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'Regeneration on Site' or Rent-Driven Urban Renewal?
An Ethnographic Inquiry into the Karapınar Project in Eskişehir, Turkey

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Cansu Civelek

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ABSTRACT

Gecekondu – squatter settlements – sprawls in Turkey, which started in the 1950s as a result of the internal migration from rural to urban areas, have created much public debate and political controversy from the outset, although the context of the discussions has gradually altered in parallel with the country's economic, political and social developments. In the last decade, the discourse on *gecekondu* has gained a new dimension which emphasizes the poor housing qualities and risky structures of these settlements against natural disasters. Today there is a broad governmental campaign to regenerate these "zones under risk", "reintegrate them to the cities", and "supply healthy housing conditions" to people. In this regard, the Mass Housing Administration of Turkey (TOKİ) appears as a super power in the urban regeneration activities which has been furnished with extensive authority since 2002 when the Justice and Development Party (JDP) rose to power in the government. Although the regeneration projects are claimed to carry a "win-win" character and bring benefits to local residents of the regeneration sites, districts, and cities, TOKİ gains sublime economic profits from such projects as it constructs luxury housing units, five-star hotels, or commerce centers on the regeneration area, whereas the locals are exposed to direct or indirect evictions from their neighborhoods. Direct evictions take place when the locals are proposed new flats in multi-story apartment buildings from different neighborhoods – generally from the outskirts of the cities –, while the indirect ones mostly occur in the "regeneration on site" projects. Although "on site" projects claim to give local residents new dwellings from their own neighborhood, especially the illegal land squatters are subjected to substantial monthly payments to TOKİ if they want to stay and receive a new dwelling in their own area.

Concordantly, since 2011, an analogous process has occurred in the Karapınar Valley *Gecekondu* Regeneration Project in Eskişehir where the first squatters settlements started in the 1960s. As a result of the city expansion, the quarter targeted for

regeneration has rapidly integrated with the city while becoming increasingly more central, and therefore, more valuable. The municipality's and TOKİ's Karapınar project asserts its missions as "regeneration on site" and "participation" in which the locals willingly demolish their houses under a "festive atmosphere" which, in fact, creates a contrast to the general weeping and lamenting pictures seen during *gecekondu* demolitions. This research, based on an ethnographic inquiry involving the residents of the neighborhood, municipal authorities, and urban experts, among others, intends to reveal the dynamics of the Karapınar regeneration project by uncovering the profits and other interests of TOKİ and its partners from the project. It argues that the alleged principles of "regeneration on site" and "participation" are not major concerns of the authorities. Instead, the residents are forced to bear the costs of a profit-driven project in the form of evictions, financial woes, and social and cultural problems.

Key Words: Urban regeneration projects, *Gecekondu*, TOKİ, Eskişehir.

ZUSAMMENFASSUNG

Gecekondus, informelle Siedlungen, die ab den 1950-Jahren infolge von Binnenmigration aus ruralen in urbane Gebiete entstanden, sorgten von Beginn an für öffentliche Debatten und politische Kontroversen, die stets im Kontext der wirtschaftlichen, politischen und sozialen Entwicklungen der Türkei standen und sich somit kontinuierlich veränderten. Im vergangenen Jahrzehnt gewann der Diskurs über *Gecekondus* eine neue Dimension, in deren Mittelpunkt die schlechten Wohnbedingungen und die mangelhafte Bausubtanz dieser Siedlungen stehen, welche in ihrer gegenwärtigen Form gegen Naturkatastrophen nicht gewappnet wären. Nunmehr läuft eine umfangreiche Regierungskampagne zur Erneuerung dieser „gefährdeten Zonen" um sie „in die Städte zu reintegrieren" und den Menschen „gesunde Wohnbedingungen zu bieten". Im Kontext dieser Stadterneuerungsprojekte kommt die wichtigste Rolle der staatlichen Wohnbaubehörde (*TOKİ*) zu, die seit dem Amtsantritt der „Partei für Gerechtigkeit und Aufschwung" im Jahre 2002 mit umfassenden Befugnissen ausgestattet wurde. Es wird betont, dass die Stadterneuerungsprojekte zu einer „win-win-Situation" führen, indem sie Vorteile für die betroffenen BewohnerInnen sowie für die zu erneuernden Viertel und Städte mit sich bringen. Während jedoch *TOKİ* bei diesen Projekten immense Profite erwirtschaftet, indem luxuriöse Wohneinheiten, Fünf-Sterne-Hotels oder Commerce Centren gebaut werden, sind die BewohnerInnen mit direkter und indirekter Räumung konfrontiert. Direkte Räumung bedeutet, wenn den BewohnerInnen Wohnungen in Hochhaussiedlungen angeboten werden, die fern ihrer bisherigen Nachbarschaft – meist am Stadtrand – liegen, während indirekte Räumung bedeutet, dass BewohnerInnen zunächst neue Wohnungen in ihrer angestammten Nachbarschaft angeboten werden (regeneration on site), jedoch der Bezug dieser Wohnungen im Besonderen für illegale Hausbesitzer an sehr hohe monatliche Zahlungen an *TOKİ* gebunden ist.

Analog dazu ist im Zuge des 2011 gestarteten Karapınartal *Gecekondu*-Erneuerungsprojektes in Eskişehir ein ähnlicher Prozess zu beobachten. Die ersten informellen Siedlungen entstanden dort in den 1960-Jahren. Aufgrund kontinuierlicher Stadterweiterungen rückte das Karapınartal mehr ins Zentrum der Stadt, wodurch auch sein Wert stieg. Die Bezirksverwaltunbg und *TOKİ* behaupten nun, dass das primäre Ziel dieses Projektes "regeneration on site" und "Partizipation" von Seiten der BewohnerInnen sei, welche demnach in festlicher Atmosphäre und freiwillig ihre Häuser niederreißen. Doch widerspricht dieses Ziel den Bildern des Klagens und Leidens, welche meist den Abriss von *Gecekondus* begleiten. Ziel dieser Masterarbeit ist es, basierend auf einer ethnographischen Forschung, welche u.a. BewohnerInnen der betroffenen Nachbarschaft, Vertreter der Bezirksverwaltung und Stadtforscher inkludiert, Dynamiken des Karapınartal *Gecekondu*-Erneuerungsprojektes aufzuzeigen, indem wirtschaftliche und andere Interessen *TOKİ*s und seiner Projektpartner offengelegt werden. In dieser Arbeit wird die Ansicht vertreten, dass die Prinzipien „regeneration on site" und „Partizipation" nicht zentrale Interessen der Projektverantwortlichen sind. Tatsächlich sind die BewohnerInnen gezwungen die Kosten dieses profitorientierten Projektes in Form von Räumungen, finanziellen Einbußen sowie sozialen und kulturellen Problemen zu tragen.

Schlüsselwörter: Stadterneuerungsprojekte, *Gecekondu*, *TOKİ*, Eskişehir.

to my super hero

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INTRODUCTION

Towards the end of 2010, an urban regeneration project in a squatter housing quarter in the city of Eskişehir, Turkey has begun to be talked about. I do not say "discussed" since the news in the media was either informative or flattering, while the public did not really know about what was coming and there was not much attention to the project at first, moreover, the chamber organizations or academicians of the city were not included in the planning and decision making phases of the project. However, as long as the high story apartments have risen up, the attention has increased. Now the height of the apartments creates a big contrast with the surrounding neighborhoods and dominates them. They can be easily recognized even from the outskirts of the city that attract people to wonder who built them and for what reason.

On the other hand, since I am from Eskişehir and grew up in a neighborhood that is close to a part of the regeneration quarter, I was raised with ideas about people living in that quarter. Many students "up there" have come "down" for high school education to our neighborhood and they used to spend time in our parks. Yet, our inhabitants, especially the parents, were not happy about their "invasion" of our parks where they smoked cigarettes or sometimes consumed alcohol which "set a bad example" for our neighborhood and especially for the children. Thus, towards the end of the 1990s, the parks and apartment blocks have started to be fenced in and the caretakers of the each apartment units were assigned to keep the outsiders away.

Since the regeneration has started, therefore, I have been able to observe the reactions in my neighborhood environment towards the project. The general opinion has been around the claim that the project will be "at least" good for "cleaning" the quarter, although they do not know about the advantages or disadvantages of the projects to the local population. This opinion is not only limited to the neighborhood that I grew up in,

but rather a general middle class public opinion. By cleaning up they seek to create "healthy" and "shiny" places which would better serve public health and the image of a district, province, or a city than the chaotic housing and life-style structures of a poor or squatter settlement.

Today, regeneration of slum settlements has become a significant urban policy which has created enormous economic sources for the government which are applied through the hegemonic discourses sprawled through the society. Since the onset of propagation of squatter settlements in big cities, there have been large public and political discussions about their social, cultural, and economic effects on the urban environment. Although the discussions have had variations from one decade to another due to the sociopolitical developments in Turkey, the unfavorable image of the squatters as a contaminating element on the cities has remained. Moreover, the view of seeing these settlements as the centers of crime and vandalism has become widespread. Significantly, after the 2000s the application of neoliberal urban requirements in cities made the slums regions as the potential areas for new urban investments. Peripheral or less valuable locations of the slums have become central as the cities have grown. Hence, the Mass Housing Administration of Turkey (TOKİ)[1], which has become the superpower in the construction sector in the last decade, gravitated towards the squatter regeneration projects.

Focusing especially on the bad housing quality of such settlements and the forthcoming fatal risks of the natural catastrophes on these jerry-built quarters have generated the hegemony of the regeneration activities of TOKİ. Furthermore, emphasizing bad images of such settlement on the general prestige of the cities has consolidated the long standing adverse viewpoint of the middle classes towards the squatters. Thus, regenerations are claimed to be a milestone for the future of the city. In this regard, beautifying and regenerating the Karapınar regeneration zone seems crucial for Eskişehir's middle classes and project's planners, who are hagridden by the "modernization" attempts of the city and think that "such shanty settlements look like a saddle on a sow in our city", as I heard from several citizens and executors of the regeneration project exactly through the same expression.

[1] T.C. Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı

However, the regeneration projects of TOKİ follow the logic of profit orientation. This critique is quite often emphasized by the urban experts. Yet more, if not in a critical but normalized perception, the officers applying the Karapınar regeneration project claimed that "TOKİ would not make a project if it does not gain anything", in other words "nobody gives without taking". Thus, construction of luxury housing units, commerce centers, shopping malls, and five stars hotels have become the common project elements for TOKİ which supply enormous economic benefits to itself. Even though TOKİ claims to make a "regeneration on site", meaning that the locals will stay on their own land, the profit mechanisms, that I just mentioned, still come into existence as I will mention later.

Furthermore, the regeneration projects lead to re/dissettlements of people from their neighborhoods. Even the flattering claims of regeneration on site are conducive to evictions. First, since the tenants do not have property in these regions, they are forced to move somewhere else. And secondly, the illegal settlers are imposed a high monthly payment to TOKİ to get a new flat from the regeneration site. Moreover, even the property owners might need to make a payment to TOKİ if the value of the new dwellings are higher than the price of their property. Crucially, monthly payments create difficulties which lead to resigning of the locals from the contract and dwellings. In this case study I will discuss these points thoroughly.

Consequently, profit oriented constructions on the regeneration sites, as well as the payment problems of the locals which lead to dissettlements, show that regenerations of the squatters zone in accordance with the needs and wants of the locals with social housing consideration are far from being a primary principle of TOKİ. In this regard, Turkey is used to seeing intense discussions about TOKİ regenerations both in national and international media, as well as among the urban experts. Public discussions, oppositions, and demonstrations have supported the squatter settlements as well. In academia several scholars published academic and non-academic articles criticizing TOKİ projects by proposing alternative ways of housing or regeneration projects.

However, these oppositions, news, and criticisms are mostly limited to the projects in Istanbul, and followed by Ankara.

My concern is that urban regeneration projects are not only limited to the metropolises. There are plenty of housing or other types of urban projects which are sustained by the same logic as we have seen in the big cities. Yet the smaller scale cities take enough attention neither in the national media, nor by the scholars. What I have even realized during my research is that, many scholars living in the smaller cities tend to prefer writing about the famous discussions in the big cities, rather than focusing on their own cities. This was a significant concern for me when I picked my thesis topic.

As a citizen of Eskişehir, I observed the dynamics of the city from my early ages on. Since I am interested in the urban processes and followed the enormous urban alteration in Eskişehir in the last decade, I decided to write my thesis about my city. Lately, there have been significant urban issues about the demolition of the city stadium, new construction on the old factories quarter of the city, increasing land values in the central zones, the city's first *gecekondu* regeneration project which has aroused my deep interest towards them. Meanwhile, I have seen the rising of the first high-story apartment buildings in the Karapınar regeneration zone together with the first demolitions. The news I followed in the local media was only focused on the glorification of the project and how it will serve to people, the region, and the city. Yet more, it was said that the inhabitants were all satisfied and welcome the regeneration plans, while willingly demolishing their houses. This kind of news created a conflict to Harvey (2008:33) who claims that "building the new urban world requires violence" as state or non-state actors displace the inhabitants of the quarters. In addition, welcoming the demolitions was opposite to the common pictures of *gecekondu* demolitions that we are used to seeing, such as crying women and children, standing against the big machines to stop demolitions, and uttering swearwords to the authorities. Hence, these contradictions led me towards making my research about the Karapınar project. An ethnographic inquiry would deeply and fruitfully delve into the dynamics of the project through the inhabitants' point of view, as well as the policy makers' and the civil society. Therefore, my research question has been shaped around how the project

functions in the actual terms, the benefits of TOKİ and its partner municipality, and the locals' point of view and expectations about the regeneration.

***

When I started to design my thesis project at the beginning of 2012, first of all, I started my research by checking the local newspapers archives about the urban developments in Eskişehir. Here, I especially emphasize the nature of the news articles which aroused my interest towards the Karapınar Project since they were highly flattering. Although I hoped to find the view points of the local people or discussions about the regeneration, all the news was either glorifying the project or was decidedly descriptive. I was disappointed by the one-sided news, however, it was useful to see how the media functions and how it is even sometimes controlled by the local dynamics and politics. Later when I conducted an interview with the mayor of the municipality, which is the partner to TOKİ for the regeneration project, I saw this more clearly. After our interview, the mayor called an officer who is responsible for the press and told him that he wants a news article about our interview which will be given to the local newspapers and published by the next day. Thus, the next day my picture with the mayor was published in the local newspaper as well as in the social media while the text was written with wrong statements without even asking for my consent. There, it was said that the "prestige" of the regeneration project has spread to Europe where students and academicians show great interest in making research about it. With this news I was clearly included in the means of the municipality's advertisement campaign. Later, some of my interviewees from the oppositional side to the regeneration called me to say that they see me in the news. They were not blaming me, but welcoming me to face the wrong statements in the news. As it is a small city – although the population is 700 thousand, the city more has the character of a small city in terms of social ties– such calls and social ties are easy to construct. The reason why I mention this point is to show how the news is manipulated and spread to society very quickly and efficiently. Another point I would like to mention is that the amount of news matters. When I had the chance to talk to the press officer in the municipality, he said that the mayor wants to publish at least five pieces of news in the local media about the projects of the

municipality as well as regular posts and updates in social media venues, such as Facebook. This experience better indicated the nature of the flattering news that I often found in the archives.

Next to the news research, through my multiple informal ties with the city, I had access to several viewpoints and thoughts of people about the regeneration project. Although the general opinion seemed supportive of the project or had not much idea about the ongoings, there were a few critical considerations that created discussions and brainstorming which we sometimes conducted online. Since I am not living in Eskişehir permanently, these talks enabled me to follow micro developments or rumors not only about the project but also generally about the city that I cannot find in the local news. In this regard, some family members and friends were highly informative and connected to the city.

During my research between January to December 2012, I was in Eskişehir several times for shorter or longer periods; the longest for three months in the summer of 2012. Initially, I started my field research by contacting the chamber associations and academic units in Eskişehir. One of the initial visits was going to sociology department of Anatolia University – where the departments of social anthropology or political science do not exist.

Since the sociology department does not have a special interest on the urban processes, there was very little research available about the urbanization of the city. However, we discussed about TOKİ's increasing involvement in Eskişehir. Besides sociology, I contacted the architecture departments of the both universities of Eskişehir. At Osmangazi University I had the chance to have a fruitful discussion about the late urban developments in the city and I was provided further contacts and reading materials. Moreover, from the Institute of Earth Sciences in Anatolia University I was given GIS (Geographic Information Systems) data from which I made maps of the city.

At the same time, I visited the representatives of chambers of urban planners, architectures, and civil engineers. While all were helpful to discuss about the urban

dynamics in the city, the chamber of the civil engineers was especially helpful to me. I had a field tour in the regeneration zone, as well as several meetings and phone talks with the chairman of the civil engineers, who is a critical expert on the urban development. Besides, I conducted some interviews through his referral.

Hence, my first visits and interviews were with the academic departments of the universities and urban experts. Meanwhile I did a literature review about Eskişehir which was literally not very productive regarding my research interest since there is not sufficient academic research on the contemporary urban history and urban developments. However, the Museum of the City Memory, which was opened recently, was beneficial to get overall information about the economic, social, and cultural development of the city. On the other hand, I did an interdisciplinary literature review on urbanism. I utilized the works from social anthropology, to sociology, geography, urban planning, and the like.

Finally, I began the most significant part of my field research in the summer of 2012. Before my Karapınar visits, some of my family members or friends were a bit worried; some offered to go with me, or recommended "convenient clothing" while commenting on the regeneration quarter's "not very open minded people". In fact, this sort of fear reflects the homogenized biases of the middle class towards the squatter settlements.

