenship, in other words, acts a node that brings the residents together and delegitimizes their dispossession. The fact that the projects are not executed on the side of the *citizen* but against the *citizen* totally nullifies their rationality.

> Urban transformation is good thing, but only if it is executed for the benefit of the *citizen*… only if the administration makes sure to protect the rights of its *citizens*… look for the benefit of *citizens*, not for the partisan (Cumhuriyet, Interview 8, July 2016).

The failure of the state to implement UTPs for the benefit of "what is considered to be the public interest as well as… a body of citizens conceived as public beneficiaries" (Roy 2003: 475) opens new spaces for residents to act as political subjects and assert their rights as citizens. "If you do not fight for your rights in this country, you are entitled to nothing", a resident told me whose neighborhood was just declared as a risky area (Okmeydani, Field Notes, 15 July 2016). "The existing disjunctions between the form and substance of citizenship" (Miraftab & Wills 2005: 202), thus empowers resident activists to challenge the boundaries of the rights and duties imposed by the state and take control of their situation. They question the sincerity of state officials and "the capacity of the state to govern and deliver its promises. They "demand the state to be accountable and constitute themselves as citizens who are entitled to make such claims" (Wood 2017: 104). "Who are we afraid of?" a female middle-aged resident asked during a neighborhood meeting (Baglarbasi, Field Notes, 20 August 2016). She was at the verge of being evicted, and her house was to be demolished. "Aren't we the ones who make up the municipality? Aren't we the ones who make the state? I am not scared… If we brought the state up, we could also bring it down!".

In this sense, citizenship acts as an empowering institution that entitle residents to make claims on the state. For example, in both Tozkoparan and Cumhuriyet neighborhoods when resident activists demanded to see technical plans regarding the new projects, they were asked to provide their identity documents, probably so that the municipal officials could keep files on them. However, in both of the cases the activist residents rejected to do so, arguing since they were *citizens* of the targeted neighborhoods, they had rights to see the plans without being carded (Interviews 5 and 7). After arguing with the officials residents of the Cumhuriyet neighborhood were able to access to an unofficial copy of the plan. Even though those in Tozkoparan failed to do so, claiming to be the citizens of the neighborhood unquestionably empowered residents to push the boundaries of what they were officially allowed to do and not.

In this vein, many community members emphasized that it was their collective emotional and material labor that built their neighborhood, thus they were "the real owners and real inhabitants of the city" (Erdi Lelandais 2014: 69). Their concrete labor and lived experience of urban space endowed them with "as much right to live there and to invest in the city as any other Turkish citizen" (Erdi Lelandais 2014: 69) even if they did not fit to the prescribed definition of right holders.

> Erdogan himself rise to power from a *gecekondu* neighborhood. Most of the members of parliament are from *gecekondu* neighborhoods. Why do they denigrate this place? They claim our houses are illegal. We have been here more than 40 years… We demand the same rights as those in Europe (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

> I admit that the community had many missing documents [of land tenure], but I have been living here for 40 years… In the end they framed as 'occupiers' because this land belongs to the municipality. OK, but I have been living on your land for 40 years, paying my taxes, my water and electricity bills. After doing all these, am I not entitled to be a right holder? Even if one has no documents at all, if they live in a place for 40 years, they are right holders… In good or bad days, the state could find me in this address for 40 years. Therefore, I am a right holder (Sarigol, Siteder 2013, May 20).

"Against the abstract and commodifying logic of the law and property rights", the community members put "their concrete labor and lived experience of urban space" (Gündoğan 2018: 12) in order to become full members of the society. In doing so, they redefine what is a public interest and how it should be realized through the city (Gilbert & Dikeç 2008). They bring out a different understanding of the city, one that goes beyond the aggressive nationalist discourses, rising real-estate values and opportunities for profit maximization. They imagine the city in a communal way: as a source of polity, as a place of shelter, as a site of belonging and solidarity. In this sense, the community members emphasized multiple times that this *rantsal donusum* had nothing to do with the city. For them, the city as an abstract concept was irreducible to its merely exchange value, to its ever-rising asset values. Taking their lived experience and neighborhoods as reference points, they stated that the city "could not be contained in square meters" or "was not something to be negotiated in one to one deal" (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016). On the contrary, they emphasized the importance of their close relations with neighbors, the embeddedness of their collective history in the neighborhood and their physical and emotional labour invested in their houses/common gardens as well as how the projects threatened all these aspects associated with the urban in their life.

> Do not give me 1000 TRY extra money, but let me stay with my neighbors… I grew up here… All these are my childhood friends. Now all of them will leave, and where will I see them again? Where would I find my people again? (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

> This is our common garden. It is full of fruit trees. This is an apple tree, and next to it there are trees of figs, sweet cherries, and mulberries… We have planted all these trees and flowers… Next to it we have our vegetable garden. We did everything on our own. Now that we have a highway and subway built near the neighborhood, our gardens suddenly became valuable for the state (Cumhuriyet, Interview 9, July 2016).

> We are the people of Fikirtepe. It does not matter where our parents from. We lived here for years. This is my village and my city (Fikirtepe, Kentsel Vizyon Platformu 2015: 65).

> Of course, we want earthquake resistant buildings, but we cannot let them destroy our neighborhood culture. People should not be driven away from here. The tenants should be made 'right holders' on easy conditions. Tozkoparan people should act in unity. They should obey us, not us to them (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

As illustrated by the quotes above, the residents' city is not merely equated to its exchange value or to its potential for profit maximization. On the contrary, it presents "a sense of community...a feeling of solidarity between people who occupy the common territory based on a strong local network of kinship" (Knox and Pinch 2010: 188). It is an inhabited city (Wood 2017) where everyday life and actions shape and produce urban space as a source of polity, as a place of shelter, as a site of belonging and solidarity. Thus, I contend that the lack of the word *kentsel* (urban) in *rantsal donusum* is not accidental but rather an unconscious choice that signifies the loss of this "inhabited city". By replacing the word *kentsel* (urban) with *rantsal* (for profit), the opponents insist on defending the city as a polity and redefining the public interest. By demanding accountability, questioning their assigned roles and the state's capacities residents challenge the imposed modes and forms of citizenship, transform them and act as political subjects (Isin 2009).

6.3.2. Working in and out of state-spaces: Mobilizing community members against UTPs

For the targeted neighborhoods, the first step of challenging the state and defending citizens' rights against the projects is through establishing neighborhood associations (*mahalle dernegi*). Established by dissident community members, such associations act as central venues for public deliberation and coordinating grassroots action between residents and housing activists. They aim "to follow up on transformation and construction projects in the neighborhood", "to inform citizens about such projects", "to identify citizens' concerns and suggestions", "to contact necessary institutions regarding such concerns and suggestions" and "if necessary to take legal action against such projects" (Siteder 2016). Members attend city wide meetings about UTPs, lobby parliament members, help residents to write petitions and give general advice (Fikirtepe, Interview 12, June

2017). In some respects, the neighborhood association offices function as alternative spaces to the official transformation offices for residents to have access to open information about the projects and the legal procedures.

> All the decisions by the municipality are taken behind closed doors, hidden from citizens… But our meetings here are open to everyone, whether they are members or non-members, whether they support the projects or not… People come here, listen to, and keep themselves updated about the new developments (Cumhuriyet, Interview 9, July 2016).

> What is important here is that an elderly uncle can come here and talk to me about his problems; why he supports or not support the projects. We listen to people up to an hour. Patience is especially important in this job (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

As a legal entity, a neighborhood association allows residents to collectively take the projects to the court, and challenge their legitimacy. Indeed "given the limited access of citizens to the URP planning processes" and the projects' "administratively nonnegotiable nature", for residents the legal struggle has become a primary means to contest the projects and their terms (Tepe 2016: 81, 95). As described in chapter 5, once two thirds of the neighborhood population sign the project contracts with the municipality and/or TOKI, TOKI is legally entitled to expropriate the remaining one thirds' house. Usually in every neighborhood there are two main groups of residents: those who oppose the projects and those who find opportunities in them (Karaman 2014: 298). Thus, one of the primary goals of a neighborhood association is to convince more residents not to sign the contracts with TOKI and instead join a legal battle with them against the projects. City wide non-profit organizations, such as Urban Movements (*Kent Hareketleri*) and Association of Neighborhoods (*Mahalleler Birligi*), also support neighborhoods in their legal cases by providing legal and technical advice, helping them to create petitions and etc. At the time of the field work, all the relevant neighborhood associations were in contact with such organizations and worked together.

In order to mobilize the neighborhood against the projects, the neighborhood association employs a wide of variety of tactics. In addition to opening an office space where residents can ask questions freely in contrast to the transformation offices, the resident activists organize apartment meetings to inform the neighbors about the process and to point out the problems in the contracts (Interview 5 Tozkoparan, June 2016; 7 Cumhuriyet, 13 Fikirtepe). They also organize panels in neighborhoods where resident activist from other neighborhoods come and inform people about the urban transformation projects that took place in their neighborhood. Such panels hold a crucial role in organizing dissent, because when the projects are first announced many of the residents are not sure how to proceed further and are vulnerable to the mayor's promises. (See Figures 6.5 and 6.6). As it was put by an organizer:

> When there are new developments, we organize panels in the neighborhood. People from different neighborhoods come and talk about their experiences with UTPs. For example, we brought people from neighborhoods of Sulukule, Ayazma and Cumhuriyet. They talked about how they had been deceived by the municipal lies. Through these panels, we want to show these cases as examples and say "Look my brother and sister, this is what happened in all other neighborhoods. What is your difference or distinction from them? Why wouldn't the same things happen to you [us]? It was about making *rant* there and it is about *rant* here (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

In opening an office space, organizing apartment meetings and panels "the mobilizers convert the neighborhood space into an outdoor forum" (Gündoğan 2018: 17) and a place of public deliberation. In mobilizing residents against the projects, the associations also emphasize the importance of cultivating a sense of belonging and community in the neighborhood. Through their speeches and pamphlets, they emphasize the change of lifestyle the neighborhood would experience once the new projects are completed and claim the quality of life in neighborhood would decline.

> We put the pictures of our neighborhood in opposition to their proposed plan at the back cover of our association's magazine. One of them is with lots of green space [current neighborhood], the other one is crammed apartments with no green space [proposed plan]. On the magazine we asked the residents: "Do you want Tozkoparan to be like this or that?" (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

In order to revive and cultivate a sense of belonging in the neighborhood, the associations also organize picnics, football matches, pilaf days etc. Such neighborhood activities bring neighbors together and highlight the importance of the neighborhood as lived space. Neighbors cook together; share their food; play football while building a movement against the projects. Often housing activists from other neighborhoods are also invited to such activities and are able to mingle with residents at an informal environment, feeling comfortable and at home. "One of the rare benefits of urban transformation", such a housing activist commented at the pilaf day of Cumhuriyet neighborhood "is its capacity to bring people together stronger than before" (Cumhuriyet, Siteder 2013, May 20). By building on the contribution of all of its inhabitants, such activities bring out 'the creative capacity… invariably that of a community or collectivity' (Lefebvre 1991: 115) and contribute to a collective identification with a different and lived city.

Figure 6.5 A Small-scale Neighborhood Meeting in Gaziosmanpasa

(Photo by author, August 2016)

Figure 6.6 A Large-scale panel meeting in Okmeydani Neighborhood

(Photo by author, July 2016)

In cultivating a sense of belonging and collective identification, one theme that repeatedly emerged from the field work and interviews was the importance of "not doing politics" and keeping the struggle "above parties" (*partiler ustu*). There was a significant attempt both by the residents and housing activists to separate their "struggle for their lived space" from being "a political struggle". "Our problem is not politics. We do not care about political parties at all" a resident activist explained "We just want to protect and defend our living space" (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016). Similarly, during neighborhood meetings, non-resident housing activists frequently emphasized that this struggle was not about politics. "Our concern is not politics. It is not about the AKP or the district mayor [of AKP]. Our only concern is about defending our homes, our settlements" (Okmeydani, Field Notes, 15 July 2016). During the initial stage of my field work I associated this emphasis on "not doing politics" with an attempt to 'tame' their movement and fit respectfully to the proper state-citizen relationship. However, as the field work proceeded, I realized that this was an intentional strategy that aimed to challenge the strong polarization and imposed categories of party politics in Turkey. It is an attempt to prove that one's stance on UTPs does not necessarily signify their affiliated political party. As such the discourse of being 'non-political' and *partiler ustu* allows neighborhood associations to reach neighbors who may strongly identify as supporters of the ruling party, but nevertheless are against the projects in their neighborhoods.

> In this exact you are sitting there can be an AKP supporter; there can be a MHP supporter. This [struggle] is beyond politics. What is important is the ability to cultivate similar politics because we have similar interests. Our livelihood rights, our neighborhood rights… the struggle for the valuable social relations, for our common areas… We have inhabitants who are AKP supporters, who always vote for AKP, but some of them tell us that on this specific struggle they support us (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

> We never put politics in what we did, because we have members in our association from every party. Party A, Party B, people whose parties are not represented in the

> parliament. They are all our members. By working outside politics, we have achieved our success. However, it was a difficult process (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).
>
> AKP supporters also filed legal cased with us, even ex AKP city councils. We see that there are some glitches in these spaces (Housing Activist, Field Notes, 2 June 2016).