I had from two to five hour daily visits to the quarter and generally went there by foot. Since it was summer, people were mostly in their gardens, in front of their houses and chatting with their neighbors, or in the café house (for men). Thus, it was not difficult to contact them. While we were talking, they gave me examples from their neighbors and brought me to them as well. After a couple of visits, people started recognize me and make comments, such as "you are back again!".

Although their general approach to me was very friendly, they were still sensitive about the regeneration topic. They had the fear that the knowledge they shared might create future problems. Some locals, especially the older ones, even asked me whether I work for TOKİ, or whether I might harm them with their sharing. Therefore, I did not use the

recording machine in any of our talks which, I believe, was a correct decision since they more openly expressed particularly the oppositional angers or fears to the regeneration. I also told them that I will not use their real names in my thesis so that they do not need to have fear about it, which they seemed to like. However, some people were different and said that I can write to wherever I want and can use their name since they have fear "neither from TOKİ nor anyone else"[2]. Besides, some of them thought that I was a journalist to give their voice to the world. Although I tried to explain what I am doing, they asked questions such as "from which channel do you come from" or said "bring your cameras next time".

Moreover, almost all of them asked detailed questions about what I am doing, whether I am from Eskişehir, where I live, why I am interested in this topic, and the like. When I told them that I live nearby, I felt the escalating trust ties between us. Then, I have become the "daughter of the next-door", as some of them commented. Besides, when they thought that they might trust me, many of them, mostly the women or older ones, sought advice from me by explaining their situation and expecting that I would know better because of my education. Consequently, in my opinion, if I consider that some of the locals were very nervous about the regeneration or cautious towards my research, being the native speaker of Turkish and from the same city created big advantages to erase the barriers.

Parallel to my daily visits to the regeneration zone, several times I visited the Odunpazarı Municipality – the partner municipality of TOKİ – as well as the Greater Municipality of Eskişehir. While some of them were spontaneous, I made appointments for interviews as well. However, compared to my unstructured talks with the locals, the discussions or interviews at the municipality were semi structured. Still, I avoided using the recording machine and rather took notes. The reason was again the sensitivity of the topic. Since the officers are not politicians but administrative staff, they were sometimes very careful about what they said or were uncomfortable about talking with the wrong words which would create trouble for them. In addition, although some of the interviews were uncomfortable for me in terms of some reactions of the officers about

[2] Most of the time people used the name of TOKİ as if they talk about a person, such as "I will talk to TOKİ", "TOKİ doesn't see our situation", "TOKİ came here" etc.

the regeneration or their derogatory way of talking about the locals, I continued the conversation and expressed my opinion graciously. As a feedback I was told that I watch the processes from a different angle with my social science background, while they need to be more technical in order to apply the plans. In these moments I reminded myself the formulation of "empathy not sympathy" (Gingrich and Banks, 2006:11) which means that an anthropological research does not require the construction of sympathy towards a research group, topic, or individuals, whereas empathy is "indispensable for any serious methodological focus" on any field research.

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"Planning through urban 'projects' has indeed emerged as the main strategy to stimulate economic growth" (*Swyngedouw* et al., 2002:562). Concordantly, slums regions, old industrial quarters and neighborhoods have become the targets of regeneration projects of the neoliberal economy. Even though urban regeneration is not a new phenomenon manifested itself in the neoliberal era, cities and rescaling projects have become the key means of entrepreneurial strategies to economic success since the 1980s. Such strategies, therefore, carry business interests while they are conducted by the public-private partnerships. Today, akin urban strategies have occurred worldwide but by conveying local level fluctuations. My case study of the Karapınar *gecekondu* regeneration project is an instance where such urban strategies and micro dynamics have been emanated. Considering sociocultural anthropology's exploration of large issues in small places (Amit and Mitchell, 2010:vii), and following Burawoy's (2000:27) extended case method in ethnographic research, which accents the formulation of "extending out from micro processes to macro forces", my case study targets the examination of the micro dynamics of a regeneration project, but at the same time aims to relate them to the broader urban development processes, primarily in Turkey as well as globally.

Hence, in the first chapter of the thesis, I will conduct a discussion by utilizing interdisciplinary literature on the urban developments of the neoliberal era which will be focused on urban rescaling projects. This discussion will be followed by Turkey's

neoliberal experience and the escalating activities of the construction sector which have been changing the nature of the built environment. Crucially, after 2002, when the government of the Justice and Development Party (JDP) have come into power, TOKİ has begun to be given broad authority which would make it become a super power in developing partnerships with municipalities and private sectors to conduct housing and infrastructural urban investments and regeneration activities. Moreover, as long as cities have grown and transportation facilities increased continually, the squatter settlements which were previously unattractive zones have become more valuable which have taken the attention of TOKİ. In addition to TOKİ's empowerment and activities, literature on the squatter settlements will be provided to follow the urban dynamics in Turkey. Thus, in the following part, I will present the reasons of the emergence and mushrooming of these settlements in the bigger cities since the 1950s and decade by decade explore the public and political discussions associated with them. Before I move into my case study in Karapınar/Eskişehir, I will discuss the highlights of the development of the city in the second chapter. Regarding the crucial urban developments, particularly in the last decade, I will apply my observations and testimony in Eskişehir since my childhood. Finally in the last chapter, I will move to the Karapınar regeneration quarter where the first squatter settlements occurred after the 1960s. Mainly, I will provide the results of my empirical field research and combine them to the urban dynamics that will be discussed in the first chapter. In this regard, I will examine the profitability of the Karapınar regeneration project and reveal the economic and political benefits to TOKİ and the municipality. Although the Karapınar project is promoted as a "win-win" project, which is a shared hegemonic discourse of all akin projects, I will discuss the validity of such claims on the local populations and whether this project might lead to evictions of the people out of the regeneration quarter. On the other hand, in the very last part of the section, I will briefly mention the "new life expectations" of the people which will be brought by the high-story apartment life. Thus, not only economic but complex social and cultural dimensions appear in the regeneration process which would need an additional research in itself.

CHAPTER I

Introduction: Capital, Neoliberalism and the Urban

Among the several functions ranging from religious, to political, cultural, symbolic, military, and the like (Smith, 2002:431), cities have always been—i.e. in mercantilist, colonialist, imperialist, capitalist eras— the economic concentrations of raw materials, labor power, wealth, trade routes, import/export, among others (Rose, 2000:104). Since the 19th century, "with the development and expansion of industrial capitalism, burgeoning cities increasingly express the powerful impulse toward the centralization of capital" (Smith, 2002:431), which forces urban projects to re/organize the city space for the accumulation of labor and capital. Correspondingly, Haussmann's project for Paris that Harvey discusses in his works well indicates how cities were invested and structured for the accumulation of the capital, labor, and surplus money, as well as for the stabilization of the economy in early capitalism.

Determinant urban requirements of the capital prompted Haussmann's Paris project that started in 1853 during the Second Empire when Louis Napoleon was in power who claimed to remake the city in his own (imperial) image. The surpluses of capital and labor power were to be absorbed through a program of massive long-term investment in the built environment (Harvey, 2003:104). On June 23, 1853, Haussmann took office to remake the city. "Backed by the Emperor and armed with the means to absorb surpluses of capital and labor in a vast program of public works, he devised a coherent plan to reorganize the spatial frame of social and economic life in the capital" (Harvey, 2003:106). Haussmann's project covered both the center of Paris and surrounding districts (Harvey, 2003; Harvey, 2008:25). The investments extended not only to a new network of roads and ports, but also to sewers, parks, monuments and symbolic spaces,

schools, churches, administrative buildings, housing, hotels, commercial premises, and the like (Harvey, 2003:106). As a result of the long term investments in the built environment, thousands worked for the constructions; moreover, Parisian economy, commerce, and industry opened itself to interregional and international competition. Thanks to the railway constructions, for example, "agglomeration economies naturally drew new transport investments and new forms of economic activity toward Paris because this was where the rail links were most profitable" (Harvey: 2003:105-106). Therefore, through reconstruction of large areas and the opening up of the Parisian economy, the city absorbed, eventually, huge quantities of labor and capital.

Furthermore, in order to overcome the economic woes created by 1930s Great Depression, as well as World War II, urban projects continued to be used as strategies in the Fordist era as well. For instance, Robert Moses, the master planner of the New York metropolitan area, developed the system of highways and infrastructural transformations, suburbanization and engaged in the total reengineering of not just the city but also the whole metropolitan region which helped resolve the problem of capital surplus absorption (Harvey, 2008:27). In addition to Moses' urban strategies for capital accumulation, the mass consumption system of the Fordist era was another crucial strategy as a solution to the Great Depression of the capitalist economy. As Mitchell (2003:221) emphasizes, "one of the solutions to the crisis of over accumulation that marked the Great Depression was to implement new systems of collective consumption—such as subsidized housing—to jumpstart certain sectors of the economy". The Fordist accumulation strategy, which peaked in the immediate post World War II decades, made the construction sector a significant contributor to government efforts to stabilize the economy. The stabilizing effect of the construction sector was not only limited to housing projects. It was also seen significantly in infrastructural transformations, for example, in highway systems.

The Fordist era was dominated by Keynesian demand management which targeted mass production and, correspondingly, mass consumption. With the crisis of Fordist mass production, a fundamental transition to a post-Fordist mode of accumulation took place in the era of late capitalism (Hubbard and Hall, 1998:15). Hence, since the late 1970s,

the world has witnessed neoliberal strategies of economy and governmental policies that started in North America and Western Europe, then expanded elsewhere "in the hope of harmonizing (if not standardizing) economic and social policy" (Jessop, 2002:454) through the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), as well as the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (World Trade Organization since January 1995) and the Washington Consensus which was shaped in 1989. Although there are multiple ways of naming the process, such as "neoliberalism", "post-Fordism", "post-Keynesianism", "new right era", "new advanced forms of liberalism" (Rose, 2000), "late capitalism" (Hubbard and Hall, 1998), etc., scholars agree that there have been significant changes in the nature of the capitalist economy since the last decades of the twentieth century. As a turning point from the Keynesian welfare state, under the neoliberal policies the states strived to minimize public expenditures and increase privatization.

Neoliberalism founded itself on a strong emphasis on markets, deregulation, free international trade, and so on. Thus, some of the main strategies of neoliberalism included downsizing the states, decentralizing decision-making, devolving power to intermediate bodies such as trusts or associations, privatizing many functions previously part of the state machinery and opening them up to commercial pressures and business style of management, introducing managerialism and competitive pressures into the residual state apparatus. (Sassen, 1998; Rose, 2000; Harvey, 2006). The neoliberal project seeks to roll back the routine forms of state intervention associated with the Keynesian welfare state, while striving to enhance state intervention to roll forward new forms of governance which includes the state intervention that are more suitable to a market-driven globalizing economy (Jessop, 2002:454). Hence, implementation of neoliberal strategies in the cities "has entailed not the rolling back of state intervention, but its political, institutional, and geographical reorganization" (Brenner and Theodore, 2002:345). In other words, the state has been involved as a crucial actor in the transition to a new economic model rather than being just a "night-watchman". Later I will discuss how the Turkish state has also been heavily involved in urban regeneration processes through various methods such as establishing public-private partnerships and legislating for its own benefit.

However, it is crucial to emphasize that neoliberalism is not a homogenous process which has occurred everywhere concurrently with the same practices. Harvey (2005:87) indicates:

> "A moving map of the progress of neoliberalization on the world stage since 1970 would be hard to construct. To begin with, most states that have taken the neoliberal turn have done so only partially—the introduction of greater flexibility into labor markets here, a deregulation of financial operations and embrace of monetarism there, a move towards privatization of state-owned sectors somewhere else".

While keeping this illumination in mind, neoliberal practices have had influences on the urban processes which have been gripping research topics for several disciplines including urban anthropology. Although it would be difficult to claim that there is a hard-edge passage from Fordist to post-Fordist era regarding urbanism, scholars point out neoliberal urban strategies under which "decisions are increasingly driven by cost-benefit calculations rather than missions of service, equality, and social welfare" (Leitner et.al., 2007:4). For instance, privatization has been evident in social housing projects, which has restricted the urban poor's and middle class's "right to housing" for a cheap rental price. The lasting effect of Margaret Thatcher's privatization of social housing in Britain can be cited as a crucial instance of the detrimental consequences of neoliberal policies for the urban poor (Harvey, 2008:36).

As Çağlar and Glick-Schiller (2011:7) point out, "neoliberalism has been just the latest historical conjuncture of rescaling processes". Although restructuring or rescaling the city spaces is not a new concern, what makes the neoliberal era crucial is that, cities themselves have become the sources of entrepreneurial strategies as the route to economic success since the 1980s (Hubbard and Hall, 1998:12-14). This means that, as an entrepreneurial form, it is the city which is "an entity to be made entrepreneurial in and through acting upon the enterprising capacities of different partners or stake-holders" (Rose, 2000:104). In this context, the increase in public-private corporations has been striking. Furthermore, in the new era there has been an organizational and institutional shift from urban government to urban governance (Hubbard and Hall, 1998:4) which has changed the face of housing and infrastructural investments in urban

areas. In contrast to the epoch of Fordist managerialism, the new urban political arena carries the influence of powerful business interests (MacLeod, 2002:604). Urban politics appears to have shifted with the emergence of urban entrepreneurialism in which the new form of urban governance is reliant on cooperation with the private sector and the speculative mobilization of local resources to promote growth (Hubbard and Hall, 1998:12). Cities have become the significant tools/resources of public-private partnerships to make maximum profit from the restructuring of the city spaces. As Swyngedouw et al., (2002:562) point out:

> "Planning through urban 'projects' has indeed emerged as the main strategy to stimulate economic growth. […] Against the crisis of the comprehensive Plan– the classic policy instrument of the Fordist age – the large, emblematic Project has emerged as a viable alternative, allegedly combining the advantages of flexibility […]".

In this respect, particularly the central old neighborhoods and illegal settlements of the urban poor, as well as the dysfunctional old industrial areas have been targeted by the regeneration projects as a global urban strategy. Yet, regeneration is often a euphemism that refers to upcoming gentrification. As Smith (2002:445) claims, "language of regeneration sugarcoats gentrification". Moreover, as the neoliberal reasoning expands on the urban base, it utilizes the advantage of the proximity of the space "to the city's cultural amenities to satisfy the needs of professional high-income wage-earners, both male and female, for amusement" (Zukin, 1998:830). To sum up, Rose (2000:104) claims about the neoliberal city:

> "The relation of capital to the urban should be more than that of a raiding party with its prey: it should take a stake in the shaping and the destiny of the urban itself, in the reshaping of its decayed docklands and abandoned factories into shopping malls and waterfronts, in the rebuilding of its concrete and windswept wastelands into malls and markets, in the reconstruction of its estates so that they shift from spaces for the residential storage of laborers at maximum density into communities of homes that activate the dream possession and self-improvement necessary to bind the energies of young men and women into the regimes of civility".

Furthermore, today in a myriad of cities we see analogous, even if not identical, urban reshaping processes which claim to create safe, clean, modern, attractive, first-class

worldwide cities. Correspondingly, cities have been marketing themselves as entrepreneurial and competing to be labeled as a "world city", "global city", "knowledge city", "creative city", etc. Through those labels or brandings – whether they become successful or not – cities struggle globally with each other in order to attract further investors, as well as tourists, artists, and skilled employees. In this context of competing cities, neoliberal urban strategies, such as privatization of public spaces, large scaled urban projects, residential housing projects, big advertising and promotion campaigns of cities, highly speculative flagship or mega projects, dissemination of imaginary and brand cities, commodification of city centers, new consumerist practices of cities, and promotion of cosmopolitan city-center life style rise into prominence (Hubbart and Hall, 1998, MacLeod, 2002; Penpecioğlu, 2011; Şengül, 2009; Young et al. 2006; Zukin, 2006). Furthermore, enhancing the competitive advantage of cities is seen as largely dependent on improving and adapting the built environment to the accumulation strategies (Swyngedouw et al., 2002:572). Given that urban space is a scarce resource, the practices of regenerating and reshaping the urban space produce high levels of profits. In this regard, the building sector's ability to create enormous profits in the urban space is obtrusive. Especially, the construction of five stars hotels, large-scale shopping centers, and business headquarters have become key points for rent seeking activities of public-private corporations. As a result, cities and urban spaces have become strategic commodities as the means for speculative profits (Şengül, 2009:141).

Through the entrepreneurial strategies on urban spaces, cities are perceived according to their exchange-values, rather than use-values. While the use value comprehends the city as the "center of life", seeing the urban space with respect to its exchange-value treats the city as a tool of capital accumulation – surplus absorption – and rent seeking activities (Şengül, 2009:43). At this point, Lefebvre's muse appears which perceives the city as the "center of life", which requires the social life – praxis – (Lefebvre, 1996). It is the city where human's "need for creative activity" for the *oeuvre*— namely creative work—can be fulfilled (Lefebvre, 1996). He explains *oeuvre* as the specified needs of play, sexuality, physical activities, creative activity, art, and knowledge which are not only products and consumable material goods (1996:147). Therefore, an *urban strategy*,

planned by the authorities, technocrats, economists, planners, and architects, is not enough to create the city as an *oeuvre* (Lefebvre, 1996).

On the other hand, exchange value perceives the urban space as a "commodity which is purchasable and sellable" (Şengül, 2009:43, 55) rather than the space for creative activity – *oeuvre*. Thus, the space is opened for exploitation in its potential exchange value for any kind of project (Tilley, 1994:21). For example, Brand (1994:6) displays this with an illustration of lower Broadway in New York City. Compared to the 261 buildings of the region in 1865, only 33 buildings were intact in 1990, which means one in eight. A large majority of the buildings were demolished according to the real estate market's needs that severs the continuity of buildings (Brand, 1994:11). Under the domination of the exchange-value, the "commerce drives all before it (building), especially in big cities. Whenever land value is measured in square feet, buildings are as fungible as cash. Cities devour buildings" (Brand: 1994:5). Furthermore, MacLeod (2002:605) calls the commodified urban space under the neoliberal city as a "tenderly manicured landscape". He continues:

> "If the renaissance of these tenderly manicured landscapes alongside the active introduction of business improvement districts has done much to recover the exchange and sign value of many city centers, questions remain about the legitimate use-value of such spaces for a wider citizenry".

The dominance of exchange value over use value renders "the city as an economic subject, not a favorable location on coast, river, trade routes, […] but as itself an economic actor in the world economy of cities" (Rose, 2000:104). One of the important consequences of the cities as economic actors is that they become competitors with each other in order to attract capital. In this regard, the competition tends to "subjugate the overall interest of the community in the interests of capital accumulation with competition with other cities for economic growth assuming primacy over distributional issues" (Hubbard and Hall, 1998:18). Instead of inter-city division of labor between different cities which are complementary to each other, they go into a competition to enable more capital accumulation (Şengül, 2009:22, 52). In other words, we are faced with a city "as a whole by virtue of the motivation, the sense of pride and competitiveness, the installation of a relentless rivalry between cities and regions

mobilized by means of the enterprise of each and of all" (Rose, 2000:105). Hosting the Olympic Games, the World Cup, international conferences and cultural activities, becoming the cultural capital of Europe, etc. are all part of the game serving that competition.

In addition, as Harvey (2008:34) points out, building the new urban world requires violence, therefore, "accumulation by dispossession lie at the core of urbanization under capitalism". In the Paris case, which I have mentioned above, Haussmann tore down the slums, removed much of the working class and other "unruly elements" from the city center by using expropriation in the name of civic improvement and renovation (Engels, 1992: 74; Harvey, 2008:33). In the neoliberal age as well, exclusions, displacements, and dispossessions of certain groups in societies take place as a result of the urban strategies that place emphasis on the exchange value rather than the use value of urban space. As MacLeod (2002:602) insists, "while the entrepreneurial strategies might have refueled the profitability of many city spaces, the price of such a speculative endeavor has been a sharpening of socioeconomic inequalities alongside the institutional displacement and social exclusion of certain marginalized groups". Typically, such strategies leverage public and private funds for the benefit of the private sector (Zukin, 2006:117). Correlatively, Hubbard and Hall (1998:19) state that as entrepreneurial strategies generally favor development and growth over the redistribution of wealth and opportunity, the result can only be a net transfer of wealth from the less well-off to urban elites. Moreover, displacements or dispossessions of people do not only take place through state expropriations. There are a number of mechanisms such as an increase in rents as a result of gentrification, and a complex set of social, cultural and political pressures that can bring about displacement and exclusion of the disadvantaged population groups in the city.

Although displacements and exclusions are not newly found tools in the neoliberal era, as the Parisian case showed in the second half of the nineteenth century, they crucially have become far more widespread in the last decades as entrepreneurial strategies increased. As Smith (2002:439) insists, the regenerations and gentrifications in the last decades are "at one extreme, ambitiously and scrupulously planned […] and evolved

rapidly". In this regard, old or slums regions of the urban poor and immigrants have become potential areas for new urban investments as the cities have grown and the transportation systems have made these lands accessible. Such lands which have not been paid any attention before have become the targets of urban regeneration strategies which, as Kurtuluş (2006:7) claims, "have occurred as a new economy". Moreover, while regeneration strategies have occurred as a new economy which foster the construction sector, they lead to gentrification through a "major colonization by the middle and upper classes" (Smith, 2002:445) by displacements of the "unruly elements" at the same time. This colonization, on the other hand, creates centers which supply the distinct and varied life quality demands of the middle and upper classes, rather than being just a shelter (Tekeli, 2011:306). Today multifaceted projects claim "a full life" functionality, which offers dwellings, office buildings, leisure activities, and both urban life and nature. These projects becomes "inclusive" medicines for the diversified lifestyles and demands of middle classes while offering "both/and" than "either/or". On the other hand, whereas such projects claim to be inclusive, they are often socially highly exclusive (Swyngedouw et al., 2002:573). To illustrate all these points, the Aspern project which is developing on the old airfield of Vienna, which was closed in 1977, claims to[3]:

> "offer and connect many things: an economic hub, business and high-tech centers, a science, research and education quarter as well as a recreational zone; city and nature, alternative energy resources and modern architecture; innovative "townhouses" instead of anonymous blocks of flats, ground-floor zones with shops, cafés and restaurants instead of mono-structures, quality of design instead of random growth. **aspern will unite many generations and lifestyles in one spot".**

The Turkish Experience in Neoliberalism

In Turkey the economic crisis of the 1970s was accompanied by a deep political crisis, which reached its peak towards the end of the decade. The cities were divided by the fragmentations of leftist and rightist groups who struggled fiercely with each other. Moreover, the governments could not be stable after the 1977 general elections. The

[3] http://www.aspern-seestadt.at/en/vision/the-city/

minority and coalition governments between 1977 and 1979 led to political instability. Although the center-left Republican People's Party (RPP) gained 41.3% of the votes in 1977, the right wing Justice Party achieved 36.8% of the votes. This led to a minority government by RPP, which lost the vote of confidence in only two weeks. Since then the recurring governmental crisis continued.

In addition to political instability and fragmentation, there were serious problems in Turkey's economy. Parallel to the 1973 Oil Crises and the crisis of the Keynesian model, which was followed by an economic depression of the world economy, in the late 1970s Turkey's economy suffered from the huge deficit in balance of payments, large-scale unemployment, high inflation, and scarcity of the consumer goods. Hence, through the IMF's strategies and pressures, in January 1980, a package of economic stability measures, known as the "January 24 Decisions", was prepared by Turgut Özal, who was appointed as the undersecretary of the prime ministry in 1979 by the prime minister Demirel of the Justice Party. Özal's name became synonymous with neoliberal policies in Turkey, as Thatcher in the UK, and Reagan in the USA.

The import substitution model of Turkey with an interventionist state from 1930s on (Pamuk, 2012) aimed at production of consumer goods inside the country instead of importing them. Since the early 1980s the inward orientated model has begun to change to an export oriented model which has targeted the opening of the economy to world markets. The export-led strategy was sustained during the military interim period between September 12, 1980 and November 6, 1983. The election in 1983 was far from democratic and free where many of the political parties and political figures were banned from politics by the military. Among the other two parties – the Populist Party and the National Democracy Party – which were permitted by the military, the election resulted in the victory of Özal's Motherland Party (MP). MP established a one-party government which combined the neoliberal economic program with conservative socio-cultural values.

As a significant result of Turkey's new economic adaptation after the 1980s, a new urbanization process has been gradually established under the hegemony of neoliberal

reasoning (Şengül, 2009:138,139). Especially the big cities have become the pivotal enterprise centers of local governments. Then, it would be the time for the housing, transportation, and urban infrastructural investments, which were neglected for a long time during the era of the import substitution model (Şengül, 2009:140). Crucially, these investments have accelerated the growth of the construction sector.

Furthermore, the serious administrative changes since the 1980s foreshadowed the upcoming urban developments. Under the regime of Özal, budgets and administrational powers of municipalities were increased (Keyder, 2010:179). As a significant point, the municipality law was issued in 1984, which prompted important zoning and public work regulations from the central authority to the local authorities. Through the law, for example, some agencies such as the Master Plan Bureau, the Water Supply and Sewerage Authority, which had been formerly attached to ministries in Ankara, were placed under the direct control and jurisdiction of the metropolitan mayor (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008:12). On the other hand, the new administrative and financial sources became the investment tools of municipalities (Şengül, 2009:140). While the public-private partnerships in the zoning area have risen, the investments have been increasingly made by awarding tenders to the private sector. Besides, the municipalities have been applying new regulations in zoning rules and giving peculiar rights to particular cases (Çavuşoğlu, 2011: 46). "These changes led to the emergence of entrepreneurial local governments acting as market facilitators" (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008:12). Thus, since the initiation of such changes, urban investments have become the tools of resource transformation to the capital (Şengül, 2009:140).

In this parallel, the works of Bedreddin Dalan who was the mayor of the greater municipality of Istanbul from 1984 to1989 and a member of Özal's Motherland Party still take the attention of scholars and urban experts. Dalan imposed a series of urban transformations on Istanbul with the logic of private entrepreneurship (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008; Keyder, 2000:26), such as mega projects of opening boulevards, demolitions of old neighborhoods of 19th century, removing old manufacturing districts from the center to the peripheries, restoration of bordered touristic zones, among others. As Keyder (2010:181) claims, "Dalan's projects were as radical as Haussmann in Paris

or Moses in New York". Since the urban investments with a globalist discourse were the main focus of the municipality, Istanbul faced the tearing down of neighborhoods, as witnessed in the Haussmann or Moses cases. These projects aimed at making Istanbul a "world city" by changing the contaminated face of the city caused by domestic immigration in the last three decades (Keyder, 2000:26) which I will explain further in the next sections.

Correspondingly, since the 1980s the construction sector and building activities have remained on the agenda of political and economic actors as a tool of reaching political and economic goals (Balaban, 2011:1999). In this context, the profitability of the construction industry has been realized. Through the central and local governments' tender offers, national as well as international private companies have penetrated into large scale construction projects, such as housing clusters, underground railway systems, etc. (Şengül, 2009:142). Even more, the immense profitability of the construction sector has created a role model for the other sectors. By the early 1980s, the construction industry had become the second most economically important sector after textiles and clothing (Türkün, 2011: 64). Companies which had accumulated capital through manufacturing and assembling industries up until 1980s, have since then explored the profitability of urban investments and oriented their enterprises towards the urban (Çavuşoğlu, 2011:43; Keyder, 2000:185; Öktem, 2006:60).

Regarding the contribution of the construction sector to Turkey's GDP, there have been two important periods when the sector has seen a significant increase. The first period was between 1983-1987 and started when the Motherland Party won the elections in 1983. In this period, "investing on urban land was seen less risky than the available opportunities in industrial production" (Türkün, 2011:63). On the other hand, the second period started when the Justice and Development Party (JDP) won the elections in 2002 and continued until the 2008 global economic crisis. Although the crisis slowed down the construction sector's speed, after 2009 it recovered itself (Penpecioğlu, 2011:65). In the period of 2002-2008 the construction sector became the fastest growing sector in the economy with 12% annual growth rate (Balaban, 2011:22). In the same period the number of new building constructions increased from 43.430 in 2002, to

114.204 in 2006, and 106.659 in 2007 (Balaban, 2011:22). Therefore after 2000s the attractiveness of real estate properties and infrastructural urban investments put all other capital accumulation enterprises to secondary importance (Çavuşoğlu, 2011:43).

After 2002, together with 198 new pieces of legislation, the state conducted several interventions which have encouraged the reproduction of the urban built environment, such as allocation and marketing of the public domain to the private sector for housing, shopping mall and urban regeneration projects, promoting public-private partnerships which implement large scale urban projects, putting the pasture areas and forestlands up for sale, construction of hydroelectric power stations without damage calculations on the environment and social life, discarding the historical heritages for dam construction, as seen in Hasankefy and Allianoi, and the like (Çavuşoğlu, 2011:44; Penpecioğlu, 2011:66). In addition to all of these, urban regeneration projects have increased drastically especially since the beginning of the 2000s when the Mass Housing Administration (TOKİ) was given extraordinary privileges and powers.

The Role of TOKİ

TOKİ (Toplu Konut İdaresi-the Mass Housing Administration) was established in 1984 with the "aim of dealing with the housing problem of middle and lower-middle income groups" (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008:16-17). In fact, it was established with an official mission to subsidize housing projects. Especially after 1989, through the legal changes, the government tried to orient TOKİ towards the housing needs of the underprivileged, however, reciprocal relationships of *gecekondu* developments in exchange for the votes, as well as the land tenures – which is paid by the illegal squatters as a tax to the state – could not activate the public housing projects of TOKİ for the underprivileged (Buğra, 1998: 309).

Since 2002, when the Justice and Development Party won the general elections with the leadership of Erdoğan, TOKİ has been subject to numerous important changes. As a result of the legal reforms (such as Law No. 4966, Law No. 5162, Law No. 5366, Law

No. 5609, Law No. 6306 in 2012) TOKİ has become "one of the most important actors of the construction sector" (Balaban, 2011:24) and "the sole agency to regulate the zoning and sale of almost all state-owned urban land (excluding military land)" (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010:1485).

Through partnerships with the municipalities and the private sector, TOKİ has entered into a myriad of urban regeneration projects, if necessary, by overlooking the regional zoning regulations. For instance, TOKİ could build ten storey apartments in an area, even though the zoning regulation would allow only four. We will see this example in my case study. Moreover, due to its prodigious power and the profits it makes in the domestic market, TOKİ has begun to export services abroad to countries such as Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan[4].

At this point, in order to underline the empowerment of TOKİ, I would like to briefly touch upon the laws that I have just mentioned. The reason I chose these laws among many others is to relate them with my case study in Karapınar. To begin with, through the Law No. 4966 issued in 2003, TOKİ was given the power to establish companies related to the housing sector, develop projects at home and abroad aside from housing, make infrastructural developments, as well as to implement profit oriented projects in order to create an economic source for the administration (Article 4). Hence, in addition to the housing activities, which was its inaugural mandate in 1984, TOKİ has started to build shopping centers, mosques, business centers, and hospitals. Especially through the construction of business centers and luxury housing projects, TOKİ has made significant profits. Furthermore, the law also permitted that, with the approval of the prime ministry, treasury lands can be assigned free of charge to TOKİ (Law No. 4966, Article 2). In the case of the Karapınar regeneration project, the application of these new powers as the profit making mechanisms of TOKİ becomes apparent where it appropriates public lands free of charge and regenerates the combined public and private lands while constructing lucrative projects on the regeneration zone, such as luxury villas and a business center.

[4] For further research, see the official website of TOKİ under http://www.TOKİ.gov.tr/

Under the Law No. 5162 of 2004, TOKİ became entitled to prepare plans and projects in 'regeneration areas' in any scale on its own, which were to be approved in 3 months by the related municipality or the provincial administration according to the location of the project area. Otherwise, according to the new provision, the administration is capable of enforcing the plan itself in 3 months (Article 4). Thus, TOKİ obtained a substantial power in neighborhood regeneration projects. The Law No. 5366 about the renewal of the historical sites passed in 2005 gives authority to TOKİ to implement renewal projects with the municipalities (Article 3) and this created one of the largest waves of opposition in civil society. In particular, the regeneration projects of historical neighborhoods of Tarlabaşı, Sulukule, and Süleymaniye in Istanbul brought along evictions of the inhabitants, although local resistances and large civil campaigns took place.

For instance, the Sulukule transformation was carried out by the Fatih Municipality, the greater municipality of Istanbul, and TOKİ. The right holders in Sulukule were proposed either to be paid and leave the neighborhood, or to sign a contract to receive a new house in the same neighborhood by paying the monthly payments. 850 right holders chose the first option because of the payment difficulties of the contracts and left Sulukule by getting paid average 55 thousand Liras for their houses, while only 50 right holders signed a contract for a new flat. However, they do not know the exact size of the apartments that they will receive or how much they will exactly need to pay. We will see how many of them will stay in the neighborhood after the payments start. Crucial to add, the value of 55 thousand Liras calculated for an house becomes 400-500 thousand to sell to the newcomers. On the other hand, the project claimed to make the tenants become the house owners, while forcing them to move to the 15-storey apartment buildings in TOKİ Taşoluk houses, which is 40 km away from Sulukule. The Sulukule case echoed what Randeria and Grunder (2011:195) have highlighted on the slums rehabilitation and resettlement in India, when they point out that "instead of the horizontal slums, now vertical ones have been built […] on a much smaller area of land than earlier". In the same vein, the 15-story buildings of Taşoluk constitute just one example of a vertical slums construction of TOKİ. On the other hand, multi-storey apartments were not suitable for the housing culture of Sulukule tenants, most of which

belonged to the Roma community, who were used to living in single-storey houses and had strong historic and community ties to their neighbors and neighborhood. This shows, in fact, that TOKİ did not take the sociocultural nature of Sulukule into account while justifying the displacements with the promises of providing house ownership and a better life. However, only three families were able to stay in the Taşoluk TOKİ houses, while the urban regeneration project affected 300 tenant families (Sabatier and Schwarz, 2012:221). Although some moved to Taşoluk at first, they could not manage the monthly payments, and assigned the TOKİ contracts to someone else. As Andrew Gardner, Amnesty International's Turkey researcher, told the newspaper the Guardian (2011):

> "Although on paper there is provision for alternative housing in the form of these TOKİ houses, we see that the houses which are available – on paper – to the people displaced from Sulukule are not appropriate, they're not affordable."

I especially mentioned the last point of unaffordability of the TOKİ houses for the urban poor since it is a widespread problem of TOKİ projects which is highly criticized by the urban experts. A similar process awaits the Karapınar project as well, where there are already *gecekondu* residents who are looking for resignation of their contract with TOKİ, even though the payments did not start yet.

Furthermore, the Law No. 5609, issued in 2007, was also crucial in increasing the powers of TOKİ; the law determined the authority of the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement (Ministry of Environment and Urbanism since 29 June, 2011-current governmental term of Turkey). Also telling is the fact that the TOKİ president Erdoğan Bayraktar became the Minister of Environment and Urbanism following June 2011 elections. This is an important point since TOKİ became the biggest authority of *gecekondu* areas.

Finally, it would be beneficial to review Law No. 6306, the "Law about Regeneration of Zones under the Risk of Disasters" which fastened the discourse on "natural disasters" as a justification means to regenerations in Turkey, which is also related to my research about Karapınar project. Globally, in the neoliberal agenda, natural catastrophes, such

as tsunamis and hurricanes, provide authorities and elites with the ability to push their expropriation plans by using the "emergency" and "risk" pretenses (Collins and Jimenez, 2012:54) as "displacements" are utilized as the "false cure of the disasters" (Adams et al., 2009:616).