The tactic of keeping the struggle *partiler ustu* also opens new spaces for criminalized parties such as the Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) to be included in the process. [61] For example, when multiple neighborhood associations visited the parliament in Ankara to voice their demands, the representative group made appointments with all the parties including the HDP. This happened in a context where the government systematically excluded the HDP from most of the official engagements in its effort to delegitimize the party, by equating it to the armed guerrilla group, the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK). By making appointments also with the HDP, the neighborhood associations took the party as a legitimate political actor and thus implicitly challenged the official discourse. When the pictures of the meeting were posted on the association's Facebook page, it was criticized by some residents arguing "the association should not contact with terrorist groups" reflecting the ongoing tensions in society, but the post was not removed from the page. Similarly, the residents from the Cumhuriyet association contacted a Kurdish based newspaper along with other mainstreams newspapers in their efforts to publicize their struggle and to mold public opinion. "We treat all newspapers equally. It doesn't matter which newspaper it is as long as they publicize our struggle" (Cumhuriyet, Interview 5, June 2016), the resident activists hesitantly told me, trying to judge my reaction while going through the newspaper clips in their headquarters office. The discomfort in the activists' faces and their need to explain and justify having a clip from a Kurdish radical left newspaper surely underlined the exceptionality of the case and their

[61] Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) was founded in 2012 by Kurdish left of Turkey.

perception of the newspapers as outside of the norm; however, it also signaled new possibilities of albeit temporary alliances to redefine who the citizen is. Even though it is a highly contested site, it also brings different groups together in material and virtual public spaces that would not be exist together otherwise.

Once the dissidents collect as many as possible signatures to enforce a lawsuit, they engage in a long legal process. The residents usually need to bring a lawsuit to more than one state actor at a time. The Ministry of Environment and Urbanization, TOKI, the metropolitan and the district municipalities are all involved with some parts of the planning and/or executing the projects and thus a legal struggle to halt or alter the projects mean taking all these state actors in opposition.[62] A legal struggle is messy and difficult to navigate for many residents. This legal picture is also complicated by the fact due to some technical misunderstandings the courts can reject some cases upright, forcing residents to refile the same lawsuit again. A resident activist from the Cumhuriyet neighborhood explained the complexities of the process well:

> We had to file 16 or 17 lawsuits. The first case we took against the ministry [for declaring the neighborhood earthquake zone] was rejected. The court said we did not take legal action on time, even though we had done so. Thus, we had to file another case to prove that we our legal action was taken on the given time period. We proved it with documents, then our main case was accepted. But just because of that we lost one year. Then, we opened another legal case against the municipality's plan. At first this was rejected as well. The court said that we had to sue 116 separate legal cases since there were 116 apartment blocks in the neighborhood. Each legal case comes with its own costs, so it was impossible to take that many legal actions. We do not have that much money. Then with the help of some other neighborhood associations and our lawyer, we managed to reduce it to 14 different cases based on parcels [where blocks grouped together]. God bless the court, they accepted that one (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

[62] The residents need to sue the Environment and Urbanization Ministry to challenge the decision that their neighborhood is a "risky area". They also need to challenge the district and metropolitan municipalities transformation plans for the neighborhood and as well as contesting TOKI's plan.

Despite the messiness and complexities of the legal process, some of the cases brought by neighborhood associations have been successful to halt the projects. For example, at the time of the fieldwork, Tozkoparan and Cumhuriyet neighborhoods succeeded in winning all their relevant cases against the state and put a halt to their plans. These successes can be explained by the limited but continuing autonomy of the Turkish judiciary system from the government control and the failure of local and national authorities to comply with the transformation procedures and rules. Often arguing that the legal procedures hinder transformation process, TOKI and local authorities rarely follow the necessary legal procedures before they initiate UTPs and thus leave legal gaps that can be challenged by the residents.

> Their [the authorities'] most important weakness is the fact that they do not obey to the law themselves created. In order to declare a risky area, the law requires the officials to go and examine each block of apartments and take samples from them. This is a large neighborhood. 20 – 25 different civil engineers worked in constructing these buildings. If some did not build a strong building, this does not affect the others. During the court, it turned out that the municipality did not examine even one of these blocks! They just looked at this site and said, "let us declare this a risky area". Of course, when we took it to the court, the judge rejected the municipality's decision totally (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

> It was a difficult process. The legal case lasted 3 years 11 days… In the end we see that both the provincial judges and the council of state are fair, and their decisions are behind the people... I mean we still believe in the law… at least in these issues. In this regard, we are grateful to them. At least, they see the difficult situation the citizens are in (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

In other words, by exploiting such legal inconsistencies the residents "accuse the state itself of violating its own principles" and reclaim their rights as citizens (Wood 2017). They expose the hypocrisy of the state institutions and its failure to comply with its own rent- based social contract. In order to do so, they strategically engage with the state's discourse and switch it to their own benefit. "The law 6306 gives some rights to *citizens*" commented a resident in the Cumhuriyet neighborhood and added "they used the law and imposed this project on us. We also used the law;

and told them they were doing it wrong. The court recognized that we were right" (Cumhuriyet, Interview 8, July 2016). By using the state law to their own advantage, residents twist the official narrative which label them as "outsiders" and accuse the state of violating its own principles.

6.3.3. Challenges facing the Resistance

Even though the legal struggle has been a crucial means for residents to push UTPs back and mount challenges to their implementation from delays in time to complete cancellations, such a legal struggle has its own limitations and shortcomings. First, in an increasingly authoritarian context, the government has been tightening its control over the judiciary powers and thus make it difficult for the courts to rule in favor of residents. Indeed, during the fieldwork many residents and housing activists were worried that using the 15th July coup attempt as a premise, the government would further crack down the limited legal space the residents had:

> The lawsuits in the Gaziosmanpasa district, for example, had been going well. They [activists and residents] won many of their legal cases there. Then something unprecedented happened and the same court which found them right, reversed its decision… At this point I can just say that there is no law in this country. They remove the judges who do not favor their decisions… The course of events indicate there will be no rule of law in future (Housing Activist, Interview 4, June 2016).

> All the legal cases we won were reversed after the general elections…They do not even listen to the Chamber of Architects. They even kicked them out from their location… I do not believe we can get somewhere through law (Housing Activist, Fieldwork, 2 June 2016).[63]

The tightening control of the government over judiciary also makes it difficult for organized residents to convince more inhabitants to join their legal battle against the projects. "My neighbors tell me, I'm fighting for them and that's good enough.", the resident activist from Sarigol neighborhood claimed "But it is not. I filed some lawsuits against the municipality on my own,

[63] Such a total disregard for court decisions has been especially prominent in the neighborhoods, consisting of dominantly ethic and religious minorities, such as Sulukule where despite the court decision the project went ahead anyway (see Uysal 2012).

but I cannot continue fighting alone" (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016). Similarly, during another neighborhood meeting, a resident complained that they filed a lawsuit in their neighborhood only with 11 households. "They [the neighbors] say they first want to see the outcome of our legal case and then they will decide to take legal action or not. We do not know how to convince them" (Baglarbasi, Field Notes, 20 August 2016). The increasing authoritarianism and growing uncertainty regarding the outcomes of court cases render legal struggle a less and less viable option to resist the projects.

The residents' hesitation to join a legal struggle is understandable in a context where capabilities of neighborhoods to file and pursue court cases are uneven and depend on the level of economic and socio-cultural capital of the residents. It is no coincidence, in this sense, that Cumhuriyet and Tozkoparan neighborhoods were the ones who successfully organized and won their legal cases in contrast to Sarigol neighborhood. Despite their working-class character, both of the neighborhoods' education level is higher than the other two and they had retired teachers and lawyers as neighbors who worked for free to pursue the lawsuits and legal cases. For example, in both Cumhuriyet and Tozkoparan the first presidents of the associations were retired lawyers who were also local residents. As a resident in Cumhuriyet neighborhood explained:

> We have a particularly good team. We have a lawyer who voluntarily work for us and who was our ex-president… We have some engineer neighbors who helped us with technical issues… we have also retired residents like me who devoted their time to this struggle. Had I worked full time I could not be in this struggle (Cumhuriyet, Interview 7, July 2016).

On the other hand, in informal and poorer neighborhoods where there is a significant lack in education, it becomes especially difficult to challenge the state through a legal battle. During my visits to Sarigol neighborhood, many residents I talked to complained that they did not know their rights; they could not understand the contracts they were given and thus what they know

about the projects was limited (Sarigol, Field Notes, 30 June 2016). Furthermore, without an on-site resident lawyer who would work for the association voluntarily, the cost of hiring lawyers and pursing a lawsuit is too costly for the locals. "We learn our rights from lawyers, but lawyers are too expensive" explained a resident and continued:

> Neither the municipality nor the civil society gives us satisfactory knowledge about our legal rights and the process… Here the average monthly income is 250-300 TL. We do not have the money to hire a lawyer. They asked for 5000 TRY just to pursue the legal case (Sarigol, Interview 6, June 2016).

As a result of lack of information and sufficient resources, the residents of Sarigol neighborhood, for example, failed to prepare a completed legal file, including the neighborhood's earthquake report, soil and building surveys. Unlike Cumhuriyet and Tozkoparan neighborhoods Sarigol's legal challenge to the ministry's risky area decision was not accepted by the higher courts and they had to refile their case from the very beginning (Interview 2, May 2016). Thus, even though pursing a legal battle against the projects is a relatively viable (albeit limited) option for neighborhoods with the relevant social capital, such mode of resistance structurally marginalizes neighborhoods with no such capacities.

Finally, it is also important to emphasize that as judicial venues become main channels of contesting the projects, the discourse, and practices of resistance against *rantsal donusum* is also changed. Engaging in a legal process means for residents to deal with "a complex array of property rights and ownership patterns" that needs to "be identified and taken into account" (Gökşin et al. 2016: 6). The means that citizens are subjected to different legal procedures and rules based on land ownership status such as owning formal title deeds, *tapu tahsis* documents or no documentation at all. As residents learn and internalize these differences to challenge the state, they also start to think and act more in that legal language and perpetuate such divisions.

Calculating how many squares one's unit is and thinking in terms of *arsa* measures become an everyday habit to survive the legal battle. It is not surprising, in this sense, the associations which were more successful in legal battles were also the ones who successfully explained the process in terms of square meters, specific documents and property ownership patterns. They were keen to emphasize their "different" land tenure from informal neighborhoods in order to justify their legal cases.

> [Referring to Sarigol neighborhood] The biggest problem there is that the existing housing stock was built without permits. There are some with de facto use rights, some with no documents. They [the state] cannot approach us in that way. Because here our mothers and fathers, like lions, paid for their title deeds, even if with some delay we received our full titles. The state had built this neighborhood with its own hand. It is not illegal (Tozkoparan, Interview 5, June 2016).

> This place is not built on the treasure land, by marking four corners and then putting a house here. This is a place that was built with a plan under the state's own supervision… with us paying its money. We paid its money to the last cent. To whom did we pay it? To the zoning and housing ministry (Cumhuriyet, Interview 8, July 2016).

As the residents with more secure tenure conditions emphasize their difference from informal neighborhoods to justify their legal case, the residents with less secure tenure rights hesitate to join the legal struggle. During a neighborhood meeting, for example, while the housing activists tried to convince the residents to get together and file a lawsuit against the project, some locals contested that their situation was not like the other neighborhoods because of their insecure land tenure: "They had their title deeds; we do not and thus the legal struggle is not the same" commented a resident (Baglarbasi, Field Notes, 20 August 2016). The local authorities are well aware of these divisions and use them to convince more people into projects and not take a legal stance against the state. For example, they sell "title deeds" to some residents just before the launch of transformation process as in the case of Okmeydani neighborhood. Who has a right to buy their title deed and who has not is unclear and embedded in patron-client relations, further creating

divisions in the movement. In the words of housing activist "Why does the municipality sell title deeds now? What is the gain of citizens in this? It is unclear. What is clear is that it [the municipality] treats those differently who buy their title deeds and who do not and divides us more" (Okmeydani, Field Notes, 15 July 2016).

Thus, as the struggle against the projects takes a legal form, residents move from a "a struggle enmeshed in the materiality, identities and politics of urban life" to another one embedded in "the legal and bureaucratic realms of state institutions" (Yiftachel 2015: 728). As such the struggle against *rantsal donusum* and dreams for another city transforms into a struggle of getting compensated and receiving a share in the increasing urban rent. "Even if you only want to make profit in this process" stated an housing activist, "if you stay divided the end will not be good…If you want to take your share from *rant*, you need to be united and claim your rights" (Okmeydani, Field Notes, 15 July 2016). The citizen who is defined against the rich, who creates the city and who thrives on solidarity and social relations becomes marginalized, leading way to the citizen who needs to have appropriate documents, fit into a legal category and claim their rights to be compensated accordingly. Such a legally restricted definition of citizenship encourages what Roy calls "compensation politics", a highly individualistic negotiation process that "is constantly expressed in calculative rationalities and these rationalities are internalized by the self-governing subject" (Roy 2009: 173). Engendering "a distinctive political subjectivity, one that is concerned with the calculus of compensation", such politics stifle the same citizens' dreams who opposes *rantsal donusum* and wishes to live in a different city. It gives in to the state's rent-based social contract albeit challenging its terms and increasing the residents' compensation.

> Many of our activists friends gave up on working to organize neighborhoods against the UTPs. They tell us that they go to targeted neighborhoods, put their energy and efforts to organize resistance and take a stance against the projects and

> then what happens? Residents resist and take legal action; courts increase expropriation prices to the benefit of the residents, and then the residents sign their contracts with TOKI and sell their units at a better price. So then what does organized resistance serve to? To make more profits (rent)? Many [housing activists] gave up on the struggle because of that (Housing activist, Interview 4, June 2016).