Correspondingly, Turkish authorities present the regeneration law as the salvation of the country from natural catastrophes. It is almost fashionable for TOKİ and its local supporters to advocate the regeneration projects by emphasizing the destructive effects of earthquakes and other natural disasters and by underlining the need to construct safer towns and cities. Especially after the Van earthquakes in eastern Turkey that took place October and November 2011, killing 644 people, the government and its supporters have found a reason for the draft law and the foreseen urban regeneration activities. During a meeting in Istanbul, Minister of Environment and Urban Planning, Erdoğan Bayraktar, declared that there are 19 million dwellings in Turkey and 40% of them have to be regenerated and this will be a 20-year project (Mukul, 2012). In a similar vein, Kadir Topbaş, the current mayor of the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and also an JDP member, claims about the destruction of Istanbul that "We need to face it, we need to rebuild the entire city" (The Guardian, 2012).

However, the law has several problems. First of all, the draft law was prepared without the inclusion of urban planners, other chambers or academics and passed by the parliament in February, 2012. Very briefly, it concerned the transformation of areas under the risk of disaster. It opened the road to declare private and public lands, even the forest lands, pasture lands, coastal and military areas, as risky zones. Since the first talks about the forthcoming draft law by the government, it created opposition and debates both in the national and international media, as well as among urbanists. The main concern of the debates and opposition was that if the draft was legalized, it would open the ways to regeneration projects which would serve the developers' interests and which could lead to evictions of people from their neighborhoods. The Guardian in the article titled "Istanbul Sees History Razed in the Name of Regeneration" (2012) evaluated the draft as follows:

> "Now the Turkish government is preparing a new law that will grant the prime minister and the public housing development administration (TOKİ) sole decisive power over which areas will be developed, and how. The law will overrule all other preservation and protection regulations, and allow the government to declare any area in Turkey as a *zone of risk*" (emphasis mine).

Moreover, TMMOB (2012), the Union of Chambers of Turkish Architects and Engineers, issued a press statement about the draft law and pointed out that:

> "[…] the draft has been prepared without taking the expert opinions, suggestions, and the criticisms into account […] similar to the other zoning regulations legislated in the last years, it is apparent that the objective of this draft is to revitalize the activities of the construction sector".

Similarly, the academic staff of Yıldız Technical University in Istanbul issued a press statement and stressed that the draft law lacks the city planning and public equality principles, moreover it has several conflicts and mistakes in its contents[5]. Among the other academicians, Mukul (2012) criticized the politicians and draft law by stressing how the government and their agents in municipalities vindicate their urban policies by pretending that they care about earthquakes. It is possible to multiply these critiques.

However, after all these debates, the law was still enacted and promulgated on the official gazette on May 31, 2012. According to law, public and private lands would be declared as "zones of risk" and citizens would have to demolish their own houses. Once it is declared a risk zone, entering a plea is not possible. Even the healthy houses will be demolished with the unhealthy ones in order to keep the unity of implementation (Article 3). Water, electricity, or natural gas services will be cut in these areas (Article 4). If citizens do not demolish their houses in sixty days, they will be given an extra deadline; however, if the citizens still do not demolish the houses, TOKİ or the presidency will demolish them but still the citizens will pay the cost (Article 3, 4, 5). Through this law, TOKİ and the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization are given supreme powers, which means the usurpation of local government authority which is in opposition to central government. In addition, even public hospitals, schools etc. could be declared as risky zones, which enables TOKİ to convert the public lands as well.

[5] http://www.arkitera.com/haber/index/detay/yildiz-teknik-universitesi-ogretim-uyelerinden-duyuru/6876

Since the law does not set forth “regeneration on site”, public buildings can be moved to somewhere else and the land can be opened up to another usage and speculations in the name of urban regeneration.

Regardless of the scope of the Law No. 6306, referring to the natural catastrophes has already become part of the hegemonic discourse. Even though this law is not applied to Karapınar project, a very similar discourse revolves around the natural disasters, fears, and the significance of the human life and property, and the need of constructing a safe life for everyone’s sake. In the speeches of the municipality officers and neighborhood executor in Karapinar, there were references to the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism and the necessity of the Law No. 6306. However, how durable are the TOKİ houses? Does TOKİ construct “disaster-proof” buildings?

TOKİ’s housing and regeneration projects are exempt from the regulation of taxes and charges which are subjected to construction companies; moreover, TOKİ is left out of the financial auditing of the Court of Accounts (Çavuşoğlu, 2011:47-48). In addition, the tender offers of TOKİ to the private companies for constructing or consulting the TOKİ projects are often won by Islamic capital. Thus, frequently the complaints of TOKİ residents or accounts about the low material quality of TOKİ buildings have become a forgone conclusion. Among the many TOKİ-related problems, I would like to mention a few examples about the low quality of the TOKİ projects.

First of all, during my field research in Eskişehir, the municipality officers themselves were worried about the durability and reliability of their TOKİ flats against the earthquakes. Ihlamurkent TOKİ houses for the low income groups were built with the partnership of Odunpazarı Municipality, which is also the same case for Karapınar project. Thus, municipality officers were given an opportunity to have a flat in Ihlamurkent, although they are not low income citizens. However, as I learned during a group interview, after a minor earthquake in Eskişehir, crack formations occurred in the pillars and walls. As another example, a sad incident happened in a TOKİ house in Samsun, in July 2012. The ground floors were flooded which resulted in the death of nine people. The media organizations sympathetic to TOKİ evaluated the news as “not a

TOKİ mistake, but revenge of the nature" (Birgün Newspaper, 2012). It is indeed ironic that while TOKİ and authorities stress the fatal risks of natural disasters and the need of constructing safe towns, their own construction was flooded in by the "revenge of the nature". Moreover, on one hand, TOKİ claims to create safer housing units and tears down the neighborhoods, however, on the other hand, there are ludicrous cases where TOKİ does not provide proper and necessary services to the natural disaster victims. For instance, five years after an earthquake in Bala, near Ankara, TOKİ still could not finish the housing project for the earthquake victims. Even though some houses were completed and given to the residents, they could not move in because of the lack of electricity, water, natural gas, and other supplies (Solportal, 2012).

The Rise and Fall of *Gecekondu* in Turkish Cities

After the 1950's a very significant trend which affected the urbanization processes of Turkey was the intense internal migration of the rural populations to the cities as results of the Marshall aids which had created surplus labor in rural areas through mechanization of agriculture as well as the industrial development in Turkey which needed the cheap labor force. Especially the big cities were the targets of domestic migration in the period of 1950s to 1980s.

Consequently, rapid migration brought rapid urbanization of the big cities. For instance, the population of Istanbul doubled from the 1950s to the 1980s (Keyder, 2010:180). In this period, the import-substitution model of economy led state to keep urban investments at a minimum level (Şengül, 2009:123, Tekeli, 2012:109). Thus, the housing needs of the migrants were neglected. In the absence of the formal social housing policies (Buğra, 1998:307), the migrants constructed their informal settlements – "*gecekondu"* which literally means *landed overnight* – on public and private lands. Besides, the informal economy became the answer to their unemployment problem (Şengül, 2009:123). *Gecekondus* were mostly established near the industrial areas. For example, in Istanbul in 1960s, only 1% of the *gecekondus* were far from the industrial concentrations (Tekeli, 2012:110). Therefore, by providing the cheap labor force which

was needed by the industry and reducing the cost of urbanization, *gecekondus* increased the sources of the state to invest in the industry (Tekeli, 2012:110).

Since the beginning, the "mushrooming of *gecekondu* settlements" (Buğra, 1998:307; Şengül, 2009:124) has created public and political debates. However, in the first decades, the debates were around the "social problems" or "social effects" of *gecekondus* on the cities, rather than the violation of property rights (Buğra, 1998:307). In the 1950s, the right wing Democrat Party had a populist approach towards the migration from rural to urban areas and did not adopt a solid and severe attitude against *gecekondu* (Erman, 2004:2). Although there were occasional attempts to demolish these settlements in the 1950s and 1960s, new settlements swiftly proliferated the next day and proved that demolition was not a solution (Şengül, 2009:128). Considering the fact that the 1950s had been the transition years to the multi-party system in Turkey, the populist approach based on voting patterns expected from *gecekondu* settlements is apprehensible. Since the state could not provide policies regarding migration, migrants' housing needs and illegal settlements, pretending that there was no problems related to those issues became the main policy in the early period of migration (Şengül, 2009:128, Tekeli, 2012). One of the best indicators of this is seen in the date of the first "*Gecekondu* Law" – Law no: 775 – which was not enacted up until 1966. The politics of the 1960s had a more positive approach towards *gecekondus*. As the numbers of illegal settlements speedily and irremeably increased in the1960s, producing policies that took these settlements into account became necessary. In this decade, while trying to define its social base and interrogating the urban inequalities, the left gravitated towards *gecekondu* as well (Şengül, 2009:129). The leftwing Republican People's Party (RPP), for instance, claimed that "*gecekondu* belongs to those who live in it" in the 1965 election bulletin (Tekeli, 2012:226). Hence, the left started to see this urban problem as a problem of social justice which took the use-value of the space into consideration (Şengül, 2009:133).

On the other hand, the unplanned squatter sprawl has created inconsistency with the urban middle class. In the 1950s, irregular housing settlements and *gecekondu* lifestyle were perceived as a threat to the middle class (Şengül, 2009:124). The initial reaction of

the latter towards the newcomers focused around the slurring effects of *gecekondus* on the city image. The academic research about illegal settlements in the early decades saw the lifestyle of *gecekondu* as tied to rural culture (Erman, 2004: 3). The inhabitants were seen as the "villagers in the city" (Tekeli, 2011:269). *Gecekondu* was, at large, evaluated from the frame of the evolutionary approach to modernization theory. Thus, the settlements were perceived in a transitory period between the rural and urban culture (Erman, 2004; Tekeli, 2012: 192-197). For instance, Sewell's field research in Akdere, Ankara, described the evolution of the *gecekondu* settlement in three periods that are in the order of settlement, middle/interim, and assimilation (Tekeli, 2012:195-196). Very briefly, in the first period the settlements have important infrastructural problems with alienation to urban life, while in the second period they start to establish coalitions to solve their common problems; they become a neighborhood. Finally, in the last third period the first generation gets older, children get used to city life, the tenancy increase, and settlements obtain title deeds (Tekeli, 2012: 195-196). While *gecekondu* inhabitants were seen as neither rural nor urban persons, *gecekondu* research in those years sought to understand how much the *gecekondu* residents integrated with the city. Sociological surveys, therefore, continually asked about the leisure activities of *gecekondu* inhabitants, i.e., how often they go to cinema, theatre, concerts, or whether they read daily newspapers, and the like (Erman, 2004: 4). " In this way, as opposed to a *gecekondu* inhabitant, an urbanite figure was posited as one who followed concerts, cinema, theatre, and daily newspapers" (Erman 2004:4), a move that otherized/marginalized the *gecekondu*.

When we come to the 1970s, the populist approach of the political parties towards *gecekondu* continued as an election strategy. Significantly, RPP's urban strategy was shaped around the rights of *gecekondu* and urban poor which would bear fruit in the 1973 general elections, as well as in the local elections of 1977 (Şengül, 2009: 132-134). The votes of *gecekondu*s moved away from the status-quoist discourse of the right wing towards the left which promised a change favoring equality and labor (Erman, 2004:8). Before the elections in 1973, RPP promised better infrastructure and permission to build up new floors of existing *gecekondu*s (Tekeli, 2012:232). RPP's reasoning was to help not only the immigrants but also the urban poor to take advantage

of the new constructions. In addition, to give an example from policy making level, the coalition government's program in 1974 stated that "[…] all the *gecekondu*s constructed before 1973 will be legalized" (Tekeli, 2012:233). To sum up, the initial shock effect of *gecekondu*s on policy makers and political parties, as well as the attitude of pretending as if there were not any problems related to these settlements altered in the 1970s. Whilst the political parties, including RPP, still carried the populist voting approach to *gecekondu*s, the new party and governmental programs were proposed especially by the left, but also by the coalition governments of right and left wings. These programs considered social justice and use values of the urban *gecekondu* areas.

In the 1970s, the modus operandi in social sciences also shifted. The evolutionary modernist approach gave place to theories of political economy and *gecekondu* residents began to be seen as disadvantaged or exploited by the socio-economic system, rather than the source of the urban problems (Erman, 2004:6). However, as Erman (2004:7-8) states, the integration discourse among the academic research still stayed prominent in the 1970s. While the problems were seen around the integration problems of *gecekondu* with the middle class city life in the previous decades, it shifted to the integration with the capitalist economy in the 1970s.

At the end of the decade the economy and politics in the country were in disarray. As I have mentioned above, the governmental crisis of 1977-1979 and the deepening struggle of the leftist and rightist groups led to political instability. As the cities witnessed the hostility of leftist and rightist group, under those conditions *gecekondu* settlements were divided into leftwing and rightwing factions. Political activism gained a base in *gecekondus* and the urban poor in general, and there were "liberated zones" of political groups in *gecekondu* neighborhoods. Such political problems as well as the economic depression resulted in the military coup of September 12, 1980. Both the military rule of 1980-1983 and the Özal government formed after the 1983 elections sustained the neoliberal initiatives started with the decisions of January 24, 1980.

Thus, "the period of urbanization of the labor force" (Şengül, 2009:138) which had been seen in the 1970s came to a close. "From the mid-1980s, although the vote potential of

migrants was still important in big cities, other considerations began to play an increasing role in shaping decision makers attitudes" (Türkün, 2011: 64). As Keyder (2005:128) states, most of the physical transformations in Istanbul that are associated with globalization have taken place since the mid-1980s, such as new office towers, five-star hotels, rich housing complexes, and the like. In this regard, I have already mentioned the globalist approach and efforts of Dalan who governed the greater municipality of Istanbul between 1984 and 1989. However, the globalist urban strategies which led to negligence towards the *gecekondu*s and urban poor made Dalan to pay the price in the next local election held in 1989 (Keyder, 2000:26). Social Democratic People's Party won the greater municipality of Istanbul. However, while SDPP was skeptical of the globalist discourse in the first years, in the next local elections the skepticism actually diminished. Before the 1994 local elections, both the SDPP and the MP adopted a "global city" vision for Istanbul, whereas the Welfare Party (WP) with an Islamic orientation "strike an anti-globalization attitude" (Öktem, 2006:57), emphasizing social justice and fighting against corruption as principles. Through a discourse of social security, fraternity, mercy, development, and just governance, WP's propaganda promised to be a remedy to the problems of unemployment and poverty (Öktem, 2006:57). The populist approach of the WP especially towards the urban poor resulted in the victory of Recep Tayyip Erdoğan – who is currently the prime minister of Turkey– to be elected as the mayor of the Greater Municipality of Istanbul. Therefore we have witnessed the entry of Erdoğan into politics with an anti-globalist discourse. Yet, WP's developmentalist attitude changed quickly towards the free market economy when the party was reestablished as the Virtue Party (VP) (Öktem, 2006:57). When Erdoğan was the mayor of the Greater Municipality of Istanbul he had already "declared his dissatisfaction with the policies that had permitted the massive migration into the city, proposing that there should be a tax to make the city prohibitively expensive, however, this was legally and politically impossible" (Keyder, 2010:182). On the other hand, later, several legislative changes regarding the urban planning and regeneration projects to the detriment of *gecekondu*s would come up with the victory of Erdoğan's party of JDP in the general elections of 2002.

In the 1980s and 1990s the perception of *gecekondu* settlements by the middle classes continued to be negative. *Gecekondu* settlements were seen as the centers of unlawful profits and plunders of *gecekondu* amnesties (Erman, 2004:10). During the 1990s, as an important effect on policy thinking towards *gecekondu*s, "official spokesmen began to adopt a much more sweeping and exclusionary tone […] while stigmatizing squatter area dwellers […] as invaders" (Türkün, 2011:65). Therefore, *gecekondu*, which was seen as the contaminating tool of the cities in the 1950s and the disadvantaged poor in the 1970s, has begun to be perceived as the violators of the property rights or rent seekers after the 1980s. However, it would be wrong to claim that there was a sudden change of the policies of governments in the 1980s to the detriment of *gecekondu*s. We see four amnesties declared by the Özal governments in 1983, 1984, 1986, and 1987. The populist attitude in exchange for votes actually helped MP to be reelected to the parliament. However, globalist considerations and market factors were gaining more and more significance as I have already mentioned. In the 1990s an exclusionary tone of the officials has occurred seeing the *gecekondu* residents as invaders. Moreover, *gecekondu*s have started to be seen as the causes of the urban crime, vandalism, and extremism (Türkün, 2011). Hence, the rhetoric of redevelopment and transformation of the *gecekondu* settlements have been in effect since then.

In addition, during these decades in academia, the postmodernist discourse based on identity altered the research approach towards *gecekondu* settlements. *Gecekondu* regions and inhabitants which were seen as homogenous until the 1980s have started to be evaluated according to their ethnic, religious, or sexual differences. For example, woman studies programs and feminist scholars began to conduct research about *gecekondu* women and consider them as subjects of *gecekondu*s, rather than objects (Erman, 2004:9).

Finally, in the 2000s, there was a deepening application of neoliberal urban requirements in the cities. Poor or slum areas have become potential areas for new urban investments as the cities have grown with the support of the enlargement of transportation systems. The lands which had not taken attention before now became the targets of urban regeneration strategies. Kurtuluş (2006:7) signifies that these strategies

"have occurred as a new economy". Moreover, as the cities grew and the profitability of the construction sector was realized, the governments turned their face towards *gecekondu*s. Hence, the broader discourse on *gecekondu* facilitated TOKİ to take hold of *gecekondu* settlements as the main areas to be regenerated which is also seen in Eskişehir with the Karapınar project.