> The idea that let's have the projects but make sure that rightsholders keep their properties, that there should be a fair distribution of rent based on title deeds is against the logic of right to the city; but we have to deal with this logic every day on the ground… This compromiser mentality is what we need to fight against the most. It is the most dangerous (Housing Activist, Field Notes, 8 June 2016).

Even though some neighborhoods make uneven gains in the legal process, the scope of the struggle remains limited, and the process is especially marginalizing for poorer and informal neighborhoods. As residents engage with the legal and bureaucratic categories to win their case, the opposition to UTPs reproduce such categorical differences embedded in calculative rationalities. As a result, it perpetuates to a certain extent, the rent-based social contract and it becomes more difficult to talk about a different city with an emphasis on use value, solidarity, and social relationships.

6.4. Conclusion

This chapter looked at the emerging community struggles and contested spaces around the construction of mega transit projects and the urban transformation projects. The construction of mega projects on periphery lands and the implementation of urban transformation projects in inner city neighborhoods are different infrastructure projects in terms of their scale, location, and rationalities. However, analyzing community responses to these projects together allows us to explore common patterns of resistance, negotiation and compliance embedded in grassroots activism. It presents a unique glimpse into the ways in which resistance reconfigures definitions of citizenship, contests its terms of membership as well as the socio-spatial dynamics that produce the city beyond one case-based studies. In this respect, the mobilization against *rant* emerges as a

common thread of grievance and frustration among citizens in Istanbul. It appears as a narrative that resonates with diverse groups of people from rural lands to inner city settlements. As a joint thread it nullifies the official discourse that *rant* is a common good and that a rent-based social contract can address historical and spatial unevenness of citizenship in Turkey. Instead it twists the official story on its head, reframes *rant* as a means to serve to the upper-class interests while dispossessing and marginalizing *citizens*.

In many respects, the community mobilization against *rant* represents a "a glitch" in the social contract between citizens and the Turkish state. In the words of Berlant (2016: 393) a glitch is "the revelation of an infrastructural failure". It is "an interruption within a transition, a troubled transmission" (Berlant 2016: 393). As the Turkish state fails to fulfill its duties and promises to citizens, local communities and activists take power, intervene in the process as right claiming citizens and constitute themselves as political subjects. In the case of mega projects, local inhabitants organize meetings and marches in village squares, connect with other threatened villages and take legal action against the projects. The KOS activists assist the locals in their efforts to coordinate with other villages and take legal actions. They organize rallies in and out of Istanbul, engage in direct action protests, prepare reports, and publicize the opposition against the mega projects. In the case of UTPs, the dissident residents establish neighborhood associations and coordinate grassroots activism between the local residents and housing activists. To counter the state led production of uncertainty and misinformation, they organize informative apartment meetings and panels with guest speakers from other neighborhoods. They organize marches, picnics and other similar social activities and reproduce their neighborhood as lived space against the abstract logic of commodification. Through the legal struggle, the residents challenge the state using its own legal language and exposing the failure of local and national authorities to comply

with their own procedures and rules. In engaging with such acts of resistance, local communities and activists become political subjects and reclaim themselves as citizens (Isin 2009). The very fact that they reclaim themselves as citizens interrupt the state's ability to extend the rentier relations and the flows and circulations of rent.

A glitch is not merely a malfunction but also presents the possibility of "generating a form from within brokenness beyond the exigencies of the current crisis, and alternatively to it too" (Berlant 2016: 393). By rejecting to contain the city merely to its exchange value and a rent-based understanding of citizenship, the mobilization against *rant*, presents the possibility of an inhabited city, produced by its residents as a source of polity, as a place of shelter, as a site of belonging and solidarity. In doing so, the citizens redefine what public good is and what should be the principles of a polity. Even in the increasingly authoritarian context of Turkish politics, citizenship as an institution acts as an empowering mechanism for inhabitants to reclaim their rights and demand the state to be accountable to its commitments.

However, "a disruption in rules and norms is not the same thing as the absence or defeat of structure as such" (Berlant 2016: 394). In the case of mega projects, the rising land prices and the continuing trust to the charismatic leadership Erdogan, combined with anti-urban approach of the environmental activists and the criminalization of dissent prevent the emerging discontent with the projects to transform into a wider movement. Despite the disruptions and fractures the dissident citizens create in the dominant social contract, the state seems to successfully convey the message that "the mega projects are inevitable, and the best deal one can make is to be part of it and get a share in profits". Regarding UTPs, however, even though the legal struggle has been one of the viable means to challenge and halt the transformation projects, it has its own limits. Even though some residents and neighborhoods can make relative gains through the legal process, once the

resident activists frame their struggle in the abstract terms of legality, they also unintentionally perpetuate the existing divisions of property, class, socio-cultural differences in the movement. Such differences lead to uneven outcomes for neighborhoods and citizens, encouraging individualized compensation politics. The struggle to survive the legal battle tames the imagined and demanded city that fiercely opposes *rantsal donusum*. In both of the cases, I demonstrate that organized resistance fails to account for the existing uneven experiences of citizenship whether in terms of rural vs urban geographies or variegated types of private property documents and overlooks the contradictions of urban development.

Chapter 7 - Conclusion

7.1. Towards a new citizenship contract

This dissertation analyzes infrastructure as a mediation between state-space and citizenship, based on the case of Istanbul, Turkey. Following Lefebvre's theorization of production of space, it argues that infrastructure is a crucial mediation between state-space and citizens in four important ways: first it constitutes the basis of state legitimacy and power in the eyes of its subjects through provision of infrastructure. Second it is a tool for the state to impose duties and responsibilities on its citizens and often to undermine their rights by de-politicizing the process of infrastructure development. Third through infrastructure the state (re)produces and solidifies uneven and unequal patterns of citizenship. Finally, infrastructure is a key forum for citizens to challenge and contest state spaces, by producing novel and different spaces. Based on this theorization, the research looks at the infrastructure development in Istanbul, Turkey. By focusing on urban transformation projects (housing) and mega projects (transit), the dissertation argues that the ruling party AKP built a new citizenship contract that took the provision of infrastructure as its core value. Infrastructure, in the form of housing and mega projects, was presented as the primary mechanism to overcome existing inequalities and transform marginalized subjects into full-fledged citizens.

Thus, in chapter 4, the dissertation explores how in a neo-Ottomanist discourse, the projects are argued to make Istanbul an international transit hub, render Turkey a regional and global power against the (infidel) West and improve the material everyday life of the citizens. The projects symbolically represent an end to the so-called inferiority complex Turkish citizens experienced due to the incompetent regimes of the Kemalist elite. They are built as monuments to the past imperial glories and as an attempt to produce symbolic nation space as integrated and homogenous.

The defense of the projects, however, goes beyond their symbolic representations. They are also defended in terms of increasing shared prosperity through provision of higher quality infrastructure and valorization of urban land. For example, Yavuz Sultan Selim Bridge was vehemently defended to ease the traffic congestion in the city and thus improve citizens' living standards. Furthermore, the rising land prices around the bridge was expected to trickle down to local populations, revaluing their urban/rural lands. In this context, building 'the biggest' does not only signify the post-imperial glory but is also a declaration of the state's achievement of providing world class services to its subjects.

Similarly, chapter 5 looks at how urban transformation projects are presented as the fulfillment of the state's responsibility to properly house its citizens which was neglected by the prior regimes. They are promoted as an opportunity to foster a new social contract based on elevating citizens' living standards through neighborhood development. However, this elevation of living standards does not necessarily come through the use value of houses as shelters but rather through their exchange value as assets for citizens to usurp the increasing real estate prices. Citizens as stakeholders are expected to gauge their options, choosing either to stay in their neighborhoods or cash in their houses and invest their *rant* somewhere else. In one sense, if mega projects are the monuments to the prosperity of the rising nation, urban transformation projects are promises of the everyday materialization of that prosperity.

Regarding both the mega transit and urban transformation projects, citizens are expected to: i. participate in the rampant and aggressive mode of commodification of urban land (duty); ii. enjoy better provision of infrastructural services/ benefit from the rising urban rent (rights); and iii. when necessary surrender individual rights to promote the common good. Those who stand outside of the terms of the contract are excluded and marginalized from the political process. In

this sense, rural citizens' lands and urban citizens' houses are expropriated; their neighborhoods are criminalized; and those who resist the projects are framed as terrorists who wish to undermine the rise of the Turkish nation. While each new house, highway and airport represents an attempt to rebuild the social contract between the state and citizens based on infrastructural benefits, to resist means to stand outside and be excluded from the polity.

7.2. Production of state-space, urban infrastructure and *arsa*:

The dissertation argues that underneath the Turkish state's new social contract is its ability to control and dominate conditions that make relentless production of *arsa* possible. In this context, the dissertation speaks to the centralization of urban planning and executive powers under the Mass Housing Administration (TOKI) and later the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization. As described in chapter 5, with the numerous legal reforms passed between 2002 and 2008, TOKI was turned into a central bank for accumulation of public lands; became the sole agency to regulate, zone and sell all public lands as well as functioning as a profit oriented developer. Following an executive order in June 2011, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization was established to further centralize all planning decisions (state owned land and beyond). The ministry has authority to intervene in any zoning or planning decision that had been taken by district municipalities which in practice make them ineffective. Such legal and institutional changes made TOKI and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization the most powerful actors in governing the real estate markets in Turkey.

These changes produce a new land regime, based on the relentless state-led production of abstract space in the form *arsa* (parceled land) through the privatization of public lands. Through the hands of TOKI, the state acquires, buys, expropriates land, and sells it to private/public developers at low costs. Infrastructure projects such as UTPs and mega transit projects legitimize

privatization of public lands and weave through landscapes, homogenizing and fragmenting them. Neighborhoods, villages, and urban fabric are transformed into the abstract category of *arsa*, measured in quantities and hierarchized according to its ability yield to rent. By turning space into a calculable commodified entity, the Turkish state links up neighborhoods, districts, urban and rural areas and submits them to its own strategies of building state-space. Through its public-private partnerships such as Emlak Konut REIT, the state capitalizes on the rising land and real estate prices, extracting rent for its own agencies. By awarding highly subsidized lands and unique market opportunities to its own business clientele, it cultivates the growth of pro-government capital and their partisan support. Land rent distills down through the ranks of the political and economic elites and finds its way to middlemen speculators, real estate brokers and even locals who could afford the newly built projects. A new infrastructure of rent circulation is established, transforming urban and rural spaces, and creating new centres of accumulated wealth and power.

Such a system feeds back into the citizenship contract discussed above. The production of abstract space in the form of *arsa* fuels the government's increasing authoritarian tendencies and legitimizes its curtailment of social and political rights of citizens. The rising residential towers, "architectural marvels" of transit infrastructure, land prices contribute to the symbolic power of the state as rent becomes an object of desire not only for individuals but also for the collective. The abstract form of *arsa*, homogenized, fragmented, and hierarchized, becomes basis for an abstract notion of citizenship, built on the Neo-Ottoman fantasies of unity, communal belonging and collective prosperity. In the meantime, the social fabric is being torn apart by rentier compulsions and practices exercised from below and from above. In this sense, the state's fantasy of producing "a space, where something is brought to perfection, namely a unified and

homogeneous society" (Lefebvre 1991: 281) is being built on a precarious citizenship contract that is fueled by infrastructural dreams and production of parceled lands.

However, as Lefebvre argued, state space and its tendency to abstraction "reflects the result it seeks rather than what it really is" (Lefebvre 1991: 287). The fact that it tends toward to both homogenization and fragmentation, makes it rife with internal contradictions (Goswami 2004). For example, in order to maximize rent extraction and investment in the built environment, the state needs to acquire land at its cheapest. Thus, chapter 4 discussed how the same rural citizens who are promised of social upward mobility are forced to sell their land at depressed prices to the government or face threat of urgent expropriation. Through legal and economic pressures, they are displaced from their lands, lose their main source of income and livelihoods, and are trapped in new forms of economic and social deprivation. In the meantime, the prospects of new infrastructure projects open further lands to commodification and *arsa* production. The rising number of middlemen speculators and real estate brokers buy local residents' lands at cheap prices while the same land is later sold to larger real estate speculators for much higher prices. Overall, the mega infrastructure projects act as tools of land (rent) transfer from the rural citizens to large developers, fragmentating and hierarchizing society into different groups.

Similarly, chapter 5 explored how the urban transformation projects create new layers of exclusion and difference in the targeted inner-city neighborhoods. The state needs to assemble land and transfer it to the developers at the lowest possible cost while the developers need to maximize their profit by increasing the number of post-construction units within given restrictions, and lowering the costs of construction. As a result, UTPs immediately exclude tenants from being rightful owners, pressure informal settlers to sell their land at cheap prices despite their legally recognized *tapu tahsis belgesi* and exploit incomplete and ambiguous contracts to lower the profit

share of the right holders. Furthermore, as the system relies on continuous production of manufactured houses to maximize profit and exchange value rather than meeting the actual demand for affordable housing, as more "transformed" units enter the market, the less exchange value they have. In the end, despite the officials' shiny promises of a better life for citizens, many residents actually lose their houses, are relocated to another peripheral neighborhood, or become stuck in cheaply built small units, worth far less than the initial apprehensions.