Although Erdoğan had entered the elections of the Greater Municipality of Istanbul with populist developmentalist promises in 1994, neighborhood transformations and upgrading projects have become one of the main orientations of the JDP government in relation to urban policies, leading to the re/dissettlement of people from their neighborhoods, as seen in the Sulukule case. "Land has finally become a commodity" where "there is no longer the possibility of land occupation and informal housing construction" which means that the newcomers are left to become tenants probably at the least desirable and cheapest places (Keyder, 2005:130). Thus, *gecekondu* inhabitants and lower-middle classes living in the slums, who supported Erdoğan until recently would be the largest urban losers under the neoliberal urban projects (Öktem, 2006:60).

As a crucial instance to these *gecekondu* regenerations, below in Figure 1 we see Altındağ Municipality's advertisements on the billboards in Ankara. The regeneration is held by TOKİ and the JDP municipality of Altındağ. The message is "Once upon a time it was there… - Now is gone!" accompanied by the smirking picture of the mayor. The municipality's webpage claims to "clean" the Çinçin neighborhood from *gecekondu*s as an answer to those who asserted once that "they could not achieve such a project!"[6]. The language reflects the mentality of the "disposal of *gecekondu*". While the neighborhood was once there, it is gone now.

[6] http://www.altindag.bel.tr/haber.asp?islem=1&haber_ID=3614

Figure 1 - Altındağ Municipality : "Once upon a time was there ÇİNÇİN…" — "Now is gone!".

Lefebvre (1991: 26-27) accents that space is a social product. Analogously, Tilley (1994:10) discusses the socially produced space which includes necessary combination of the cognitive, the physical, and the emotional components in it. Yet, without considering a neighborhood as a socially, culturally, cognitively, and emotionally constructed place, TOKİ regeneration projects degrade the settlements into inhuman objects, somewhat like a jigsaw puzzle. In almost all cases, the projects seek not to renew or reorganize the neighborhoods, but completely tear down and rebuild. At the end, TOKİ constructs monotype high-storey buildings in the all cities without taking the social and cultural needs of the populations into account, as I indicated in the Sulukule case. Thus, the projects take construction as an activity whose performance has a result, which obtains a finished structure (Heidegger, 1971:159). In Altındağ, for instance, a finished building, which is accompanied by the smirking pictures, is taken as a unique component of the "regeneration". The finished structure only focuses on the physicality of the space or building. However, what Heidegger advocates is "letting dwell" instead of "letting appear". He (1971:160) claims that "building belongs to dwelling" and "*only if we are capable of dwelling, only then can we build*". With this argument Heidegger emphasizes the "dwelling activity" –the social activity– that produces the space. Nevertheless, TOKİ regenerations do not take into account whether the inhabitants want regeneration, and if they do, what kind of a project they want and what their social needs are. Sometimes authorities do not even conduct a survey in the regeneration area,

as in the case of the Karapınar project. Decisions are made and plans are prepared top-down.

In addition, while the regeneration projects have been actualized, hegemonic discourses have been created by the authorities and reinforced by the media organs sympathetic to JDP as a strategy for the justification of these projects. As Harvey (2006:146) states, "for any system of thought to become hegemonic requires the articulation of fundamental concepts that become so deeply embedded in common-sense understanding that they become taken for granted and beyond question". Moreover, Lefebvre (1991:10-11) insists that the space is not a passive locus of social relations, therefore, the exercise of hegemony cannot leave space untouched. Hence, the neoliberal urban strategy has also invented its hegemonic means and statements. I have already talked about the natural catastrophes as a hegemonic discourse of the authorities. Besides that, some of the other most popular discourses accompanying the regeneration projects are "interests of everyone", and "benefitting everyone". Firstly, it is claimed that everyone has the right to live in a healthy and safe house. The infrastructural and housing problems of the squatters need to be solved, of course. However, the urban projects of TOKİ are based on a profit-oriented logic rather than welfare considerations. The most obvious proof is the displacements and/or dispossessions of the inhabitants and using their land for another aim, i.e. office buildings, commercial or touristic centers, or luxury residences. Even the regeneration-on-site projects lead to evictions, as we will see in Karapınar in the third chapter. Secondly, the projects "create a discourse on the importance of the project and define it as a particular milestone in the shaping of the future of the city" (Swyngedouw et al., 2002:566). Thus, it is claimed that neighborhoods and cities will profit by getting cleaned and healthier, while crime rates in these settlements will drop accordingly. Therefore, regeneration projects are pronounced as an opportunity to a "win-win-win" situation from which "the citizens, the neighborhood, and the cities would gain". After mentioning the urban dynamics in the city of Eskişehir in the following chapter, I will discuss in the final chapter about the "win-win" claims of the regeneration in the Karapınar quarter and indicate that not everyone is winning, as it is asserted by TOKİ and its municipal partner.

CHAPTER II

Eskişehir

Eskişehir is located in the north-west of central Anatolia and is positioned on the railway line between Haydarpaşa (Istanbul) and Ankara. When Germans constructed the Hamburg-Baghdad railway in the last quarter of the 19th century, Eskişehir was chosen to be one of the Anatolian stops which gave a strategic importance to the city. Another significant point was the construction of the repair workshop by the Germans to supply the need of maintenance and repair of the wagons and steam locomotives[7]. With the republican era the workshop was nationalized and in 1946 it became a factory[8]. Many politicians, academicians, and the representatives of industry and commerce whose opinions are aired at the Museum of the City Memory (2012) signify the role of the railway and the repair shop as the root of industrial development of the city, held by public and private enterprises, which also contributed to the development of the sociocultural life of the city as well.

For the industrial benefits, existence of the railway transportation would give Eskişehir a priority for the industrial investments in the republican era of Turkey started in 1923 when the railway transportation was taken as the means of modernization. An airplane maintenance workshop in 1926, the Tile Factory in 1927, flour mills in the 1930s, and the Sugar Factory in 1933 were established among others. These factories were generally established at the north of the city, in the "factories region" which I will explain more about later. Other significant factory establishments were the textile plant factory in 1956 and cement factory in 1957. Along with the factories, the Eskişehir Commodity Exchange Market in 1925 and Bank Eskişehir in 1929 were founded.

[7] http://www.tulomsas.com.tr/1894.htm
[8] http://www.tulomsas.com.tr/1946.htm

Depending on the railway facilities and industrial investments in the city, there has been a significant urban population development in the city. According to the general census, the urban population increased from 32 thousand in 1927 to 90 thousand in 1950 (Gümüş, 2004:153). While the urban population grew 47% between 1927-1935, and 52% between 1935-1940, the growth rates in the rural area for the same respective time periods were 21% and 24% (Gümüş, 2004). In the first decades of the republic, there was a migration from rural to the urban areas in Eskişehir. Another accelerated urban population growth period was between 1950-1960 that was mainly caused by migration from the Balkans as well as by the domestic migration from rural to urban. After the 1950s, Eskişehir has started to pull migration from the nearby cities and from eastern Turkey. For instance, in the Karapınar regeneration project quarter the migrants are generally from Erzurum, Ağrı, and Afyon. Significantly, the urban population of Eskişehir saw an unbalanced gender rate between 1935-1990, where male population was higher than female's. Çamurcu (2004:268) signifies this result as an outcome of the male migration from other cities. Although the female population was higher than the male population in the rural area in the same time gap, the rates were not as unbalanced as the urban ones, which proves the internal migration to Eskişehir from outside. Furthermore, according to the general census, it was in 1965 that for the first time the urban population exceeded the rural population in Eskişehir, whereas it was in 1985 for the whole of Turkey (tuik, 2008)[9]. Today the population of Eskişehir is 781 thousand and urbanization of the population in the city is still higher than Turkey with the rates of 89.65% and 76.8%, respectively (tuik, 2011). Moreover, if we look at middle Anatolia after the 1980s, there, Eskişehir and Ankara have been two cities whose net migration rate is positive (Ataay, 2001). In addition, according to the information report on the 81 provinces of Turkey prepared by the Ministry of Science, Industry and Technology[10] (2012), the share of the service sector in the economy of Eskişehir is 60%, while the industry follows with 30%, and agriculture with 10%.

So far I briefly indicated the chronological urban highlights of Eskişehir by using the official documents and statistical analyses without mentioning the relationships of the

[9] http://www.eskisehir.gov.tr/sarici/ekitap/adnks_eskisehir_kitapcik.pdf
[10] http://www.sanayi.gov.tr/Files/Documents/81-il-durum-raporu-2012-11052012113452.pdf

city dwellers with the history and the places since there is a lack of anthropological and sociological research about the urban developments in Eskişehir. Yet, from now onward, I will provide my personal memories, experiences, and observations about Eskişehir, which I find as significant contributions to my ethnographic field research. My testified sentiments and prospects below will demonstrate how I have perceived the developments in the city since my childhood, which in fact constituted a crucial interest for my thesis. Considering the fact that my general insights about the city specifically channeled my thesis topic towards an urban regeneration project in Eskişehir, I find them inseparable from my ethnographic research. Hence, in my opinion, they are as important as my field work findings that I should supply.

First of all, what I remember from my first memories related to Eskişehir is that it was said to be a dust city in summers, and mud city in winters. Other than my visits to parks with my parents in Yediler (close to Odunpazarı) my first serious meeting with the city center was my primary school which was centrally located. During my nine years of education –between 1993 and 2001– in the same school, every day I had the chance to watch the same streets from home to school-school to home. Thus, I had enough time to observe the differences in the center. When I think about those years, a dark picture occurs about the city center: a large amount of buses, cars, and exhaust fumes which would change with the construction of the street tram in 2004. In the early 1990s, families were going to Hamamyolu street (near the Odunpazarı neighborhood) for a walk or shopping. When we came to the end of the decade the street was losing its attention and the new trend was progressively switching to the northern part of the city. It was becoming increasingly visible to recognize the income levels of the citizens according to their consuming practices, such as going shopping at Hamamyolu or to the north where new brand shops have been opened. Moreover, the number of cafes was increasing around this region.

At the end of the nineties the most widespread comment I heard about the city was the university students' effect on the "modernization" of Eskişehir. The city has two public universities; the older one, Anatolia University, was established as an applied school in 1958 which became a university in 1982, while the second one, Osmangazi University

was established in 1993 by a separation from Anatolia University. In years, after the three big cities of Turkey –Ankara, Istanbul, Izmir– Eskişehir has become a highly preferred city by students. Hence, in the 1990s, the city was branding itself as a "student city" towards the outside. I had repetitiously heard the matching of Eskişehir and "student city" from my school teachers, family, neighbors, and needless to say, from the local media. The city was compared with the other middle Anatolian cities, especially the neighboring cities such as Afyon, Kütahya, Bilecik, however, not with the capital Ankara, large and lively Istanbul, beautiful Izmir, or touristic Antalya. The comparisons were modest but still swollen with pride.

In my opinion, the age of upgrading the image of Eskişehir from being a "student city" to a "modern" and "European city" came about with Yılmaz Büyükerşen, the mayor of the Greater Municipality of Eskişehir. Since 1999 he has been repeatedly elected as the mayor of the greater municipality from a center left party of Democratic Left Party. One of the most prestigious steps for Büyükerşen to "make Eskişehir a European city!" was the construction of the street tram in 2004 that consists of 15 km of two lines and 26 stops, which actually does not cover much of the city. Among the other developments towards a European city, Porsuk River was cleaned, shaped concretely, fenced, garnished with decorative colorful lights, and every corner of the center has been pranked up with golden color decorative statues. In years, the rhetoric of the European city has widened so much that it was adopted by the district municipality of Odunpazarı, even though it is governed by JDP. Yet more, the municipality projects are compared to European standards as we will see in Karapınar.

At the beginning of the 2000s, the consumption habits and the leisure activities of the citizens started to change dramatically. The north has become more and more popular as the new shops and cafes have been opened, whereas previous central streets lost the attractiveness and have been defeated by the wave of the newly emerged trendy shops and streets and therefore. I say newly emerged streets, since some have developed only in the last years that I will come to again shortly. From my high school years on, I remember the excitements and merriments of people whenever there was an opening of a big brand that people had used to see in the advertisements or movies on TV.

Similarly, the number of cafes, pubs, and restaurants has increased. In addition, the first five starts hotel of Eskişehir, Anemon, was opened in 2003, which was also a source of pride for the city and the citizens. In these years, the city was seen as a student city, however, the imagery of a "modern" and "European" city was getting progressively more significant. Another crucial point to add here is the increasing construction of new middle class residential areas with gates and security systems which developed parallel with the popular expansion of the gated communities around the world (Fainstein, 2005:6). Hence, we have seen the movement of the upper-middle class away from the center to newly emerged "healthy", "more green", "secure", and "less risky to earthquakes" houses.

Although the city was changing year by year, when I went to Ankara for my university education in 2005, I still saw major differences between the two cities regarding the consumption and leisure activities of the citizens, as well as the built environment. First of all, "my city" appeared to my young and nascent eyes as a little and naïve city which did not have big income gaps between the poor and rich, while Ankara seemed much bigger and evil with the richest and poorest neighborhoods. There were neighborhoods that I heard about but never visited in those years, and maybe still have not today, that were highly poor or rich which were spatially and socially segregated. Yet, I was proud of my city that everybody was still close to each other where there was not such a segregation in the usage of the city center. Or, for example, there were not so many expensive places in Eskişehir that I could not go to in those years. Another point which took my attention was the shopping malls in Ankara which were still not seen in Eskişehir. Between 2005 and 2007 there were many shopping malls in Ankara that I saw open which were becoming desolate places in a couple of years or even less. I was again prideful that although it was changing, my city was at least not adopting the shopping malls insanity. However, this was a naïve assumption that I thought would always be the case for Eskişehir.

The first shopping mall, Kanatlı, was opened in 2007 on land of an old flour mill in the factories quarter at the north of the city. This was another great event for Eskişehir. The new building is claimed to have a "historical look" or an "authentic architectural look"

by the owners[11] and also the citizens: I heard many comments of "it looks like a historical building!". As Fainstein (2005:6) points out, rarely a superficial local character is given to imitative shopping mall or office buildings constructions. Similarly, Kanatlı was bestowed a an "authentic historical look". In the first weeks after its opening, the mall was replete with people who were going there for an exploratory first glimpse. Actually this was not a very surprising conclusion.

If we consider that Turkey has a large number of TV series viewers and almost all of the popular series have been made in Istanbul, from the second half of the 1990s the shopping mall scenes were getting visible in those movies which made the rest of Turkey to dream about them, at least as I know from Eskişehir. There was definitely a wonder about Akmerkez life style, which had become the icon of the shopping malls that opened in Istanbul in 1993. In the movies, the "amusing" life styles in shopping malls were shown where people go there with their families, lovers, or friends to shop, sit, eat, go bowling, and, in short, be happy. Indeed, in the 1990s, neighbors, friends, and friends of friends were boasting about their visits of malls when they went to Istanbul and Ankara. Thus, through the means of media, shopping mall culture was produced promoting people to desire a connection with such consumption habits (Zukin and Maguire, 2004).

More than a decade after Istanbul and Ankara, "finally" Eskişehir obtained a shopping mall. After that, new and bigger malls and superstores opened each year, which are currently around ten in number. Today Kanatlı is empty. The second shopping mall of the city, "Neoplus Outlet and Life Center", has also become a ghost place. My friends working there say that they make a limited amount of sales, and only on weekends. I personally went there only once. The third which is also located in the factories quarter still takes the attention of people. Although the more expensive shops are generally empty, there are many people who go to the mall for a walk inside, or meet friends on the third floor of fast-food restaurants. As a last point here, I remember the sensational news about the upcoming Starbucks café for the first time in Eskişehir, entering into this shopping mall. As I followed in the social media, people were highly impatient. As a

[11] http://www.kanatli.com.tr/index.php?sayfa=hakkimizda

result of the global media, certain products or habits have been disseminated which made them desirable to consumers everywhere (Fainstein, 2005:6). Especially brand-name franchises create a transnational consumer culture (Zukin and Maguire, 2004:186). Thus, Starbucks has been one of these globally sprawling brands which was joyfully welcomed by Eskişehir. In addition to the new consumer habits and shopping malls bursting in the city, changing structures of some crucial quarters in the city are also significant to mention.

First of all, the factories quarter has created discussions for more than the last decade. I mentioned before that in the early periods of the republic, the factories were generally established at the north of the city on a 62 hectare land plot of the "factories quarter". As the city grew more and the factories either closed or relocated, the region became central. Since the center was moving towards the north, the factories quarter has particularly come to be valuable which brought the public discussions together since the second half of the 1990s. Some focused on the importance of the region on the memories of the city which should be kept as a green area with the restoration of the buildings, whereas some considered the rent seeking activities on the land. However, it seems that, the second view has come out victorious. Already, four shopping malls, one private hospital, one hotel, two new hotel constructions, many dwellings, multifaceted projects of residential buildings, shopping and leisure activities, luxury cafes and bars have been constructed in the quarter. In addition, there are many rent or sale announcements for office places and residential apartments. So far my relationship with the quarter is a decision to not go there. Besides, the newly emerged entertainment places created a target group that excludes the majority of the Eskişehir citizens, including myself. As Suğur (2012) also points out, today it is not possible for the lover income citizens to join the activities of the factories quarter.. The quarter is getting increasingly occupied and commercialized. Thus, the deindustrialization of the factories quarter brought new concentrations of the amusement market and professional jobs in the urban core of the city (Zukin, 1987:130).

Secondly, another hot debate has been around the stadium of the city located in the centrum. The stadium land was assigned to TOKİ by the Provincial Directorate of

Youth and Sports in April, 2012. Now TOKİ will construct a new stadium outside of the city and use the old stadium's land for itself. Yet, Eskişehir is not unique about the "city stadium – TOKİ" cases. There are akin processes in Diyarbakır, Mersin, Ankara, Malatya, Kocaeli, etc. Crucially, before the assignation of the stadium to TOKİ, the discussions were divided between factions who want the stadium to stay in place, and who think that it should be relocated. It is true that before and after the football games traffic congestion creates a problem, or that the games produce massive amounts of noise. As I already spoke with the Chamber of Urban Planners, Chamber of Architects, and Chamber of Civil Engineers, they also pointed out the problems the stadium creates. They signaled that moving the stadium somewhere else can be a solution. As they agreed, the old stadium zone could be used as a city square which Eskişehir lacks. However, so far there are only rumors about the future of that space. Among them the most spoken ones are a shopping mall, a business center, or a Disneyland. As I randomly hear from the citizens, artisans demand a place from the land. Especially after the openings of big shopping malls in the last decade, artisans' economic activities at the center are highly restricted by those giant malls that they cannot compete with. Therefore, now the artisans are against a new shopping mall and they demand more like a traditional artisan bazaar for themselves. But, the chambers think that, the artisans will not be successful in getting their request fulfilled since the price speculation of the land is very high. On the other hand regarding the new stadium, when the Minister of Youth and Sports visited Eskişehir in July, 2012, he said that the architecture of the new stadium was designed according to the dynamism of a soccer ball, thus a philosophical connection is linked to the stadium[12], and he followed with:

> "We do not build a concrete jungle here. We create a *life center*. We bring a *conceptual format* of a shopping center and a five-star hotel. Here will not be a concrete jungle which will be opened every second week for the games, we *design* a center which incorporates a shopping center and sport halls" (emphasis mine).

Hence, once again, we have seen the propulsive power of the construction of a shopping mall and hotel which is claimed to be a "life center" rather than a "concrete jungle" which is verbalized through the polemic of "design", "concepts and formats" and

[12] http://www.zaman.com.tr/newsDetail_getNewsById.action?haberno=1314519

"philosophy". Yet, in the next months we will see what will happen to the destiny of the old stadium zone.

Another point to mention is the student neighborhoods of the city. As Goode (2011: 164) indicates in the case of Philadelphia, universities upscale the surrounding property values which leads to gentrification of these neighborhoods and displacements of the local residents (Goode, 2011: 164). Since the establishment of the two universities, a similar case has occurred in Eskişehir as the student population in the city has grown. Without pointing out the details, the students have settled around the universities which created the "student neighborhoods". Since Anatolia University has a more central location at the north of the city, the neighborhoods around the university have been visibly developed according to the housing needs of students. The land owners of the region have constructed single flat apartments which are more profitable to sell or rent to students. Now, these neighborhoods are occupied by monotype buildings full of one room flats. No wonder that the constructions led to an increase in rental prices. Thus, the students have had a gentrifying role in these neighborhoods, while the house owners left their places to students in exchange for the profitable rents; and former tenants of the region gradually had to leave these zones since both the sizes and prices of the flats are not suitable anymore.

In addition to all these points, there are several other developments in the city that will go beyond the scope of this paper if I continue further. What I have realized day by day is that there is an increase of bordered spaces which have not been developed naturally. For instance, in the last years, public parks have been fashionable popular activities of the municipalities. The common points of the parks are the fencing and security guards, highly structured planting and decoration systems, and the like. Moreover, in these controlled "pseudo public spaces" there are generally "restrictions on behavior and activities" (Mitchell, 2003:143). During walking tours with my mother, I have seen many instances when the security guards warn the kissing couples to stop, or youth to not consume alcohol, or sit on the grass. Another instance can be given from the bars' street (of course in the north of the city) which developed as a project from one day to another when the bars quickly opened. Although it does not have visible fences, it is

bordered as one small street of bars, where you "have to go if you want to have fun at nights", which includes me as well, and it is approximately 5-7 meters wide and 300 meters long. Today the age group of the people on the street is generally between 22-30 who are mostly university students and some of the young middle income citizens. The bars' street is the third angle of the student life triangle, where the other two angles are the university and the student neighborhoods.

Lastly, there have been vivid activities in Odunpazarı, in the oldest neighborhood of Eskişehir, which is located at the center of the city map, and which gave its name to the Odunpazarı Municipality. I passed the neighborhood with the school bus when I was younger on my way to school. As I remember from those years, it was an old place where nobody gave the attention anymore, which was even called as dangerous to enter. However, in 2002, the greater municipality under Büyükerşen and Anatolia University started a project and constructed *new* "historical houses" that I have not seen there before. Şentürk (2012, 34) calls the ferroconcrete houses as being built imaginarily. Yet, as stated by the authorities, the houses are built in accordance with the original form of the historical houses. The colors are vivid pink, yellow, green, and blue next to each other, which, in my opinion looked like toy houses at that time, and still do in fact. These houses became boutique hotels, restaurants, and museums. After that, Odunpazarı Municipality started a restoration project in the region which is generally about face-lifting. The colors are again vivid. It is interesting to read the municipality's webpage which looks like an advertisement brochure stating "Odunpazarı waits for you, offers you…"[13]. Now the streets in the neighborhood are full of souvenir shops and cafes offering the authentic Eskişehir kitchen which fulfill the "exoticism desires of the tourists" (Fainstein and Gladstone, 1999:36) . It has become an attraction where tourists try to catch the local people's pictures. Interestingly, all these drastic changes have occurred in less than a decade. In fact, these changes in the Odunpazarı Houses quarter accord with Rose (2000:107) who claims that:

> "each conservation area, each heritage trail is populated, not by the spontaneous movements of the urban inhabitants, but by those transported by tour coaches, clutching guide books, video cameras, and postcards. The city becomes not so

[13] http://www.odunpazari.bel.tr/MenuIcerik.aspx?ID=14

> much a complex of dangerous and compelling spaces of promises and gratifications, but a series of packaged zones of enjoyment, managed by an alliance of urban planners, entrepreneurs, local politicians and quasi-governmental regeneration agencies. […] Urban inhabitants are required to play their part in these games of heritage".

After all, in the last years, the place of Eskişehir in domestic tourism has drastically increased. The tourists are fascinated by the new parks, street tram, students, and the restored old town of Odunpazarı. The visitors who know the city from before give the same reaction of "Eskişehir has become such a European city which was once full of mud streets". Now we see the red color open-roof sightseeing tourist buses in the city as we were used to seeing in the movies or advertisements of the famous touristic cities that would not be imagined in Eskişehir only a couple of decades ago.

The era of the comparisons of the city with the neighbor cities fell behind the times. Now there are the arguments about the increasing high life quality of Eskişehir in the last decade and the comparisons to the big cities. In the mainstream broadcast[14], the city is said to have the second or third livability standards of Turkey. Besides, Keyman and Lorasdağı (2010:160) define Eskişehir as "a city of culture, art, and pleasure" arising from the "Odunpazarı Houses, concert halls, and International Eskişehir Festival". "With the shopping malls, parks, gardens, the bridges on the Porsuk River, the statues, and the rail system transportation, Eskişehir looks like a European city and has a high quality livability which sets the pace for Turkey" (Keyman and Lorasdagı, 2010:160). The language of the authors, in my opinion, merely follows and contributes to the reproduction of the branding strategies of the city. Furthermore, the city is getting accustomed to ceremonies which promote the city's reputation, such as becoming the sister-city to a European city, Linz, which was signed by Linz's Mayor Franz Dobusch and Eskişehir's Greater Municipality Mayor Yılmaz Büyükerşen[15], or that the city is selected as the 2013 Capital of the Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO and the 2013 Capital of the Turkish World.

[14] Such as:
http://www.ntvmsnbc.com/id/24997396/
http://www.sabah.com.tr/Ekonomi/2011/09/01/en-yasanabilir-il-belli-oldu
[15] http://www.linz.at/politik_verwaltung/58805.asp
http://www.eskisehir-bld.gov.tr/eng/haber_dvm.php?resim_id=346688 ,

CHAPTER III

Introduction

In the first chapters I discussed the enlarged power of TOKİ, and the profitability of the urban regeneration projects. Through such projects, I mentioned, how TOKİ benefits from the construction and selling activities as well as how the region is claimed to be cleaned, which in the end leads to removal of the local population from the regeneration quarters. The removals occur not only through the direct displacements and resettlement politics of the governments but also through the tools of gentrification when the locals cannot afford the payments or when there is an increased social exclusion of certain groups from the newcomers who have a different economic, social, and cultural status. Besides, I discussed the dispossessions of people through the regeneration projects under the mask of housing opportunities. If we remember the Sulukule case, the tenants were evicted from their neighborhood by being propositioned to be given new TOKİ apartments in Taşoluk. However, because of the payment difficulties, only three families were able to stay in 15-storey houses, although the urban regeneration project affected 300 families. Moreover, when the right holders in Sulukule were paid 55 thousand Liras in order to assign the land rights to TOKİ, the value of the new houses rose to 400-500 thousand Liras. The newcomers to the neighborhood will be different than the previous inhabitants.

Since 2010, "Karapınar Valley *Gecekondu* Regeneration Project" is in the agenda of Eskişehir. During my field research, I considered the facts I mentioned above and tried to uncover whether the project is carried by the economic and political benefits of TOKİ and its partners and whether the process would lead to exclusion of certain groups and direct or indirect evictions.

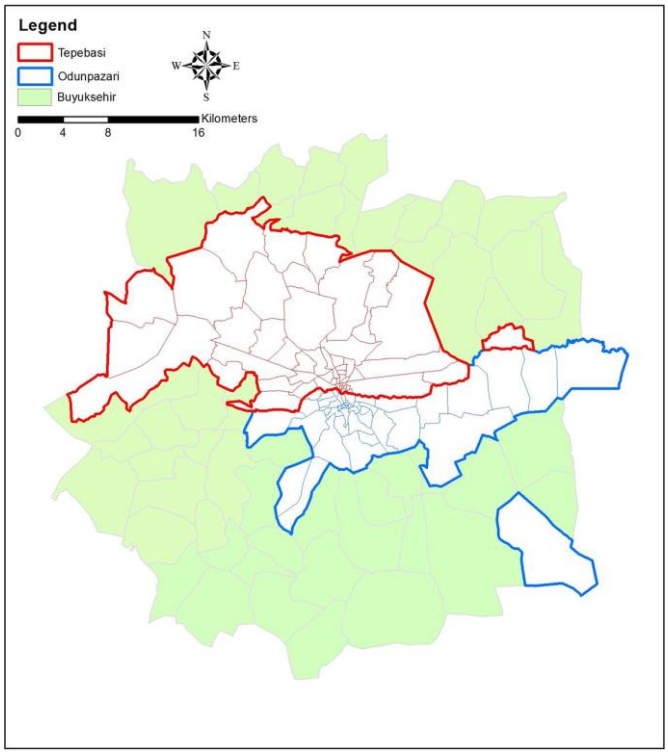

Figure 2 – Map of the municipalities of Eskişehir layered on top of the outline of the provincial center of Eskişehir. Modified from the source from Dr. Ugur Avdan, Anatolia University.

Before I start discussing the Karapınar project, I would like to give some brief information about the municipalities of Eskişehir in order to show the political dispersion between them. In 1993, Eskişehir was included into the category of metropolitan city, although it was not eligible for the criteria to become one. However, Hüsamettin Cindoruk, who was a deputy of Eskişehir (although he was not from Eskişehir) and the President of the Parliament of Turkey at the time, put Eskişehir's name on the list of the metropolitan cities. As Cindoruk explains at the Museum of City Memory (2012):

> "I made research about Eskişehir and saw its capacity. Then I used my power of the president of the parliament in order to give Eskişehir the appellation of the metropolitan city and finally I made Eskişehir a metropolitan city".

Until this decision, Eskişehir had one municipality which was the Municipality of Eskişehir. Later, two sub-provincial municipalities and the greater municipality have

been established, although the law says that greater municipalities should at least have three sub-provincial municipalities. The names of the two sub-provincial municipalities were determined as Odunpazarı –which is blue in the map shown in Figure 2 and Tepebaşı –which is red, while the green area is under the scope of the Greater Municipality. Currently Odunpazarı Municipality is governed by the Justice and Development Party (JDP) which executes the current government of Turkey of which TOKİ is directly responsible to the prime ministry. On the other hand, Tepebaşı belongs to the Republican People's Party from the center left, and the Greater Municipality of Eskişehir is administrated by Yılmaz Büyükerşen –whom I mentioned in the previous part– who is elected from the Democratic Left Party of the center left but currently of the RPP. Therefore, Odunpazarı Municipality is in a general political conflict with the greater municipality. Significantly, since the JDP holds the majority of the greater municipalities in Turkey, it tries to obtain the Greater Municipality of Eskişehir from the left wing mayor. In the last local elections we were used to seeing Prime Minister Erdoğan in the media who especially wanted the Greater Municipality of Eskişehir under the JDP. Therefore, the Karapınar TOKİ project could be supposed to create a prestigious impact for the next local elections to obtain the Greater Municipality on the side of the JDP.

Karapınar Valley *Gecekondu* Regeneration Project

To begin with, Karapınar Valley *Gecekondu* Project is the first *gecekondu* regeneration project of the city. However, since 2010 the discussions and plans about regenerations of different neighborhoods also by the other municipalities of the city have widened. There have been public discussions about these projects in the last couple of years. The latest ones were held by a panel discussion on "urban regeneration"[16] organized by the Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects in December, 2012. In the panel the new regeneration projects in Gündogdu neighborhood, Köprübaşı, Baksan industrial area and the other projects were discussed. Hence, Karapınar is not the only

[16] http://www.tmmob.org.tr/genel/bizden_detay.php?kod=8709&tipi=17

quarter which will be regenerated. It seems that these projects will stay on the agenda of Eskişehir, although the process started relatively later than the bigger cities.

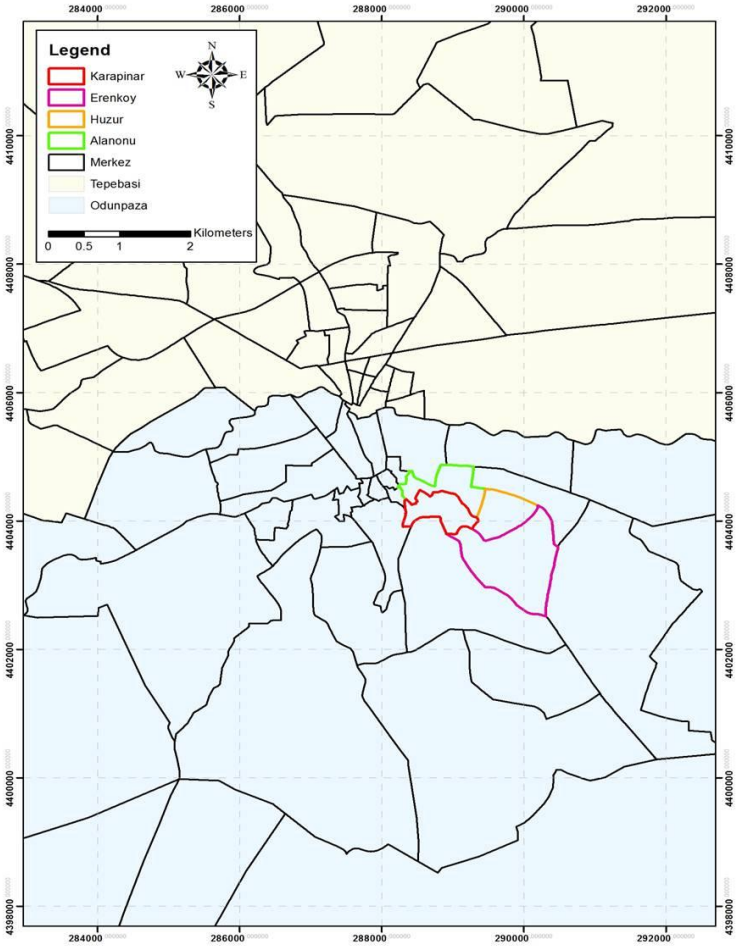

Figure 3 – Map of the neighborhoods of Eskişehir layer on top of the two municipalities. Neighborhoods of the Karapınar Project are outlined in colors. Modified from the source from Dr. Ugur Avdan, Anatolia University. We see the position of four neighborhoods in the province.

The Karapınar project is implemented by the partnership of Odunpazarı Metropolitan Sub-Provincial Municipality, TOKİ, and the private companies which build and consult on the constructions. The municipality explicitly accents that it is not an urban regeneration project, but a "*gecekondu* regeneration project". They use this term since the municipality and TOKİ will start to a new urban regeneration project again in the same region after the Karapınar project is completed. It will be an urban regeneration project, as the municipality officers and the mayor say, since it will not be on the

gecekondu zone, but still will cover the same neighborhoods as in the Karapınar project, and both projects will cover equal amounts of land.