These tensions and contradictions reveal that the state's ambitions to build an abstract notion of citizenship based on the abstract form of *arsa* through extended and concentrated urbanization, cannot deliver its promises. The imaginaries and fantasies of unity, communal belonging, and collective prosperity (conceived spaces) do not match with citizens' perceived and lived spaces, as do not experience a dramatic shift in their standard of living. Instead of moving things and people, the infrastructure projects in Istanbul make citizens "stuck in place, stuck in routines, stuck in dead end future" (Simone 2018: 41). Despite the official claims of a third bridge solving Istanbul's traffic problems, residents of Istanbul are still stuck in the traffic jam as before. Despite the dreams of moving up in citizenship status by owning higher-end residential units, residents are stuck in cheaply built small condo units. Despite the promises of ending discrimination against ethnic minorities, ethnic neighborhoods are further criminalized and marginalized. Instead of moving up towards belonging to a homogenous and unified nation, the society is ridden with inequalities, discrepancies, and disappointments. The citizenship gap is still there in its new variegated forms. In one way, infrastructure development "function[s] as traps, promising to enable and facilitate only to prey on our aspirations and then manipulate or immobilize us" (Simone 2018: 41).

7.3. Developing Infrastructures of Resistance

The state's failure to deliver shared prosperity and a sense of belonging through infrastructure development, puts it under unique pressures. Infrastructural 'glitches' from incomplete projects to an oversupply of condo units, exacerbate the contradictions in the state-citizenship contract, opening new spaces for citizens to redefine and reclaim their rights and responsibilities. As the Turkish state fails to fulfill its duties and promises to citizens, local communities and activists take power, intervene in the process as right claiming citizens and constitute themselves as political subjects.

In this sense, the dissertation argues that the mobilization against *rant* emerges as a common thread of grievance and frustration among citizens in Istanbul. It challenges the official discourse that *rant* is a common good and that a rent-based understanding can address historical and spatial unevenness of citizenship in Turkey. Instead it turns the official story on its head, reframes *rant* as a means to serve to the upper-class interests while dispossessing and marginalizing *real* citizens. In exposing the inequalities, embedded in state-led infrastructure development, citizens reject to reduce the city merely to its exchange value and disrupt the flows of rent circulation. Instead they demand an inhabited city, produced by its residents as a source of polity, as a place of shelter, and as a site of belonging and solidarity. In doing so, citizens redefine what the public good is and what should be the principles of a polity. Even in the increasingly authoritarian context of Turkish politics, we see that citizenship as an institution acts as an empowering mechanism for inhabitants to reclaim their rights and demand the state to be accountable to its commitments.

However, "a disruption in rules and norms is not the same thing as the absence or defeat of structure as such" (Berlant 2016: 394). In the case of mega projects, the rising land prices, and

the continuing trust to the charismatic leadership Erdogan, combined with an anti-urban approach by environmental activists prevent the emerging discontent with the projects from transforming into a wider movement. Regarding UTPs, some residents and neighborhoods can make relative gains through the legal process. However, once resident activists frame their struggle in the abstract terms of legality, they also unintentionally perpetuate the existing divisions of property, class, socio-cultural differences in the movement. Such differences lead to uneven outcomes for neighborhoods and citizens, encouraging individualized compensation politics. In mobilizing resistance against both the mega transit and housing projects, I demonstrate that organized resistance fails to account for the existing uneven experiences of citizenship whether in terms of rural vs urban geographies or variegated types of private property documents, and thus limiting in effect their challenge to the status quo.

Nevertheless, I do not interpret the emerging politics of compensation as a total defeat. "The commons", in the end "is incoherent, like all powerful concepts" (Berlant 2016: 397). Neither the development of mega projects nor the implementation of UTPs is smooth, coherent, or united as the Turkish state claims to be. From the citizens who defy the state at any price, to those who are the AKP supporters but also critical of the proposals or to those who want to resist but see it as a futile effort, the state's rent-based contract of citizenship is full of cracks and contradictions. Looking below the surface and how the city is actually experienced (Wood 2017: 12), shows us that the projects are built on the citizens' refusal, anxieties, grievances or (failed) expectations. Thus, I maintain that the question for the resistance movement should become how to exploit these cracks and to reach those in grey zones especially as these contradictions become sharper. In doing so, we need to develop politics that understands infrastructure development and its contradictions especially as they relate to uneven experiences of citizenship.

7.4. Contributions, limitations, and future research area

By conceptualizing the production of abstract space in the form of *arsa* as a core driver of the capitalist urbanization process and its implosions/explosions, the dissertation highlights the role of infrastructure development in state-space production. The production of *arsa* and the related politics of infrastructure, however, cannot be merely explained by the dynamics of neoliberal urbanization and capital accumulation, as the traditional political economy approach tends to analyze (Smith, 2002; Scott and Storper, 2003; Harvey, 2008, Peck & Tickell 2002, Swyngedouw 1996, Aalbers 2013ab among others). They are also driven by and trigger new political rationalities of state-space building as well as shaping citizens' political subjectivities (Goldman 2011, Haas and Azam 2019). In this sense, infrastructure development is not merely a tool of capitalist accumulation, but is also central in in constituting the nation-state as both a spatial institutional apparatus and an imaginary of collective belonging and identity.

Second as I described in the second chapter, the existing literature on citizenship and infrastructure relationship has been mostly theorized and analyzed at the level of the urban as a container. In this sense, citizenship has been conceptualized as "as a process, a struggle enmeshed in the materiality, identities and politics of urban life, rather than in the legal and bureaucratic realms of state institutions" (Yiftachel 2015: 728). This normative separation between urban and state citizenship has resulted in "overflowing… arguments about urban citizens, residents, occupants, movements, and experiences as the new political subject." (Roy 2016: 818). Such an approach, however, leaves out the questions of how urban politics are related to the wider scales of the state-space production. It puts "too much naïve hope on the thin shoulders of urban citizenship" and on "the ability of the city to deliver genuine responses to the issues raised in the increasing urban protest of recent years" (Blokland et al. 2015 cited in Yiftachel 2015: 728). On

the contrary when we analyze infrastructure as a mediation between state-space and citizens through the urban as *an entry point*, we are then able to see how citizen-subjects and their relation to infrastructure are enmeshed and entangled with the state's tactics, strategies and legalities. This is important since as the dissertation shows infrastructure development can be a tool both for politicization and depoliticization while the effects of community mobilizations against infrastructure can be limited, reproducing state-space in different ways.

Finally, in recent years we are witnessing the rise of populist right-wing parties and their electoral victories across both the global South and North. A core argument of such governments is that urban infrastructure is vital to their nations' economic and social progress. Understanding infrastructure politics as both rights and duties in relation to the state-space, helps us develop more nuanced progressive politics that attend to infrastructure development in its multi sided aspects. The dissertation argued the effects of the infrastructure projects are differentially experienced across community and place. While the questions of gendered difference were not addressed directly, but within broader power dynamics, future research on how projects generate different gendered citizenship experiences would be worth studying. Similarly, as there is a growing literature on the urbanization of refuge, the questions of refugees and their claims to citizenship, state-space, and access to infrastructure in host countries would be a critical area of investigation. As dissidents, we have to recognize the power structures that are always present before, during and after any infrastructural encounter and that they unevenly shape citizens' lived experience. The infrastructure development, in this sense, is a contradictory and messy process that simultaneously includes and excludes citizens, blurring the lines between the winners and losers. Thus, without understanding how infrastructure development mobilizes most citizens' legitimate demands and desires for inclusive citizenship and equality, we cannot develop progressive politics

that speak to their everyday experience and lived spaces. Once we understand how the conceived, perceived and lived spaces are produced and integrated to each other by those states citizenship contracts, then we can point out to its internal cracks and contradictions which are embedded in the everyday life. By strategically criticizing the dominant system from inside rather than outside (i.e. anti-developmentalist), we can carry the seeds of a different space and momentum building towards an equal and inclusive membership.

Bibliography

Adakli, G. (2009). The Process of Neoliberalisation and the Transformation of the Turkish Media Sector in the Context of the New Media Architecture. In Jackie Harrison and Bridgette Wessel (eds.), Mediating Europe: Communication in Contemporary European Culture Contents, pp. 286–317. Oxford: Berghahn.

Adakli, G. (2010). 2002–2008: Türk Medyasında AKP Etkisi. In İlhan Uzgel, and Bülent Duru (eds.), AKP AKP Kitabı: Bir Dönüşümün, pp. 559–613. Istanbul: Phoenix

Adama, O. (2018). Urban imaginaries: funding mega infrastructure projects in Lagos, Nigeria. *GeoJournal*, *83*(2), 257–274. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-016-9761-8

Ahmad, F. (1977). The Turkish Experiment in Democracy 1950-1975, London: C. *Hurst & Company*.

Ahval. (2018). "Turkey to allow construction in one of Istanbul's scarce green spaces". Retrieved from https://ahvalnews.com/environment/turkey-allow-construction-one-istanbuls-scarce-green-spaces

AKP. (2017). AK Party 2023 Political Visions. Retrieved from https://www.akparti.org.tr/en/parti/2023-political-vision/

Akpinar, I. (2015). Menderes Imar Hareketleri Turklestirme Politikalarinin bir Parcasi miydi? Arrademento Mimarlık Dergisi, Mayıs-2015 pp. 85-89

Akser, M., & Baybars-Hawks, B. (2012). Media and Democracy in Turkey: Toward a Model of Neoliberal Media Autocracy. *Middle East Journal of Culture and Communication*, *5*(3), 302–321.

Aksoy, A. (2012). Riding the storm: 'new Istanbul.' *City*, *16*(1–2), 93–111. https://doi.org/10.1080/13604813.2012.662373

Allweil, Y. (2012). Israeli Housing and Nation Building: Establishment of the State-Citizen Contract, 1948-1953. *Traditional Dwellings and Settlements Review*, *23*(2), 51–67.

Akhter, M. (2015). Infrastructure Nation: State Space, Hegemony, and Hydraulic Regionalism in Pakistan. *Antipode*, *47*(4), 849–870. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12152

Anand, N. (2017). *Hydraulic city: Water and the infrastructures of citizenship in Mumbai*. Duke University Press.

Azem, I. (2011). Documentary *Ecumenopolis*: *City Without Limits*. Available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=maEcPKBXV0M [last accessed 10 May 2020]

Babbie, E. & Benaquisto, L. (2002). *Fundamentals of social research*. Scarborough, ON: Nelson Thomson Learning.

Bakirkoy. (2018). "AKP'li Holdingler Kanal Istanbul Arsalarini Toplamis". Retrieved from http://www.bakirkoygazetesi.com/akp-li-holdingler-kanal-istanbul-arsalarini-toplamis/3713/

Balaban, U. (2009). "Faburjuvazi ve İktidar, Praksis Derg isi, Sayı 32(2), Ankara.

Batuman, B. (2005). Identity, monumentality, security: Building a monument in early republican Ankara. *Journal of Architectural Education*, *59*(1), 34–45. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1531-314X.2005.00004.x

Bayhan, K. (2016). 140journos. Available at *https://140journos.com/yap-islet-devret-modeli-uygulanan-projelerde-gecis-sayilari-ne-ec0281607473* [last accessed 25 April 2020]

Baysal, C. (2014). Civilizing the Kurdish Population of Ayazma: Ayazma / Tepeüstü Urban Transformation Project -Küçükçekmece Istanbul. *Journal of Planning*, *23*(2), 83–94.

Baysal, E. (2017). Terricide : Poisoning the Lungs of Istanbul . *Research and Policy on Turkey*, *2*(1), 10–24.

Berlant, L. (2015). The commons: Infrastructures for troubling times*. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *34*(3), 393–419.https://doi.org/10.1177/0263775816645989

Beykozses. (2013). "Istanbul 3. Kopru icin Ne dusunuyor?" Retrieved from https://www.beykozses.com/istanbul-3-kopru-icin-ne-dusunuyor.html

Bikos, L. J. (2018). An Insider's Perspective on Research with Policewomen in Canada. In Kleinknecht, van den Scott & Sanders (Eds) *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*. Canadian Scholars' Press. 78 – 85.

Bocking, P. (2020). Public Education, Neoliberalism, and Teachers: New York, Mexico City, Toronto. Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Bora, T. (1999). Istanbul of the Conqueror. *Istanbul: Between the global and the local*, 47-58.

Brenner, N. (1997). Global, fragmented, hierarchical: Henri Lefebvre's geographies of globalization. *Public Culture*, *10*(1), 135-167

Brenner, N. & Elden, S. (2009a). "Henri Lefebvre on State, Space, Territory." International Political Sociology 3 (4): 353–377.

Brenner, N. & Elden, S. (2009b). In Lefebvre, H. *State, space, world: Selected essays*. U of Minnesota Press.

Bugra, A. (1998). The immoral economy of housing in Turkey. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *22*(2), 303–317. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.00141

Çalışkan, Ç. O. (2010). The 3rd Bridge Project Evaluation Report. UCTEA Chamber of Urban Planners Istanbul Branch (UCTEA). Spoist.org (Istanbul). Retrieved from http://www.spoist.org/dokuman/kitaplar/Kopru_raporu_eng.pdf accessed 8 August 2019

Çalışkan, G. (2018). Doing Research Undercover: Interviewing Protesters. In Kleinknecht, van den Scott & Sanders (Eds) *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*. Canadian Scholars' Press .60 – 67.