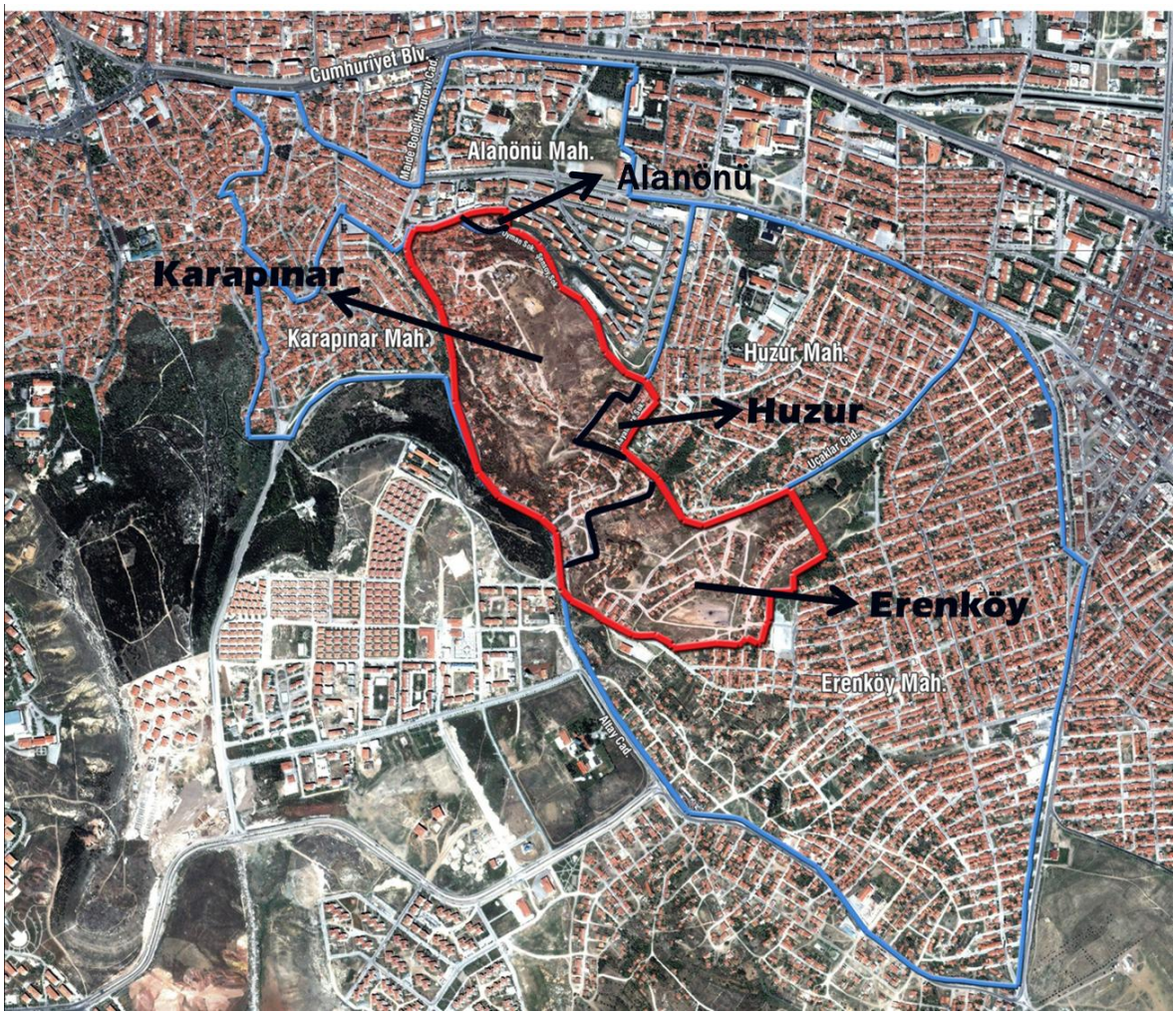

Figure 4 – Satellite image showing the general settlement structure of the Karapınar project area and the sizes of the four neighborhood components involved in the project. Modified on the source from http://www.odunpazari.bel.tr /Galeri.aspx?AID=13, accessed in August, 2012.

The project covers a 48 hectare area with different sizes of land from four neighborhoods which trend horizontally from north-west to south-east as Karapınar, Alanönü, Huzur, and Erenköy. Crucially, half of the project zone was treasury land, as the planners in Odunpazarı Municipality told me. The name of the project is coming from the Karapınar neighborhood since it has the biggest proportion of dwellings in the project among the included neighborhoods. According to the information which was provided to me by the planning unit at Odunpazarı Municipality, as well as the neighborhood executors, there used to be 736 dwellings under the project zone.

However, I could not find the numbers in an officially written form. Yet, in media sources, where the municipality gives explanations, it is possible to see different numbers. As I learnt from the executor of Karapınar, 272 are from Alanönü, Huzur, and Erenköy. Thus, the rest stays under the boundaries of Karapınar neighborhood which is a very elating point for the neighborhood executor. He remarks that:

> "I am very proud that my neighborhood is giving its name to such a big endeavor, which is the first regeneration project in Eskişehir".

Among the four neighborhoods Karapınar and Alanönü are the closest to the centrum by a 10-15 minute walk, whereas Erenköy is the farthest where the inhabitants needs transportation to arrive in the city center. However, Alanönü has the smallest share in the project with the number of 20-25 dwellings, among the others. Therefore, I will not mention Alanönü deeply. Since the Karapınar part is very centrally located, the land is very valuable. It sees the city from the top and neighbors Odunpazarı[17] neighborhood which is the most central and the oldest settlement region in Eskişehir. Besides, Karapınar is itself one of the oldest neighborhoods of the city. The Karapinar Mosque dates back to 1526. As a very old man notified us in the office of the executor of Karapınar, the settlements have started in the 14th century. Before the Karapınar Mosque was built the inhabitants were going down to the Alaaddin Mosque which was constructed in 1267 during the era of the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum. Although the neighborhood is very old, the settlements of the region which are under the scope of the regeneration project began in the 1960s from the eastern cities, such as Erzurum and Ağrı, as well as from the surrounding cities or villages of Eskişehir. Before that the area was vineyards and orchards fields as the old man told us. Aside from the oral history I have not reached any official documents yet about Karapınar's history. Furthermore, Karapınar also neighbors Eskişehir's new Court House which was constructed in 2008. This is why many lawyers, legal advisors, and prosecutors are moving towards the region –either buying/renting their offices or homes– which increase the value of the land more and more. As a natural consequence, this centrally situated region attracts the attention of the city. In contrast to Karapınar, Erenköy stays at the outskirts of the city with a miserable image in the perception of citizens of Eskişehir. Even the squatters in

[17] This oldest neighborhood of Eskişehir might be called the "downtown" of the city which gives its name to municipal sub-provincial Odunpazarı municipality.

the Karapınar neighborhood belittle Erenköy. Huzur on the other hand stands as a passage in the middle.

Within the scope of the project, 1536 dwellings, a five-star hotel, a shopping center, a primary school, a mosque, a sport center, and a health center will be constructed. In short, a TOKİ town, which will be much bigger than some of the provinces of Eskişehir, such as Han, Sarıcakaya, Günyüzü among others. Besides, the five-star hotel is used as a prestigious point by TOKİ as its former president Erdoğan Bayraktar, currently the Minister of Environment and Urbanism, proudly shouts with an emphasis on being a "first" that "it will be a 'first' in Turkey that a squatter houses region will gain a five-star hotel" (Arkitera, 2010).

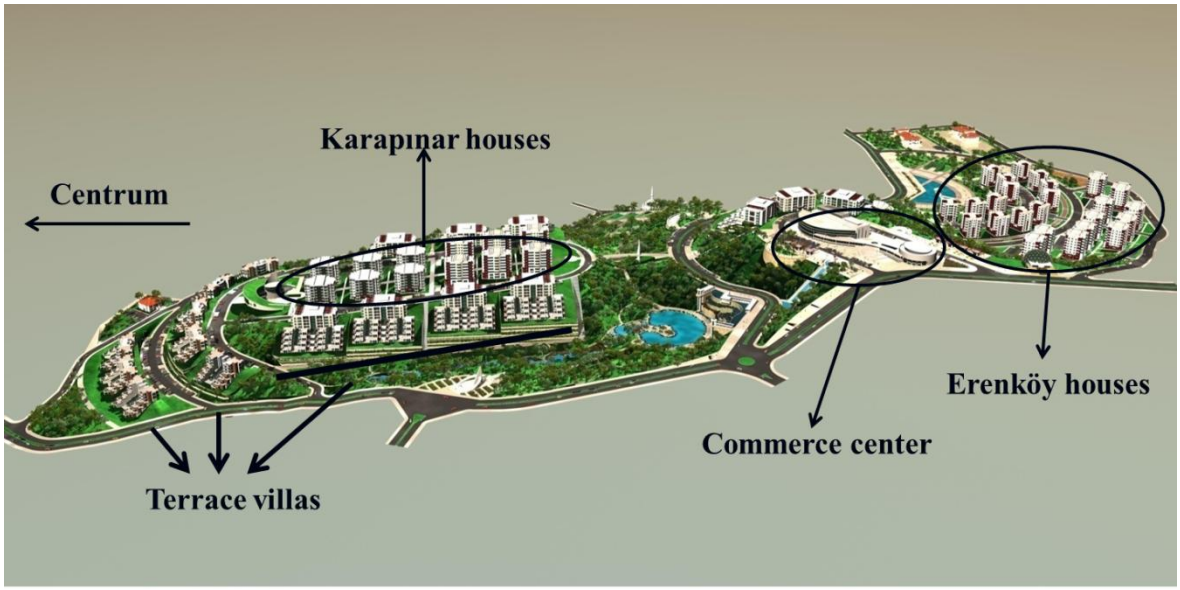

Figure 5 - 3-D figuration of the Karapınar project, although not the final version. Modified from the source: Odunpazarı Municipality, accessed in August, 2012.

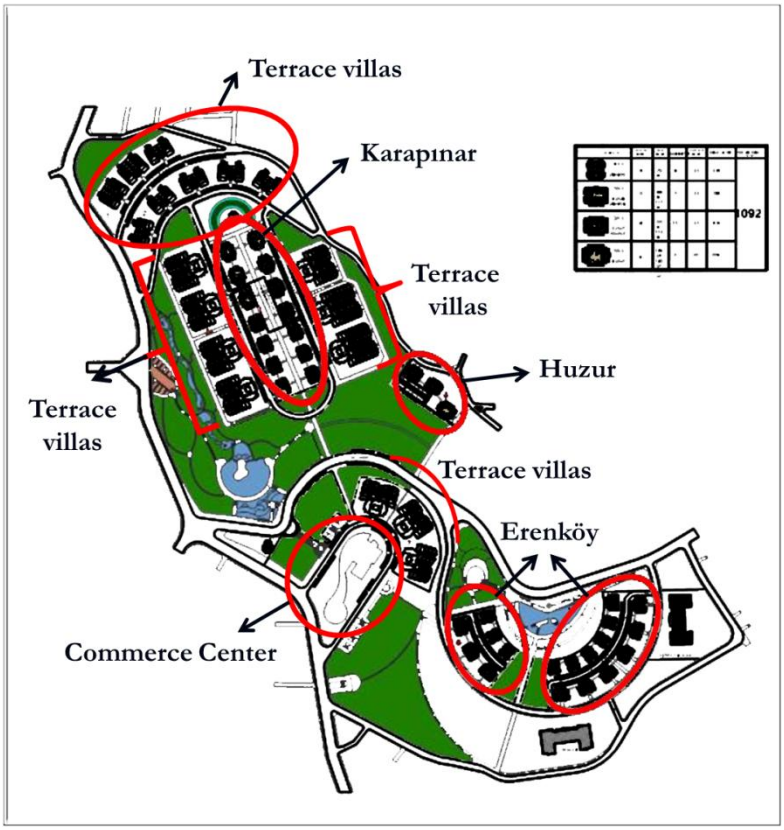

Figure 6 – Layout plan of the Karapınar project. Modified from a source: Odunpazarı Municipality, accessed in September, 2012.

The construction is divided into two phases. In the first phase 1092 dwellings will be built in 35 apartment blocks with eight to ten storeys that will be built with the different sizes of flats from 75 m^2 as the smallest, then to 90, 115, 125, 135, and 140 m^2 as the biggest. 35 apartment buildings will include these 1092 dwellings. Among these 35 blocks, 14 will be in Karapınar, 3 in Huzur, and 18 in Erenköy. The householders of the project region will be relocated among these apartments. I will give more information about these blocks later. In the second phase, the next 444 dwellings and the schools, health center, mosque, auto-parks, and a "Bosphorus Bridge" will be constructed. However, this time these 444 dwellings will not be apartment blocks but will be in the form of terraced villas. Significantly, all of the terrace villas will be constructed in the Karapınar neighborhood. If we consider the centrality of Karapınar, it is easy to comprehend the reason to build the rich villas in this neighborhood rather than in Erenköy. I will come to this point later.

Figure 7 – Photograph of the 14 apartment blocks of the Karapınar neighborhood. The houses below will be deconstructed and replaced by a part of the terrace villas. Photo taken by Cansu Civelek, August, 2012.

Figure 8 – Before and after satellite image with the planned layout of completed construction overlaid. Source: Odunpazarı Municipality webpage, http://www.odunpazari.bel.tr/Galeri.aspx?AID=13, accessed October 13, 2012.

Figure 8 above illustrates the "before and after" look of the region. Now, if we come to the development process of the project, as a brief summary, the size of the 48 hectare area and the borders of the project were decided by the municipality which then appealed to TOKİ with a construction plan. TOKİ approved the project, made a feasibility study in the region and signed a protocol with the municipality. After that, the municipality initiated compromising talks with the residents of the regeneration quarter which ended in agreements being reached for the future dwellings and payments to TOKİ. Currently the construction of the first phase continues which can be seen from Figure 7. For the first phase TOKİ announced a tender to the private construction companies. Consequently Yeni Sarp İnşaat from Ankara won the tender which will complete the project for 51 million Turkish Liras. After the first phase is executed, the householders will move in and the second phase will start with a new tender announcement.

On the 48 hectares of land, 736 dwellings were used as living quarters. By November 2012, approximately 300 dwellings were destroyed as a part of the first construction phase. Yet, the deconstruction continues at a slow pace. The inhabitants moved out of the region and rented their temporary flats. The municipality has given them a 250 Liras rent subsidy which will last until the people move into their new dwellings when the first construction phase is completed. With the 250 Liras rent subsidy, people could afford peripheral districts, while the rents in the central neighborhoods where the Karapınar residents were used to living start from at least 350-400 Liras. I had the chance to find approximately 10 families who get the rent aid. They all moved to peripheral neighborhoods, such as Emek, Ihlamurkent, or distant parts of Erenköy.

Legal Basis of the Project

The whole regeneration process came into operation in accordance with several laws, which are the *Gecekondu* Law (law no: 775) which was issued in 1965 in order to prevent *gecekondu* structures that I mentioned in the first chapter, Municipality Law (law no: 5393), Mass Housing Law (law no: 2985), Amnesty Law on Settlement

Development (law no: 2981), and Expropriation Law (law no: 2942). Although it is not possible to mention all the articles in these laws related to the Karapınar project, I would like to highlight some of the important facets.

First of all, the Article: 73 in the Municipality Law that regulates the urban regeneration and development areas is significant to mention, which was enacted in 2005 and largely debated and criticized in public. It begins with "the municipality may implement urban regeneration and development projects with the decision of the council of the municipality in order to create housing areas, industrial and commercial zones, technology parks, social facilities, and recreation areas; to reconstruct and restore the ruined parts of the city, to protect the historical and cultural structure of the city, or to take precaution against earthquake risk" (translation mine). With this article, if the municipality decides to make a regeneration project in a zone where private property exists, the negotiation with the property owner is the principle. On the other hand, it provides municipalities with the opportunity for expropriations, or it gives the authority to municipalities to change the property owner's place and send them to a different part of the regeneration zone. Thus, if the negotiations do not come to an agreement, the property owner is not protected appropriately.

In the *Gecekondu* Law, on the other hand, under indispensable circumstances, municipalities may promulgate a region as a *gecekondu* prevention zone, and purchase or expropriate – here we see the power of expropriation again – the private estates with the allowance of TOKİ in order to use the land for dwellings construction and public utility (article 4,5,7, 13). When the municipality declares a region as a *gecekondu* area in order to regenerate it and when TOKİ approves the plan, there is no way to enter a plea for the households for a rejection of the project even if they have their private estates in the region. The only condition to enter a plea is from the calculation of the value of the dwellings. When the municipality starts the value determination process of the dwellings for the negotiations and contracts with the local populations, if a householder/right-holder –with or without the deed title– thinks that the value of his/her dwelling does not meet its actual worth, s/he can enter a plea to the court within 15 days after the date of the notification of value determination (article 21). Therefore, all

households have to reconcile with the municipality and TOKİ either with the contract for the new dwellings and the payment for it (if necessary) or by accepting the expropriation and taking the expropriation money from TOKİ.

In addition to these points, according to the same law, in three months after the official declaration of the project, right owners have to submit a declaration –which is prepared by TOKİ– to the municipality for the agreements and negotiations (article 17). If they do not submit the declaration within three months without indication of a valid ground for their arrearage, they have to pay 200 Liras (article 37). In the next parts, I will come to the process of talks between the municipality and the locals.

However, at this point, I would like to briefly discuss about the *Gecekondu* Law from my interpretation. As I mentioned in the previous part, Turkey experienced a mushrooming of *gecekondu* constructions after the 1950s which created huge political and social debates. Yet, *gecekondu* law could not be enacted until 1965. Above I mentioned the severe regulations of the law. Although the law was amended over the years, i.e. the authorities, duties, and responsibilities of the Ministry of Development and Housing were given to TOKİ, the rigid structure of the law originates in the earliest version. The main reason behind the rigid structure may be interpreted as a tool of prevention of the increasing *gecekondu* settlements and provision of social housing units in the *gecekondu* zones. Still, the law could not be enforced since the *gecekondu* construction was less costly for the state than building social houses and providing services to masses of *gecekondu* settlements was a pragmatic way to get votes in exchange for services. Today it is not as easy as before to build *gecekondu* whereas many *gecekondu* settlers managed to get the title deeds. Yet, the law is utilized as a tool of regeneration activities for municipalities and TOKİ since it paves the way for declaring land as a *gecekondu* zone, involving in the profitable constructions with the rent seeking concerns, "decreasing the earthquake risks", enhancing the land value and selling the newly built apartments. Therefore, the law has not been enforced in accordance with its initial purpose. The social and urban structure of Turkey has been changed since the 1960s and land speculations and regeneration projects increased enormously. Under these circumstances, the severe content of the *Gecekondu* Law

serves the profit motives, even though the law was enacted under the different conditions of the time for different aims.