Çavdar, A. (2016). Building, marketing and living in an Islamic gated community: novel configurations of class and religion in Istanbul. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *40*(3), 507-523.

Çavuşoğlu, E., & Strutz, J. (2014). Producing force and consent: Urban transformation and corporatism in Turkey. *City*, *18*, 134–148.

Celik, O., Topal, A., & Yalman, G. (2016). *Finance and System of Provision of Housing. The Case of Istanbul, Turkey* (Working paper 152).

Cengiz, P. (2014). "Rant Aglariyla Orduk Istanbulu Dort Bastan". Retrieved from http://politeknik.org.tr/rant-aglariyla-orduk-istanbulu-dort-bastan-pelin-cengiz-taraf/

Chapin, T. (2002). Beyond the entrepreneurial city: municipal capitalism in San Diego. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, *24*(5), 565–581.

Christophers, B. (2016). For real: Land as capital and commodity. *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, *41*(2), 134–148.

Collinson, P. (2015). Turkey tops global house price index despite turmoil. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/money/2015/dec/01/turkey-tops-global-house-price-index-knight-frank

Corbridge, Stuart, et al. 2005. Seeing the State: Governance and Governmentality in India. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Cowen, D. (2019). Following the infrastructures of empire: notes on cities, settler colonialism, and method. *Urban Geography*, 1–18. https://doi.org/10.1080/02723638.2019.1677990

Dikeç, M. (2002). Police, politics, and the right to the city. *GeoJournal*, *58*(2/3), 91–98.

Dikeç, M. (2017). *Urban rage: The revolt of the excluded*. Yale University Press.

Doğru, H. E. (2016). The 'Benevolent Hand' of the Turkish State: Mass Housing Administration, State Restructuring and Capital Accumulation in Turkey. Unpublished PhD Thesis

Dunn, K. (2004). Interviewing. In Hay (Eds.). *Qualitative research methods in human geography*. Oxford University Press: 50-81.

Dursun, B. (2017). "3 Koye Kanal Piyangosu". Retrieved from https://www.milliyet.com.tr/ekonomi/3-koye-kanal-piyangosu-2569366

Eckert, J., (2004). Urban governance and emergent forms of legal pluralism in Mumbai. Journal of legal pluralism, 50, 29–60.

Eckert, J. (2011). Introduction: Subjects of citizenship. *Citizenship Studies*, *15*(3–4), 309–317.

Ekonomist. (2017). "Kopruler ile degerlenen 81 bolge". Retrieved from https://www.ekonomist.com.tr/kapak-konusu/koprulerle-degerlenen-81-bolge.html

Ekonomist. (2018). "Kanalin Parlattigi Bolgeler". Retrieved from https://www.ekonomist.com.tr/kapak-konusu/kanalin-parlattigi-bolgeler.html

Elden, S. (2004). *Understanding Henri Lefebvre*. London: Continuum.

Emlak. (2007). "Terorun arkasinda gecekondulasma var". Retrieved from https://emlakkulisi.com/terorun-arkasinda-gecekondulasma-var/1133

Emlak. (2013). "Istenmeyen yerde Kentsel Donusum Yapilmayacak" Retrieved from http://emlak.haber7.com/emlak/haber/998969-istenmeyen-yerde-kentsel-donusum-yapilmayacak

Emlakta. (2016). "Sektorden Haberler". Retrieved from https://www.emlaktasondakika.com/haber/sektorden-haberler/gyoderin-konut-kampanyasi-ekonomiye-katki-saglayacak/115972

Emlak Konut. (2011). "2011 Dönemine Ait Yönetim Kurulu Raporu." Emlak Konut.

Emlak Konut. (2016). "Emlak Konut REIT Partnership Structure." Retrieved from http://www.emlakkonut.com.tr/Page/236/partnership_structure.html

Emlak Konut. (2019a) "2018 Yili Faaliyet Raporu" Retrieved from http://www.emlakkonut.com.tr/_Assets/Upload/Images/file/Yatirimci/faaliyetraporlari/tr/Faaliyet%20Raporu%202018.pdf

Emlak Konut. (2019b) "Emlak Konut GYO A.S. Yatirimci Sunumu" Retrieved from http://www.emlakkonut.com.tr/_Assets/Upload/Images/file/YatirimciSunumu/turkceSunum.pdf

Emlak Konut. (2020). "Emlak Konut GYO A.S. Yatirimci Sunumu" Retrieved from http://www.emlakkonut.com.tr/_Assets/Upload/Images/file/YatirimciSunumu/24042020-Sun-Tr.pdf

Erder, S. (1996) Istanbul'a bir kent kondu: Ümraniye [A shanty town in Istanbul: Umraniye]. Iletisim, Istanbul.

Erdi-Lelandais, G. (2014). Right to the City as an Urban Utopia? Practices of Everyday Resistance in a Romani Neighborhood in Istanbul. In *Understanding the City: Henri Lefebvre and Urban Studies*. (Eds) Erdi-Lelandais, G. Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Fainstein, S. S. (2008). Mega-projects in New York, London and Amsterdam. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *32*(4), 768–785.

Flint, A. (2018). "Letting Slum Residents to Control Their Destiny" Retrieved from https://www.citylab.com/equity/2018/02/letting-slum-residents-control-their-own-destiny/554120/

Flyvbjerg, B. (2005). Machiavellian megaprojects. *Antipode*, *37*(1), 18-22.

Flyvbjerg, B. (2014a). *Megaproject planning and management: Essential readings, vols 1-2*. Edward Elgar Publishing

Flyvbjerg, B. (2014b). What You Should Know about Megaprojects and Why: An Overview *Project Management Journal*, vol. 45, no. 2, April-May, pp. 6-19.

Fredericks, R. (2018). *Garbage citizenship: vital infrastructures of labor in Dakar, Senegal*. Duke University Press.

Furlong, K. (2019). Geographies of infrastructure 1: Economies. *Progress in Human Geography*.

Garcia, M. (2006). Citizenship Practices and Urban Governance in European Cities. *Urban Studies*, *43*(4), 745–765.

Gazete Esenler. (2014). "Kentsel Donusum Magdurlari Belediyeye Yurudu" Retrieved from http://www.gazeteesenler.com/havaalani-mah-kentsel-donusum-magdurlari-belediyeye-yurudu-h6818.htm

Gilbert, L., & Dikeç, M. (2008) Right to the City. *Space, Difference, Everyday Life: Reading Henri Lefebvre*

Goldman, M. (2011). Speculative urbanism and the making of the next world city. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *35*(3), 555-581.

Goswami, M. (2004). *Producing India: from colonial economy to national space*. Orient Blackswan.

Göktürk, D., Soysal, L., & Tureli, I. (Eds.). (2010). *Orienting Istanbul: cultural capital of Europe?* Routledge.

Gökşin, Z. A., & Töre, E. (2016). The origins, processes and emerging outcomes of neighbourhood redevelopment in Gaziosmanpaşa, Istanbul. Athens Journal of Mediterranean Studies Volume 2, Issue1–Pages 45-70

Görüş. 1994. "Istanbul stress degil huzur kenti olacak" Retrieved from https://tusiad.org/tr/yayinlar/gorus-dergisi/item/9164-tusiad-gorus-dergisi-no-13

Graham, S. & Marvin, S. (2001). *Splintering Urbanism: Networked Infrastructures, Technological Mobilities and the Urban Condition*. London: Routledge.

Graham, Steve. (2009). *Disrupted cities: When infrastructure fails.* London, NY: Routledge.

Gündoğan, A. Z. (2018). Divergent responses to urban transformation projects in Turkey: common sense and state affinity in community mobilization. *Urban Geography*, *00*(00), 1–25.

Gündoğdu, O. (2019). "Kiracilar ev sahiplerine 60 milyar lira odedi" Retrieved from https://www.birgun.net/haber/kiracilar-ev-sahiplerine-60-milyar-lira-odedi

Güney, K. M. (2019). Building northern Istanbul: Mega-projects, speculation, and new suburbs. In K. M. Güney, R. Keil, & M. Üçoğlu (Eds.), Massive suburbanization: (Re)building the global periphery (pp. 181–200). Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Gürakar, E. Ç. (2016). *Politics of favoritism in public procurement in Turkey: Reconfigurations of dependency networks in the AKP era*. Springer.

Haila, A. (2016). *Urban land rent: Singapore as a property state*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Hardal, S. 2014. Kentsel Dönüşüm Alanlarına Bir Örnek; Sarıgöl Mahallesi (Gaziosmanpaşa). Yük-sek Lisans Tezi, Bilecik Şeyh Edebali Üniversi-tesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, Coğrafya Anabi-lim Dalı, Bilecik. Retrieved from http://acikkaynak.bilecik.edu.tr/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11552/200/10015499.pdf?sequence=1 on 09 – 10 – 2019

Harvey, D. 1973. Social Justice and the City. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Harvey, D. 1974. 'Class-monopoly rent, finance capital and the urban revolution'. Regional Studies, 8, 239–255.

Harvey, D. 1982. The Limits to Capital. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Harvey, D. (1989). From Managerialism to Entrepreneurialism: The Transformation in Urban Governance in Late Capitalism. *Geografiska Annaler*, *71*(1), 3–17.

Harvey, D. (2008) The right to the city. New Left Review 53 (September/October), 23–40.

Hillier, C., & Milne, E. (2018). “You’re an Alien to Us”: Autoethnographic Accounts of Two Researchers’ Experiences in an Organizational Setting. In Kleinknecht, van den Scott & Sanders (Eds) *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*. Canadian Scholars’ Press. 98 -107.

Holston, J., & Appadurai, A. (1999). Introduction: Cities and Citizenship. *Cities and Citizenship*, 1–20.

Holston, J. (2008) Insurgent citizenship: disjunctions of democracy and modernity in Brazil. Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ.

Houston, C. (2005). Provocations of the built environment: Animating cities in Turkey as Kemalist. *Political Geography*, *24*(1 SPEC. ISS.), 101–119. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.polgeo.2004.07.008

Houston, C. (2015). How Globalization Really Happens: Remembering Activism in the Transformation of Istanbul. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *39*(1), 46–61. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12157

IBB 2009. Retrieved from http://www.planlama.org/new/images/stories/Dokuman/istanbul_cdp/1-2_aciklamalar_bolgesel_aras_bulgulari_.pdf on 8/6/2019

ICA Consortium. (2016). 3. Kopru. Available at https://www.3kopru.com [last accessed 25 April 2020]

Insaat. (2019). “Emlak Konut ile THY 10 bin konutluk projeye basladi”. Retrieved from https://www.insaatderyasi.com/emlak-konut-ile-thy-10-bin-konutluk-projeye-basladi-10616h.htm

Ince, E. (2014). “Son Uyari: Istanbul Manda Sutunu Cok Ozleyecek” Retrieved from http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/son-uyari-istanbul-manda-sutunu-cok-ozleyecek-1172563/

Isin, E. F., & Wood, P. K. (1999). *Citizenship and identity* London, UK; Thousand Oaks, CA, New Delhi : Sage Publications.

Isin, E. F. (2004). The Neurotic citizen. *Citizenship Studies*, *8*(3), 217–235.

Isin, Engin F. (2008). Theorizing acts of citizenship. In: Isin, Engin F. and Nielsen, Greg M. eds. *Acts of Citizenship.* London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 15–43

Isin, E. F. (2009). Citizenship in flux: The figure of the activist citizen Introduction: A New Vocabulary of Citizenship. *Subjectivity*, *29*(29), 367–388.

Isin, E. F., & Nyers, P. (2014). Introduction: Globalizing citizenship studies. In Isin, E. F., & Nyers, P. (Eds.). *Routledge handbook of global citizenship studies*. Routledge 1–11.

Isin, E. (2017). Performative citizenship. In Shachar, A., Bauböck, R., Bloemraad, I., & Vink, M. (Eds.). *The Oxford handbook of citizenship*. Oxford University Press.

Jäger, J. (2003). Urban land rent theory: A regulationist perspective. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *27*(2), 233–249.

Jessop, B. (2013). Putting neoliberalism in its time and place: a response to the debate. Social Anthropology, 21(1), 65-74.

Jonas, A. E., McCann, E., & Thomas, M. (2015). *Urban geography: a critical introduction*. John Wiley & Sons Ltd.

Kabeer, N. (2002). Citizenship and the boundaries of the acknowledged community: identity, affiliation and exclusion. *Institute of Development,* 1 – 40. Retrieved from http://saigonbank.vanpack.com/tailieu/TVN/CT/Citizenship%20and%20the%20Boundaries%20of%20the%20Acknowledged%20Community.pdf

Kadioğlu, A. (2013). Can we envision Turkish citizenship as non-membership? In *Citizenship in a Global World* (pp. 117-135). Routledge.

Kahveci, I. (2019). "Istanbul'dan koye donus basladi". Retrieved from https://www2.karar.com/yazarlar/ibrahim-kahveci/istanbuldan-koye-donus-basladi-9146

Kalaycioglu, E. (2001). Turkish Democracy: Patronage versus Governance. *Turkish Studies*, *2*(1), 54. https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2001.11009173

Karaman, O. (2013). Urban Renewal in Istanbul: Reconfigured Spaces, Robotic Lives. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, *37*(2), 715–733.

Karaman, O., Sawyer, L., Schmid, C., & Wong, K. P. (2020). Plot by Plot: Plotting Urbanism as an Ordinary Process of Urbanisation, *Antipode 0*(0), 1–30. https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12626

Kearns, R. (2000). Being there: Research through observing and participating. In Hay, I. (Ed.). Qualitative research methods in human geography. South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Keil, R. (2018). Extended urbanization, "disjunct fragments" and global suburbanisms. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *36*(3), 494–511.

Keller, C. (2011). Kanal Istanbul: Pipedream or Politics? Retrieved from https://www.ifri.org/en/publications/editoriaux/actuelles-de-lifri/kanal-istanbul-pipedream-or-politics

Kentsel Vizyon Platformu (2015). Sosyal Etki Degerlendirme Rehberi. Retrieved from http://www.kentselvizyon.org/assets/sed-rehberi_mail-2.pdf

Kezer, Z. (2009). An imaginable community: The material culture of nation-building in early republican Turkey. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, *27*(3), 508–530.

Kipfer, S. (2002). Urbanization, Everyday Life, and the Survival of Capitalism: Lefebvre, Gramsci and the Problematic of Hegemony. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, *13*(2), 117–149.

Kipfer, S. (2008). How Lefebvre urbanized Gramsci: hegemony, everyday life, and difference. In *Space, difference, everyday life* (pp. 207-225). Routledge.

Kipfer, S., Goonewardena, K., Schmid, C., & Milgrom, R. (2008). On the production of Henri Lefebvre. In *Space, difference, everyday life* (pp. 15-38). Routledge.

Kipfer, S., Saberi, P., & Wieditz, T. (2012). Henri Lefebvre: Debates and controversies. *Progress in Human Geography*, *37*(1), 115–134.

Kipfer, S., & Goonewardena, K. (2013). Urban Marxism and the post-colonial question: Henri Lefebvre and 'colonisation'. *Historical Materialism*, *21*(2), 76-116

Kleinknecht et al. (2018). (Eds) *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*. Canadian Scholars' Press.

Knox P. & S. Pinch. (2010). Urban Social Geography. Essex: Pearson.

Kofman, E. & Lebas, E. (1996). Lost in Transposition – Time, Space and the City. In Writings on Cities (Eds) by E. Kofman and E. Lebas, Oxford: Blackwell

KONUTDER. (2013). "Konut Sektörü Değerlendirme Sunumu." Housing Sector Evaluation Presetation. Retrieved from http://konutder.org.tr/upload/raporlar/da34e3a5574e29e97e04d5d902b99572.pdf

KOS. (2014). 21 Mart Basin Aciklamasi. Retrieved from https://kuzeyormanlari.org/2014/03/21/kent-mitinginde-okudugumuz-metin/

KOS. (2015). "The Third Airport Project Vis-a-Vis Life, Nature, Environment, People and Law". Retrieved from http://www.kuzeyormanlari.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/3rd_airport_project.pdf accessed 8 August 2019

KOS. (2016a). Available at https://www.facebook.com/IstanbulKentSavunmasi/posts/1735115723443546/ [last accessed 25 April 2020]

KOS (2016b). Available at https://kuzeyormanlari.org/2016/06/06/fatih-ormaninda-faili-veysel-protestosu/ [last accessed 25 April 2020]

Kuyucu, T., & Ünsal, Ö. (2010). "Urban transformation" as state-led property transfer: An analysis of two cases of urban renewal in Istanbul. *Urban Studies*, *47*(7), 1479–1499.

Larkin, B. (2013). The politics and poetics of infrastructure. *Annual review of anthropology*, *42*, 327-343.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). *The production of space* (Vol. 142). Blackwell: Oxford.

Lefebvre, H. (1996). The Right to the City, In Writings on Cities (Eds) by E. Kofman and E. Lebas, Oxford: Blackwell

Lefebvre, H. (2003). *The urban revolution*. University of Minnesota Press.

Lefebvre, H. 2009. State, Space, World: Selected Essays. edited by N. Brenner & S. Elden, Translated by G. Moore, N. Brenner & S. Elden. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Lemanski, C. (2018a). Infrastructural citizenship and temporal displacement. Retrieved from https://urbangeographyjournal.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/speculative-infrastructures-a-workshop-magzine.pdf

Lemanski, C. (2018b). Infrastructural citizenship: Spaces of living in Cape Town, South Africa. In Ward, K., Jonas, A. E., Miller, B., & Wilson, D. (Eds.). *The Routledge Handbook on Spaces of Urban Politics*, 350–360.

MacLeod, G. (2002). From Urban Entrepreneurialism to a "'"Revanchist City"'"? On the Spatial Injustices of Glasgow''s Renaissance. *Antipode*, *34*(3), 602–625.

Mamdani, M. (1996). Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Mardin, Ş. (1973). Center-periphery relations: A key to Turkish politics?. *Daedalus*, 169-190.

Marshall, T. H. (1992). *Citizenship and social class* London: Pluto Press, 1992.

Martin, P. Y. (2004). Gender as social institution. *Social forces*, *82*(4), 1249-1273.

Massey, D. (2004). Geographies of responsibility. *Geografiska Annaler, Series B: Human Geography*, *86*(1), 5–18. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0435-3684.2004.00150.x

Massey. D. (2005). For Space. London; Thousand Oaks, Calif.: SAGE.

McCormick, C. (2018). The Story of Dr. Charles Smith: An Exercise in Rolling Thematic Analysis. In Kleinknecht, van den Scott & Sanders (Eds) *The Craft of Qualitative Research: A Handbook*. Canadian Scholars' Press. 32 – 46

Merrifield, A. (2006). *Henri Lefebvre: A Critical Introduction*. Taylor & Francis.

Miraftab, F. (2004). Invented and invited spaces of participation: Neo- liberal citizenship and feminists' expanded notion of politics. Wagadu: Journal of Transnational Women's and Gender Studies.

Miraftab, F., & Wills, S. (2005). Insurgency and spaces of active citizenship: The story of Western Cape Anti-Eviction Campaign in South Africa. *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, *25*(2), 200–217.

Mitchell, T., 1999. Society, economy and the state effect. In: G. Steinmetz, ed. State/culture: state formation after the cultural turn. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 76–97.

Moudouros, N. (2014). Rethinking Islamic Hegemony in Turkey through Gezi Park. *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies*, *16*(2), 181–195.

Mumay, C. (2014). "Ucuncu Havalimani Mandalari Vurdu". Retrieved from https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/3-havalimani-mandalari-vurdu-25713208

Mumford, L. (1961). *The city in history: Its origins, its transformations, and its prospects*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Oguz, S. (2010). "Istanbul'un Dogasina Hancer". Retrieved from https://www.milliyet.com.tr/gundem/istanbul-un-dogasina-hancer-1231766

Olwig, K. R. (2005). Cultural Geographies Representation and alienation in the political land-scape, 19–40.

Ong, A. (2006). *Neoliberalism as exception: Mutations in citizenship and sovereignty*. Duke University Press.

Ongur, H. O. (2015). Identifying Ottomanisms: The Discursive Evolution of Ottoman Pasts in the Turkish Presents. *Middle Eastern Studies*, *51*(3), 416–432.

Osborne, B. S. (2001). Landscapes, Memory, Monuments, and Commemoration: Putting Identity in its Place. Authors: Osborne, Brian S. Source: *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, *33*(3), 39–77.

Önal, N. E. (2012). Osmanlı İmparatorluğu'ndan Cumhuriyet'e Geçişte Büyük Toprak Sahiplerinin Sınıfsal Rolü ve Dönüşümü. *Middle East Technical University Studies in Development*, *39*(1).

Öncü, A. (2007). The politics of Istanbul's Ottoman heritage in the era of globalism. Retrieved from http://research.sabanciuniv.edu/9395/1/Ayse_Oncu.pdf

Öncü, A. (2014). Turkish Capitalist Modernity and the Gezi Revolt. *Journal of Historical Sociology*, *27*, 151–176. https://doi.org/10.1111/johs.12036

Özgur, B. (2018). “Bir Yandas Nasil Yaratilir ve Beslenir?” Retrieved from https://www.gazeteduvar.com.tr/yazarlar/2018/11/13/bir-yandas-nasil-yaratilir-ve-beslenir/

Pérouse, J. (2013). ‘Kentsel Dönüşüm Uygulamalarında Belirleyici Bir Rol Üstlenen Toplu Konut İdaresi’nin (TOKI) Belirsiz Kimliği Üzerine Birkaç Saptama’, in Çavdar, Ayşe; Tan, Pelin (eds.) İstanbul: Müstesna Şehrin İstisna Hali, İstanbul, Sel, p. 81–96.

Pongsiri, N. (2012). Public-private partnerships and urban infrastructure development in southeast Asia. *Urbanization in Southeast Asia ISSUES & IMPACTS*, 139-153.

PRM Emlak (N/A). “Yatirimci arsa alimina basladi.” Retrieved from https://www.prmemlak.com.tr/uc-mega-proje-catalcaya-geldi-yatirimci-arsa-alimina-basladi.html

Reidin. (2016). “3. Havalimanin Yil Yil Konut Fiyatlarina Etkisi” Retrieved from https://rebis.reidin.com/tr-TR/News/view/TR_ZINGAT/TRZNGTHBR/20160531/5/3-havalimannn-yl-yl-konut-fiyatlarna-etkisi

Rodgers. D. (2019). Infrastructural citizenship: Spaces of living in Cape Town, South Africa 1. In *Citizenship and Infrastructure* (pp. 8-21). Routledge.

Rose, N., & Miller, P. (1992). Political power beyond the State: problematics of government. 1992. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *61 Suppl 1*(2), 271–303.

Rose, N., 1999. Powers of freedom: reframing political thought. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rose, N. (2000). “Community, Citizenship, and the Third Way,” American Behavioral Scientist, 43, 9: 1395-1411.

Rose, N. and Osborne, T., 2000. Governing cities, governing citizens. In: E. Isin, ed. Democracy, citizenship and the city: rights to the global city. London: Routledge, 95–109.

Rose, N. and Novas, C., 2004. Biological citizenship. In: A. Ong and S.J. Collier, eds. Global assemblages: technology, politics, and ethics as anthropological problems. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 439–463.

Roy, A. (2003). Paradigms of propertied citizenship transnational techniques of analysis. *Urban Affairs Review*, *38*(4), 463–491.

Sachs, J. (2013). Turkey's economy is thriving in a dangerous neighborhood. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/business/economics-blog/2013/may/28/turkey-economy-thriving-jeffrey-sachs

Samara, T. (2012). “Citizens in Search of a City: Towards a new infrastructure of political belonging,” in Michael Peter Smith & Michael McQuarrie (eds.) *Remaking Urban*

Citizenship: Organizations, Institutions, and the Right to the City, Transaction Publishers, pp.39-56.

Savran, S. 2015. Class, state and religion in Turkey. In The neoliberal landscape and Islamist capital in Turkey, eds. N. Balkan, E. Balkan, and A. Öncü, 41–88. New York: Berghahn.

Sayarı, S. (2014). Interdisciplinary Approaches to Political Clientelism and Patronage in Turkey. *Turkish Studies, 15*(4), 655–670. https://doi.org/10.1080/14683849.2014.985809

Schmid, C. (2008). Henri Lefebvre's theory of the production of space: Towards a three-dimensional dialectic. In *Space, difference, everyday life* (pp. 41-59). Routledge.

Scott, James. 1998. Seeing like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed. Yale Agrarian Studies Series. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Secor, A. J. (2007). Between longing and despair: State, space, and subjectivity in Turkey. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space, 25*, 33–52.

Kentsel Vizyon Platformu (2015). Sosyal Etki Degerlendirme Rehberi. Retrieved from https://www.kentselstrateji.com/wp-content/uploads/E-02_SosyalEtkiDegerlendirme.pdf

Konda. (2017). "Turkiye'nin siyasal evrenini duygu ve duygulanimlar izerinden anlamak: Olaganustu Hal, Toplum ve Siyaset". Retrieved from https://konda.com.tr/tr/rapor/turkiyenin-siyasal-evrenini-duygu-ve-duygulanimlar-uzerinden-anlamak-olaganustu-hal-toplum-ve-siyaset/

Sendika. (2016). "Bakanliktan Faili Veysel Pankartina Cevap" Retrieved from https://sendika63.org/2016/06/bakanliktan-faili-veysel-pankartina-cevap-orman-katliamlari-izinli-355736/

Serin, B. (2016). The Promised Territories: The Production of Branded Housing Projects in Contemporary Turkey. *European Journal of Turkish Studies, 23*(January), 1–23.

Seymen, C. (2014, Feb 27). Para Dedektifi: Kuzey Ormanlari. [Video File]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RSBGvRWaio&t=1946s

Simone, A. (2018). Infrastructural Survival(s). Retrieved from https://urbangeographyjournal.files.wordpress.com/2019/02/speculative-infrastructures-a-workshop-magzine.pdf

Siteder. (2013, May 20). "Kentsel Donusum Oyunlari" [Video] Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slwaCyRiN0Y on 28 mart 2018

Siteder (2013, June 23). "Siteder Pilav Gunu" [Video] Retrieved from http://haber.siteder.com/23-haziran-2013-pilav-gunu/ 28 mart 2018

Siteder. (2016). Cumhuriyet Neighborhood Association Bylaws. Retrieved from 03.http://siteder.com/dosyalar/cumhuriyet-mahallesi-siteler-yasam-ve-dayanisma-dernegi-tuzuk.pdf Accessed on 28. 03. 18

Shatkin, G. (2014). Reinterpreting the Meaning of the 'Singapore Model': State Capitalism and Urban Planning, *38*(January), 116–137.

Shatkin, G. (2016). The real estate turn in policy and planning: Land monetization and the political economy of peri-urbanization in Asia. *Cities*, *53*, 141–149.

Shin, H. B. (2012). Unequal cities of spectacle and mega-events in China. *City*, *16*(6), 728–744.

Slater, T. (2017). Planetary Rent Gaps. *Antipode*, *49*, 114–137.https://doi.org/10.1111/anti.12185

Smith, N. (1984). Uneven Development: Nature. *Capital, and the Production of Space*. New York, NY : Blackwell

Smith, N. (1987). Gentrification and the Rent Gap. *Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, *77*(3), 462-465

Smith, N. (2002) New globalism, new urbanism, gentrification as global urban strategy. Antipode 34.3, 427–50.

Staeheli, L.A., Ehrkamp, P., Leitner, H. & Nagel, C.R. (2012). Dreaming of the Ordinary: Citizenship and the Complex Geographies of Daily Life. *Progress in Human Geography*, 36(5), pp. 627–643.

Star, S. L. (1999). The ethnography of infrastructure. *American behavioral scientist*, *43*(3), 377-391.

Streule, M., Karaman, O., Sawyer, L., & Schmid, C. (2020). POPULAR URBANIZATION: Conceptualizing Urbanization Processes Beyond Informality. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*. https://doi.org/10.1111/1468-2427.12872

Sönmez, M. (2011). "TOKI'den Aslan Payi Kimlerin?" Retrieved from http://mustafasonmez.net/toki%e2%80%99den-aslan-payi-kimlerin/

Sönmez, M. (2011a). "TOKI ve Rant Dagilimi". Retrieved from http://mustafasonmez.net/toki-ve-rant-dagitimi/

Sönmez, M. (2012). Rejimin Insaat Baronlari" Retrieved from http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/koseyazisi/382848/AKP_Rejiminin_insaat_Baronlari.html

Swyngedouw, E. (1996). Reconstructing Citizenship, the Re-scaling of the State and the New Authoritarianism: Closing the Belgian Mines. *Urban Studies*, *33*(8), 1499–1521.

Swyngedouw, E., Moulaert, F., & Arantxa, R. (2002). New Geographies of Power , Exclusion and Injustice Neoliberal Urbanization in Europe : Large-Scale Urban Development Projects and the New Urban Policy. *Antipode*, *34*, 542–577.

Tansel, C. B. (2019). Reproducing authoritarian neoliberalism in Turkey: urban governance and state restructuring in the shadow of executive centralization. *Globalizations*, *16*(3), 320–335. https://doi.org/10.1080/14747731.2018.1502494

Tekeli, I. (1970). "Şehir ve Bölge Planlaması Açısından Boğaz Köprüsü", Belgelerle Türk Tarihi Dergisi, Sayı 30, s. 16-26.

Tekeli, I. (2004). Istanbul ve Ankara Kent Ici Ulasim Tarihi Yazilari (Collected Articles of Istanbul and Ankara Urban Transportation History). Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayinlari

Tekeli, I. (2009). Kentsel Arsa, Altyapi ve Kentsel Hizmetler (Urban Lots, Infrastucture and Services). Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayinlari

Tekeli, I. (2013). Istanbul'un Planli Gelismesinin Oykusu (The story of Istanbul's Planning and Development). Istanbul: Tarih Vakfi Yurt Yayinlari

Tepe, S. (2016). Urban renewal projects and democratic capacities of citizens. *Mediterranean Quarterly*, *27*(1), 71–96. https://doi.org/10.1215/10474552-3488071

Teyit. (2019). Retrieved from https://teyit.org/bogazlardan-gecen-gemi-sayilariyla-ilgili-iddialar/

Therborn, G. (2017). *Cities of Power: The Urban, The National, The Popular, The Global*. Verso Books.

Tilly, C. (1990). Where do rights come from? Working Paper 98. Center for the Studies of Social Change, New School for Social Research, New York.

Tilly, C. (1995). Citizenship, Identity and Social History. *International Review of Social History*, *40*(S3), 1-17. doi:10.1017/S0020859000113586

Tisdall, S. (2018). "Recep Tayyip Erdoğan: a dictator in all but name seeks complete control". Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/apr/19/recep-tayyip-erdogan-turkey-president-election-dictator-seeks-total-control

TOKİ. (1993). Konut Politikaları ve Finansmanı. Yerel Yonetimlerin Geliştirilmesi Programı Serisi 3. Ankara.

TOKI. (1999). Addressing New Perspectives in Housing Development through Millenium. Ankara.

TOKI. 2003. Toplu Konut İdaresi'nde Yapısal Sorunlar İle Çözüm Önerileri. Ankara: İmaj Baskı.

TOKI. 2006. Housing Convention 2006: Housing Provision to Low Income Groups and Urban Transformation in Turkey. Istanbul: Yem Yayınları.

TOKI. 2018. Toki Konut Uretim Raporu. Retrieved from https://www.toki.gov.tr/AppResources/UserFiles/files/FaaliyetOzeti/ozet.pdf

TOKI. 2020. "Kurulus ve Tarihce" Retrieved from http://www.toki.gov.tr/kurulus-ve-tarihce

TOKI. 2020a. "Arsa Uretimi" Retrieved from http://www.toki.gov.tr/arsa-uretimi

TOKI. 2020b. "Kentsel Yenileme" Retrieved from https://www.toki.gov.tr/kentsel-yenileme

Topcu, H. (2019). "Yerel'den Global'e' THY'nin Yükseliş Dönemi" (From Local to Global: the Rise of THY). Remzi Kitabevi. Istanbul

Toprak, Z. (1988). "Türkiye Tarımı ve Yapısal Gelişmeler 1900-1950", içinde: Şevket Pamuk & Zafer Toprak, Türkiye'de Tarımsal Yapılar (1923- 2000),Ankara: Yurt Yayınları / Türk Sosyal Bilimler Derneği, 19-35.

Tuğal, C. (2009a). The Urban Dynamism of Islamic Hegemony: Absorbing Squatter Creativity in Istanbul. *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*, *29*, 423–437.

Tuğal, C. (2009b). *Passive revolution: Absorbing the Islamic challenge to capitalism*. Stanford University Press.

Tuğal, C. (2016). *The fall of the Turkish model: How the Arab uprisings brought down Islamic liberalism*. Verso Books.

Tuvimer. (2018). "Kanal Istanbul". Retrieved from http://haber.tuvimer.com/kanal-istanbul-bolgesi-2/

Tünay, M. (1993) "The Turkish New Right's Attempt at Hegemony",in *The Political and Socioeconomic Transformation of Turkey*, London: Proeger. 11-30

Türkün, A. (2011) 'Urban Regeneration and Hegemonic Power Relationships,' International Planning Studies, 16(1): 61–72.

Uysal, Ü. E. (2012). An urban social movement challenging urban regeneration: The case of Sulukule, Istanbul. *Cities*, *29*(1), 12–22. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2011.06.004

Üçoğlu, M. (2019). "Massive Housing and Nature's Limits? The Urban Political Ecology of Istanbul's Periphery". In K. M. Güney, R. Keil, & M. Üçoğlu (Eds.), Massive suburbanization: (Re)building the global periphery (pp. 181–200). Toronto: University of Toronto Press

Yazman, D. (2010). Istanbul'a Vurulan Darbeler. Retrieved from https://v3.arkitera.com/h53810-istanbula-vurulan-darbeler.html on March 8 2020.

Yeldan, E. (1995). "Surplus Creation and Extraction Under Structural Adjustment: Turkey, 1980-1992." Review of Radical Political Economics 27 (2): 38–72.

Yeşilbağ, M. (2019). The state-orchestrated financialization of housing in Turkey. *Housing Policy Debate, 00*(00), 1–26. https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.2019.1670715

Yiftachel, O. 2002. 'Territory as the kernel of the nation: space, time and nationalism in Israel/ Palestine', Geopolitics 7(2): 215–48.

Yiftachel, O. 2015. Epilogue-from "Gray Space" to Equal "Metrozenship"? Reflections on Urban Citizenship. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research, 39*(4), 726–737.

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Belonging and the politics of belonging. *Patterns of Prejudice, 40*(3), 197–214. https://doi.org/10.1080/00313220600769331

Wilson, J. (2013). "The devastating conquest of the lived by the conceived": The concept of abstract space in the work of Henri Lefebvre. *Space and Culture, 16*(3), 364–380.

Wood, P. B. (2017). *Citizenship, Activism and the City: The Invisible and the Impossible*. Taylor & Francis.

Newspaper Articles:

AA. (2019). "Kentsel Donusum de Teror Kadar Onemli" https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/politika/cevre-ve-sehircilik-bakani-kurum-kentsel-donusum-de-teror-kadar-onemli/1399546

ABC. (2019). "TOKI Borclulari Artiyor". https://www.abcgazetesi.com/toki-borclulari-artiyor-2-21132

BBC. (2015). "Mega Projeler Oylari Nasil Etkileyecek?" https://www.bbc.com/turkce/haberler/2015/05/150525_kuzey_istanbul_genel_gs2015

Bianet. (2013). "Iste Roman Acilimi". http://bianet.org/bianet/toplum/145256-iste-roman-acilimi

Bianet. (2014). "Biz Nerede Yasayacagiz?" http://bianet.org/bianet/toplum/153056-biz-nerede-yasayacagiz

Bianet. (2019). "3. Koprude Arac Garantisinin Ucte Birine Bile Ulasilamadi" http://bianet.org/bianet/kent/213858-3-koprude-arac-gecis-garantisinin-ucte-birine-bile-ulasilamadi

Birgun. (2012). AKP'nin iktidarda oldugu 9 yilda gazetelere neler oldu? https://www.birgun.net/haber/akp-nin-iktidarda-oldugu-9-yilda-gazetelere-ne-oldu-61215

Birgun. (2012a). “TOKI Gunde 28 bin tazminat oduyor”. https://www.birgun.net/haber/toki-gunde-28-bin-tl-tazminat-oduyor-237466

Birgun. (2016). “Erdogan’in son sakasi”. https://www.birgun.net/haber/erdogan-in-son-sakasi-bati-metromuzu-kiskaniyor-113103

Cumhuriyet. (2018). “Cilgin Yikim”. http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/cevre/1110906/Cilgin_yikim.html

Financial Times. (2015). “Istanbul third airport plan ruffles feathers” https://www.ft.com/content/72b834f8-7753-11e5-a95a-27d368e1ddf7

Haber7. (2005). “TOKI Robin Hood Gibi.” http://ekonomi.haber7.com/ekonomi/haber/91160-toki-robin-hood-gibi

HT Emlak. (2015). “Istanbul’da Donusum Projelerinden En Buyuk Payi Burasi Aliyor”. http://htemlak.haberturk.com/diger-haberler/haber/1079710-istanbulda-donusum-projelerinde-en-buyuk-payi-burasi-aliyor

Hurriyet. (2000). “Istanbul’lularin yarisi gecekonduda oturuyor” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/istanbullularin-yarisi-gecekonduda-oturuyor-39195483

Hurriyet. (2005). “Kopru de Cami de Yapilacak”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/kopru-de-cami-de-yapilacak-3414134

Hurriyet. (2005a). “Ucuncu Kopruyu Kesin Yapacagiz”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/istanbula-3-kopruyu-kesin-yapacagiz-38734107

Hurriyet. (2005b). “Guzergahi Begenmedi”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/guzerg-hi-begenmedi-3409946

Hurriyet. (2005c). “Belediyede Darbe” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/belediyede-darbe-3497814

Hurriyet. (2006). “Bogaza 3. Kopru ve 2. Tup Gecit”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/bogaz-a-3-uncu-kopru-ve-2-nci-tup-gecit-5215857

Hurriyet. (2006a). “Ucuncu Kopruye Vize Yok”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/3-uncu-kopruye-vize-yok-4756758

Hurriyet. (2006b). “Muhalefet Uzayda Yasiyor” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/muhalefet-uzayda-yasiyor-dedi-marmaray-i-deldi-5657694

Hurriyet. (2007). “Istanbul’un en cok degerlenecek arsalari” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/istanbulun-en-cok-degerlenecek-arsalari-6446461

Hurriyet. (2008). “3. Koprude guzergah 4’de indi.” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/3-uncu-koprude-guzerg-h-4-e-indi-9824088

Hurriyet. (2008a). “Krizden Cikisin Yolu Gayrimenkulden Geciyor”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/krizden-cikisin-yolu-gayrimenkulden-geciyor-10629813

Hurriyet. (2010). “Iste 3. Kopru guzergahi”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/iste-3-kopru-guzergahi-14567060

Hurriyet. (2010a). “3. Havalimani 60 milyon kapasiteli olacak” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/ulastirma-bakani-ucuncu-havaalani-60-milyon-kapasiteli-olacak-16402594

Hurriyet. (2010b). “Hanimlar Parayi Yastik Alti Yapmayin” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/hanimlar-parayi-yastik-alti-yapmayin-kira-verir-gibi-ev-alin-15059290”

Hurriyet. (2010c). “2010’da 70 bin konut satacagiz” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/2010da-70-bin-konut-satacagiz-13411645

Hurriyet. (2011). “Turkiye Kendi Panama Kanalini Insa Ediyor” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/turkiye-kendi-panama-kanalini-insa-ediyor-17649842

Hurriyet. (2011a). “Yatirimci bekleyen 32 Koy”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/yatirimci-bekleyen-32-cilgin-koy-17698257

Hurriyet. (2011b). “Arsa Fiyatlari Uce Katlandi” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/arsa-fiyatlari-uce-katladi-18561533

Hurriyet. (2012). “3’üncü havalimanına A-380 de inebilecek” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/3-uncu-havalimanina-a-380-de-inebilecek-21211760

Hurriyet. (2012a). “Ataturk Havalimani Kapasitesinin iki Kati Calisiyor” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/ataturk-havalimani-kapasitesinin-iki-kati-ile-calisiyor-gariban-isadamlarinin-103-ozel-ucagi-var-20395067

Hurriyet. (2012b). “3. Kopru Ihalesi Iptal Edildi”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/3uncu-kopru-ihalesi-iptal-edildi-19647133

Hurriyet. (2012c). “Varyap Neden Ihaleye Girmedi?” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/varyap-neden-ihaleye-girmedi-19656436

Hurriyet. (2012d). “Ucuncu Kopru icin 9 Yatirimci Sartname Aldi” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/ucuncu-kopru-icin-dokuz-yatirimci-sartname-aldi-20141642

Hurriyet. (2012e). “Basbakanimiz Haritalari Onune Aldi” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/basbakanimiz-haritalari-aldi-onune-projelere-bakti-ve-soyle-bir-talimati-oldu-19775443

Hurriyet. (2012f). “Istanbul’da yasanacak bir depremde bilancoyu soylemeye dilim varmiyor” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/istanbulda-yasanacak-bir-depremde-bilancoyu-soylemeye-dilim-varmiyor-20581541

Hurriyet. (2012g). “Donusume 4 bin donum 12 mahalle ile basladi” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/donusume-4-bin-donum-12-mahalleyle-basladi-21905179

Hurriyet. (2012h). “Kentsel Donusumu Engellemek Isteyenler Var”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/bakan-erdogan-kentsel-donusumu-engellemek-isteyenler-var-20733469

Hurriyet. (2013). “Basbakandan Sure Pazarligi”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/basbakandan-sure-pazarligi-23390554

Hurriyet. (2013a). “Istanbul Ucacak”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/istanbul-ucacak-23566833

Hurriyet. (2013b). “Basbakan Tekirdag’da Halka Hitap Etti.” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/basbakan-tekirdagda-halka-hitap-etti-25301128

Hurriyet. (2013c). “Erdogan Kentsel Donusum Toreninde Konustu”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/erdogan-kentsel-donusum-toreninde-konustu-22983548

Hurriyet. (2013d). “Bu 6 Bolgeye Dikkat” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/bu-6-bolgeye-dikkat-23377483

Hurriyet. (2013e). “Donusum Istanbul’da Fiyatlari yuzde 50 artirabilir” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/donusum-istanbulda-fiyatlari-yuzde-50-artirabilir-23304951

Hurriyet. (2013f). “Gayrimenkul bu yil yine en guvenli yatirim amaci” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gayrimenkul-bu-yil-yine-en-guvenli-yatirim-araci-25179091

Hurriyet. (2013g). “Dolara Degil, Konuta Yatirin” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/dolara-degil-konuta-yatirin-24860928

Hurriyet. (2014). 150 milyon kapasitesi ile dunyanin en buyuk havalimani olacak" https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/150-milyon-yolcu-kapasitesiyle-dunyanin-en-buyuk-havalimani-olacak-26570163

Hurriyet. (2015). "Kendimi Viyana kapilarinda Akinci beyi gibi hissediyorum." https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/bakan-idris-gulluce-kendimi-viyana-kapilarinda-akinci-beyi-gibi-hissediyorum-28192702

Hurriyet (2015a). "Kentsel donusumde istenen olmayabilir". https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/kentsel-donusumde-istenen-olamayabilir-40033501

Hurriyet (2015b). "Kentsel Donusumu Vatandaslarimiz icin Yapiyoruz" https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/baskan-usta-kentsel-donusumu-vatandaslarimiz-icin-yapiyoruz-37162622

Hurriyet. (2016). "Erdogan: PKK, DAIS, FETO gibi terror orgutlerinin arkasindaki gucler kendinize ceki-duzen verin" https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/erdogan-pkk-dais-feto-gibi-teror-orgutlerin-40209190

Hurriyet. (2016a). "Selfie icin duranlar, emniyet seridini ihlal edenler" https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/selfie-icin-duranlar-emniyet-seridini-ihlal-edenler-bu-haber-size-40211213

Hurriyet. (2016b). "Garipcede ev fiyatlari uctu". https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/garipcede-ev-fiyatlari-uctu-milyon-liralar-konusuluyor-40076640

Hurriyet. (2016c). "Baskanlik Gelmezse Turkiye'nin Bolunme Riski Var" https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/basbakan-binali-yildirm-asil-baskanlik-gelmezs-40263537

Hurriyet. (2016d). "Cezasi daha ucuz". https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/cezami-oderim-fsmden-gecerim-40237103

Hurriyet. (2016e). "Rant olmadan hayat olmaz". https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/bakan-ozhaseki-rant-olmadan-hayat-olmaz-40258636

Hurriyet. (2016f). "4 yilda 183 alan riskli olarak ilan edildi." https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/4-yilda-183-alan-riskli-olarak-ilan-edildi-40234270

Hurriyet. (2016g). "Esenlerdeki Kentsel Donusumde Yasam Sancili Basladi". https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/esenlerdeki-kentsel-donusumde-yasam-sancili-basladi-40275039

Hurriyet. (2016j). "Ev Fiyatlari Dususe Gecti". https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/ev-fiyatlari-dususe-gecti-40306005.

Hurriyet. (2017). “Turkiye’nin itibarina 15 yil icinde itibar kattik”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/basbakan-yildirim-turkiyenin-itibarina-15-yil-icinde-itibar-kattik-40493529

Hurriyet. (2017a). “Turk’un hizi sasirtti”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/turkun-hizi-sasirtti-40397444

Hurriyet. (2017b). “Yabancinin Gozu Mega Projelerde”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/yabancinin-gozu-mega-projelerde-40586523

Hurriyet. (2017c). “Iki koprunun geliri 3. Koprunun odemesine yetmiyor”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/iki-koprunun-geliri-3-koprunun-odemesine-yetmiyor-40433530

Hurriyet. (2017d). “Yavuz Sultan Selim Koprusu Yolunda Kamyoncu Eylemi” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/yavuz-sultan-selim-koprusu-yolunda-kamyoncu-eylemi-40326461

Hurriyet. (2017e). “Binalarin Cogu Sagliksiz”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ozhaseki-binalarin-cogu-sagliksiz-40411066

Hurriyet. (2017f). “Evini Donusturene Bakanlik Kredisi” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/evini-donusturene-bakanlik-kredisi-40377560

Hurriyet. (2017g). “Orta gelirliye ev icin calisacagiz”. https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/ekonomi/orta-gelirliye-ev-icin-calisacagiz-40421392

Hurriyet. (2016e). “Soforler 200 Lira yerine 17 Lirayi tercih edince Dolup Tasmaya Basladi” https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/gundem/soforler-200-lira-yerine-17-lirayi-tercih-edince-dolup-tasmaya-basladi-40449163

Milliyet. (2008). “Erdogan TOKI Olmasaydi Kriz bizi de vururdu” https://www.milliyet.com.tr/siyaset/erdogan-toki-olmasaydi-kriz-bizi-de-vururdu-545745

New York Times. (2018). “Turkish Media Group Bought by Pro-government Conglomerate” https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/21/world/europe/turkey-media-erdogan-dogan.html

Sabah. (2011). “Arsa Fiyatlari Uce Katladi” https://www.sabah.com.tr/ekonomi/2011/08/24/arsa-fiyatlari-uce-katlandi

Sabah. (2012). “Basbakan Erdogan Konusuyor” https://www.sabah.com.tr/ekonomi/2012/04/02/basbakan-erdogan-konusuyor

Sozcu. (2017). “Hazirlik yaparsaniz Deprem Japonlarda oldugu gibi Ninni gibi gelir” https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2017/gundem/son-dakika-haberi/ozhaseki-hazirlik-yaparsaniz-deprem-japonlarda-oldugu-gibi-ninni-gelir-1686637/

Sozcu. (2018). “Yeni Sehir icin Ilk Adim”. https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2018/gundem/kanal-istanbulun-etrafinda-kurulacak-yeni-sehir-icin-ilk-adim-2678234/

T24. (2010). “Basbakandan Roman Acilimi”. https://t24.com.tr/haber/basbakandan-roman-acilimi,72458

T24. (2011). “Benim Milletim Laf Degil, Icraat Istiyor”. https://t24.com.tr/haber/erdogan-benim-milletim-laf-degil-icraat-istiyor,131121

T24. (2016). “Yavuz Sultan Selim Köprüsü'nün maliyeti Boğaziçi Köprüsü'nden 143 kat fazla” https://t24.com.tr/haber/yavuz-sultan-selim-koprusunun-maliyeti-bogazici-koprusunden-143-kat-fazla,357743

Vatan 2017. “Iste Istanbul’un Yeni Bogazi”. http://www.gazetevatan.com/iste-istanbul-un-yeni-bogazi--1124251-gundem/

Yenicag. (2018). 3.Havalimanı'nın maliyeti dünyanın en büyüğünü solladı” Retrieved from https://www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr/3-havalimaninin-maliyeti-dunyanin-en-buyugunu-solladi-207142h.htm

Yenicag. (2020). “Iste Kanal Istanbul’un gercek maliyeti”. https://www.yenicaggazetesi.com.tr/iste-kanal-istanbulun-gercek-maliyeti-264260h.htm

Yenisafak. (2005). “TOKI Robin Hood Gibi”. https://www.yenisafak.com/ekonomi/robin-hood-toki-2746335

Appendix A: Research Methods, Details and Purposes

Research Methods	Details	Purpose
Newspaper Content Analysis	• Hurriyet Newspaper (2002 - 2017)	To map official and mainstream discourses regarding the projects (conceived spaces)
Government and Business Documents	• Housing Development laws and regulations (1981 – 2018) • Environmental Assessment Reports (CED) • Neighborhood and District Plans and Revisions • Istanbul Metropolitan Monthly Bulletins (2002 - 2017) • Activity and Sectoral Reports of TOKI and Emlak Reit (2002 - 2017) • Research and Sectoral Reports by GYODER (1999 - 2017)	To map housing and construction sector rules and regulations; capital accumulation strategies, patterns and trends in the Turkish housing sector; official and business discourses regarding the projects (perceived and conceived spaces)
Social Media Analysis	• Facebook Groups and Forums of Neighborhood Associations and Activist Organizations	To map activist and resistance networks, counter discourses (perceived, conceived, lived spaces)
Participatory Observation	• Attending bi-weekly meetings of Istanbul Urban Defense Grassroots Organization (May – August 2016) • Attending neighborhood and local municipality meetings (as they happen) (May – August 2016; June – August 2017) • Field trips to the development sites (May – August 2016; June – August 2017) • Informal Interviews (May – August 2016; June – August 2017)	To develop a deeper understanding of how the projects unfolded on the ground and how subjects made sense of them (lived spaces)
Interviews	• 15 x in-depth semi structured formal interviews (May – August 2016; June – August 2017)	To develop a deeper understanding of how the projects unfolded on the ground and how subjects made sense of them (lived spaces)

Appendix B: List of Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods	Sarigol	Tozkoparan	Fikirtepe	Cumhuriyet	Okmeydani
Year UTP announced	2005	2008	2011	2013	2012
Land Tenure	Mostly informal settlements – residents have different types of title deeds	Formal – built as a Squatter Prevention Project for prohibition and removal of illegal construction	Formal – but built by residents without central planning	Formal – built as a Squatter Prevention Project for prohibition and removal of illegal construction	Mostly informal settlements – residents have different types of title deeds
Year designated as Risky Area	2013	2012	2012	2013	2016
Project Partners	TOKI – Gaziosmanpasa District Municipality	GEDAS (TOKI company) – Gungoren District Municipality	Independent developers, Some sections overtaken by KIPTAS (Municipality Company)	GEDAS (TOKI company) – Sultangazi Municipality	KIPTAS (Municipality Company) Beyoglu District Municipality
Current Status	Ongoing	Halted by the court in 2016 – The district municipality wants to relaunch the project	Ongoing	Halted by the court in 2016 – The district municipality wants to relaunch the project	Ongoing

Appendix C: List of Interviews

Interview Number	Occupation of Interviewee	Neighborhood	Date
1	Urban/ Housing Activist	-	6 May, 2016
2	Urban/ Housing Activist	-	6 May, 2016
3	Urban/ Housing Activist	-	10 June, 2016
4	KOS/ Housing Activist	-	18 June, 2016
5	Resident Activist	Tozkoparan	20 June, 2016
6	Resident Activist	Sarigol	24 June, 2016
7	Resident Activist	Cumhuriyet	10 July, 2016
8	Resident Activist	Cumhuriyet	12 July, 2016
9	Resident Activist	Cumhuriyet	12 July, 2016
10	KOS Activist	-	24 July, 2016
11	KOS Activist	-	30 July, 2016
12	Resident Activist	Fikirtepe	17 June, 2017
13	Resident Activist	Fikirtepe	1 July, 2017
14	Resident Activist	Fikirtepe	5 July, 2017
15	KOS Activist	-	24 July, 2017