Economic Concerns: TOKİ Wins!

One of my interview partners, who is one of the councilpersons both in the Greater Municipality of Eskişehir and Odunpazarı municipality and who politically supports Republican People's Party, told me an anecdote about Tayyip Erdoğan and TOKİ. As he told me, during a meeting at the Governor's Office of Eskişehir[18] they were discussing the stadium issue of the city and Erdoğan claimed about the stadium construction that "TOKİ does not enter a construction business if it does not gain profit". The councilperson especially pointed out this anecdote since he is from the opposition. Yet, the Karapınar project shows the profit making mechanisms of TOKİ very well.

First of all, I have already mentioned that the first phase of construction –1092 dwellings–continues, which is paid by TOKİ to Yeni Sarp Yapı Construction Company as a tender of 51 million Turkish Liras. It is crucial to mention that, TOKİ will cover more than half of the first phase expenses through the contracts that it signed with the locals. As a finding of my in-depth interviews, the locals, collectively, are 31 million Liras indebted to TOKİ. In addition, 947 dwellings were given to the locals. Thus, the other 145 (1092–947) will be sold to outsiders. If we assume that each dwelling will be sold for an average price of 100 thousand Liras[19], then TOKİ would gain an extra 14 million Liras. Seemingly, the revenue from the first phase of construction almost covers the expenses by itself. On the other hand, as the mayor of Odunpazarı Municipality stressed, the whole project will cost approximately 250 million Liras[20]. Therefore, the first phase of the constructions, which will be given to the local population of the project, costs only one fifth of the whole project.

[18] Different than the local administration, the Governor of Eskişehir is appointed by the central authority of the Republic of Turkey.

[19] This is a minimized amount especially considering the larger dwellings of 125-135-145 m^2.

[20] http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/YurtHaberler/?t=22.01.2011&i=299086

Besides, the main profit area of TOKİ will be the second phase of the project, from the commercial center and the terrace villas. As I said above, half of the 48 hectare project zone was treasury land. In the first chapter I mentioned Article 2 of Law No: 4966 which permits that treasury lands can be assigned free of charge to TOKİ with the approval of the prime minister. Through this law, TOKİ took over half of the land for free, as the municipality conceded this information during my interviews. However, TOKİ will make an immense profit from the commerce center land. During my interview with the mayor of the municipality, he said that everybody will win through this project, and when I asked about the economic benefits to TOKİ, he crucially stressed that for the construction of the commercial center TOKİ will sell 1.2 hectares of land from the project zone to a private company for 34 million Liras. Yet, the value of this land was 500 thousand Liras, as he further explained. This means, the land's value will be multiplied for 68 times which will be a direct profit to TOKİ. Here, in addition to construction of the luxury units to sell the upper income citizens, we can see another mechanism of TOKİ to gain economic benefits through receiving public lands for free of charge and selling land to outsiders with the immense profits.

At the same time, the dwellings from the second phase will create another immense profit. As a brief explanation, TOKİ will announce a tender again for the construction of 444 terrace villas and the schools, mosque etc. During the talks with the locals, especially the ones owning the land of the villa areas spoke out their anger that TOKİ will make an immense profit from the locals' lands. They told me that the estimated price of the villas is approximately 500-600 thousand Liras. However, later, as both the officers at the municipality and the head of the consultancy company of the project informed me, the villas would be sold for around 800-900 thousand Liras, which increases the profit to TOKİ. This shows how TOKİ implements the Law No. 4966, that I mentioned before, which states that TOKİ may enter into profit oriented projects in order to create an economic source for the administration (Article 4). The same law allows TOKİ to implement projects aside from housing. Therefore, TOKİ creates a town, rather than simply providing the housing needs of the citizens.

Political Concerns: Municipality and JDP

In addition to what I show above about the economic benefits of the Karapınar project, it also targets the creation of political gains to Odunpazarı Municipality specifically, and to JDP support in Eskişehir in general, as the municipality often mentions how the project has become a source of prestige for them. To begin with, the municipality constructed a hegemonic discourse of "everybody will benefit", which would strengthen its prestige and political authority. During my interview with the mayor of the Odunpazarı Municipality he repetitively mentioned that "this is a win-win project in which everybody wins". He explained that:

> "Think about a situation that everybody wins. The hallmark of this project is that it is a win-win project for everybody. Yes, we win in this project as we gain prestige and become a role-model for whole Turkey; TOKİ wins as it obtains economic return and prestige as well; on the other hand our right owners win as they attain healthy and safe homes; the region wins as its value rises which it deserves; but most of all, Eskişehir wins which becomes a brand city".

The Odunpazarı Municipality involves itself in the name branding strategies of Eskişehir that I mentioned in the second chapter. Through the urban projects that assist in the branding of the city, the mayor receives prestige, which is supposed to serve for the sake of the next elections. As they informed me, this project "has become a role-model for the rest of the Turkey, especially for the local governments". The mayor focused on:

> "Almost every day a mayor or their advisers are calling to congratulate us and putting compliments on our success and asking about the secrets of our achievements. They wonder how we did not have any problems about convincing our citizens. […] Even though some mayors want to do such projects, they don't because of the fear of next elections. However it is possible if you manage the projects well. That's what we have done here in a peaceful atmosphere and a trustable bridge between the public administration and the citizens. We became a role-model of Turkey".

Furthermore, the election considerations of the municipality were seen at the implementation process of the project. I mentioned that TOKİ can apply a regeneration project through expropriations. However, discordance with the locals would create a

risk for the political concerns of the municipality. Significantly, an officer at the department of city planning in the municipality emphasized during the interview that:

> "Even if there wasn't anyone in the regeneration declaration region who approved the regeneration plans, TOKİ still has the power to apply the project and it would do so. Then there would be expropriations in the whole region, but the people would not gain as much as they do now. Also the mayor would not like to start the project with that way, at the end it would lead to the loss of our prestige. There is the concern of the next elections as well. So, this would be a risk if we didn't convince the people".

From this explanation the political worries of the municipality become prominent. Even though TOKİ and municipality have the power to implement the project without any reconciliation, concerns about the positive image of the municipality for the next local elections necessitates conviction of the locals.

On the other hand, the economic gains of the municipality were a secret issue which I could not discover directly from my interviews at the municipality. They seem to consider and benefit only from the non-economic sides of the project by not mentioning anything of the economic point. However, as the head of the consultancy company told me, among the 1092 dwellings 40 will go to the municipality, which will probably be grouped in the same block of the apartments, not separated from each other. This statement confirms the concerns of the locals who say that the three entire blocks in the Karapınar part will be separate from the locals and will be given to outsiders. During the contract signing projects with the locals, there were some households who had the right to get two dwellings from TOKİ, however, some were told that they cannot receive the both dwellings from Karapınar neighborhood because there were not enough dwellings left, therefore, they needed to have one of them from the Erenköy constructions. This statement was confirmed to me by a planner in the municipality as well. Yet, the locals showed me three apartment blocks in Karapınar which they think are actually still free which will be sold to outsiders. However, when I asked the officers about the 40 dwellings given to the municipality as well as the free dwellings which are not being given to the locals, they stated that these points were false. However, they said that there are still approximately 100 dwellings which will be later sold by TOKİ

with a higher unit price per square-meter, however those dwellings are not segregated from the locals. Of course, either of the claims/information might be true. We will see what will come after the people start to move into their new residences. However, there seems the lack of transparency or trust between the municipality, the locals, as well as the consultancy company.

The Justification Formulas Behind the Project

So far I discussed about the economic and political gains of TOKİ and the municipality. In this part, I would like to mention the grounds of the Karapınar project that were explained by the authorities. As I ascertained from the municipal webpage, the local news and my interviews, the prominent motives behind the necessity of the regeneration are shown as the low infrastructural and housing qualities of the quarter, the visual pollution of the city image, environmentalist considerations, as well as the earthquake risk. For instance the project is announced on the webpage of the municipality as[21]:

> "In the region there are hundreds of squatter houses on the public land, as well as hundreds of illegal/unlicensed constructions with allotment documents and title deeds. In consequence, the region has become a tenement district with low environmental quality […] With the collaboration of Odunpazarı Municipality (and TOKİ) a comprehensive *gecekondu* regeneration project is developed in order to recover the infrastructural problems of the region, to avoid the physical threat and the visual pollution of the *gecekondu* area, and to provide the quality which the region deserves as being one of the most charming location in Eskişehir. The project will be an attraction center not only in the Odunpazarı region but also in Eskişehir and even in the entire country".

In our interview, as the mayor emphasized the "win-win situation" of the project, he claimed that "Eskişehir is the most crucial winner of the game". The main logic behind the assertion seems like a creation of a "center of attraction" for Eskişehir's "need" of branding among the other cities. As it is stated on the municipality's webpage:

[21] Translation mine, http://www.odunpazari.bel.tr/Projeler.aspx?ID=2

> "Such an abominable zone in the city center is a disadvantage for the image of Eskişehir which is becoming a brand across Turkey through rapid developments and changes. However, at the same time, the region offers significant advantages to the city through big opportunities to create new residential and recreation areas for the worthiness of the name of the city"[22].

Furthermore, the mayor of the municipality stated in the interview that the biggest central squatter zone of Eskişehir which is located very close to historical Odunpazarı Houses is very important for them to transform. He added that:

> "Together with the help of the amnesty laws in zoning, the illegal housings in the region were ignored for decades. This is the biggest squatter region of Eskişehir which at the same time in located just in the city center with such a beautiful panorama. We want to give the value of such a region back to itself".

Similarly, a planner in the municipality explained:

> "This region has been disturbing the city's silhouette terribly. The citizens outside of the region were severely complaining about their discomfort from the region. Maybe another squatter region at the outskirts of the city does not bother the center and the citizens that much, however, this central region has been largely affecting the city".

Thus, the region as a disadvantage of the city name becomes, on the other hand, a subservient tool to the city. As it was touched upon before, "valuing the region as it deserves" is parroted repeatedly. Also, the region is expected to provide "big and surprising landscape design" not only to the householders in the region but also to whole Eskişehir and its visitors, as the webpage further informs[23].

Undoubtedly, the project is greatly attached to expansion of tourism in Eskişehir that I mentioned in the second chapter. The region is expected to fascinate the visitors both city wide and Turkey wide. The webpage points out that:

> "The project will be the milestone for the city of Eskişehir which develops rapidly and has started to occupy an important position both in the national and international tourism".

[22] My translation from: http://www.odunpazari.bel.tr/Projeler.aspx?ID=2
[23] http://www.odunpazari.bel.tr/Projeler.aspx?ID=2

In parallel with this, an officer in the municipality signified the role of the project on tourism with the following assertion:

> "We will have parks, gardens, cafes, and a shopping mall with the panorama of the city. The quarter will be the most prestigious place in Eskişehir. It will be even more attractive than Kentpark or Şelalepark[24] for the visitors, and it will be a serious magnet of tourist attraction. […] the tourists will come to see our foot bridge just as we wish to see the beauty of the Dikmen Valley Project[25]".

The foot bridge the officer mentioned is a "miniature Bosphorus Bridge" of Istanbul. As the mayor asserted:

> "First time under the scope of a regeneration project we are putting a Bosphorus Bridge miniature. People will cross the two neighborhoods which are located on two hills of the project through a Bosporus bridge. Thus, we will be bringing the Bosporus Bridge to Eskişehir which neither has a Bosphorus or a sea"[26]

Similar kinds of "acquisitions" of the quarter and city are often mentioned by the municipality, TOKİ executors, and the JDP. For example, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Tayyip Erdoğan, was in Eskişehir in May, 2011 for a public meeting before the general elections in Turkey on June 12, 2011. In his speech he also touched on the Karapınar Project which will make Eskişehir a prestigious city, as he claimed[27].

In addition to these services provided to the name of the city, the project claims to take a basis from the environmentalist consideration as well, which the region and the city "require". It has been a large issue for the project makers to constantly boast of their environment friendly project. However, the only scope of their boasting is about the "green-rich" landscape, which will be an artificial construct compared to the valley's natural sense of today. Nevertheless, the mayor claimed proudly to me that the project's green land proportion is even higher than the European standards. As a usual

[24] These are two of the public parks which are constructed in the last years (less than a decade). Park construction and park visits have become very fashionable in Eskişehir and they also attract tourists as I mentioned in the second chapter.

[25] Dikmen Valley Project is a regeneration project in Ankara which is one of the most debated urban transformation project which widely drew reaction bot by the locals and the specialists in Turkey.

[26] http://www.yenisafak.com.tr/YurtHaberler/?t=22.01.2011&i=299086

[27] http://tr.wikisource.org/wiki/Recep_Tayyip_Erdo%C4%9Fan'%C4%B1n_28_May%C4%B1s_2011_tarihli_Eski%C5%9Fehir_mitinginde_yapt%C4%B1%C4%9F%C4%B1_konu%C5%9Fma

phenomenon in Turkey to compare oneself to Europe for a stronger justification of a circumstance, he spoke out that:

> "Our project is a very environmentalist project. The average per capita green space of 33m^2 is 2.5 times higher than the European standards. However, before this project there had not been *even 1m^2* of green space in the region".

Besides, he added that this will be "a big gain for Eskişehir to meet more green". When I asked about further environmentalist considerations of the project other than the green landscape, he said

> "There is nothing other than this but maybe in their next projects we might try to apply recycling stuff".

In addition to these, the natural catastrophes are used as one of the most significant reasons for the municipality to run the project, which was not surprising to hear as a reason for a regeneration projects in the last years as I mentioned in the first parts. With the mayor's words laying emphasis on the natural disasters:

> "I know this region since my childhood. I know how problematic the houses are. These houses here do not have any security of life and property. We know that Eskişehir is under the second-degree seismic zone. If an earthquake occurs tomorrow this is the region which would take the major blow and would be the most aggrieved place. The squatter houses will break down. We need to consider this. Can we take such a risk? For us everybody's life is very important".

Moreover, the neighborhood executor of the Karapınar neighborhood, who was pleased with his neighborhood for giving its name to the project, complained about the *gecekondu* settlements in his neighborhood and added:

> "Here is the most problematic squatter part of Eskişehir, people live in broken places. If we remember the earthquake risk of Eskişehir, this area must be rebuilt again. I absolutely support the project since I want our neighborhood to be cleaned and built up in better conditions".

On the other hand, although some locals mentioned that they need better infrastructural planning, as opposed to the warnings about the earthquake risks frequently manipulated by the authorities, the locals do not think that they live under the security risk of earthquakes, except for a few households who fully support the project. I will come to these locals later. For example, during the talks in a coffee house in Karapınar, the locals claimed that they built their houses with their hands and of course they considered the security. Salih said:

> "I've lived here for 50 years, there were big earthquakes in Turkey, that's true. But nothing happened to us. We made our places by ourselves, and we are safe. Where is the risk here? Even if a wall demolished here if a great earthquake came, nothing would happen to us, no one would die here. Here is safer than their (TOKİ) construction".

Principles of the Project: "Regeneration on Site" and "Participation"

In addition to the motives of the regeneration project, the mayor of the municipality elatedly stressed that the project's "two most important missions" are regeneration on site and participation. During our interview the mayor claimed that:

> "This project is very strong in its thoughtfulness on social relationships. During the meetings with our citizens they told me that 'Our mayor! We don't want to separate from our neighbors, we want to live together'. Thus, we looked after their vicinity rights and we allocated them the dwellings from their own neighborhood. Although there may be some small bifurcations along the way, we are making a regeneration on site".

He is proud that they regenerate the quarter and locals will stay exactly in their own neighborhood as they receive very good comments from everywhere appreciating their regenerating on site success. However, there are contradictions to this claims that I will come to in the next parts when I discuss the situations of the squatters.

As the second most important mission of participation, he said that from the beginning of the project the municipality considered the request of the local citizens and they told

the households that "this is *your* (locals') project". This is another instance of hegemonic discourse which shows a "dedication" to locals. Furthermore, without mentioning their understanding or criteria of participation, the mayor continued to repeat the same words that participation was their first principle and the municipality succeeded to build a trust bridge between the public administration and the citizens. He said that:

> "That's why our first demolitions in the region were done so in a festive air. Our citizens and the representatives of the public administration were all together. It was a dancing and feast atmosphere instead of crying. The citizens demolished their own houses with us".

On the local news as well the "festive air" was mentioned widely which was my main question when I decided to write my thesis about this project. Was there really a festive mood? Do the locals fully support the project and are they satisfied by it? Therefore, during my field research I asked the locals about that "festive day". Interestingly I could not find any one who agreed with the festive atmosphere and only found two households in Karapınar who said that they just went there to see what was happening. Other than these, the locals said that the crowd was all about the "people in suits and ties" (administrative officers). At the coffee house of Karapınar Mustafa and his friends asserted:

> "They found couple of toady people around, also the photographers and their media supporters, brought them all together, made pictures. If you were there you would have seen that they were all suits and ties people and couple of toadies".

All other households said more or less the same, except those two that I mentioned. Besides, seemingly the elder people who I talked with did not even hear about it at all. One said she can believe that "such an event might have happened since they (TOKİ and municipality) are able to play with anything for their sake".

Other than the festive atmosphere of the demolitions, the mayor reported to a popular local magazine that the project considered the request and participation of the inhabitants:

> "During this project, first we had hundreds of small size and then large meetings with our local citizens. The project was shaped according to their requests and expectations. They said they want a shopping mall, a five star hotel, a culture and congress center, a high school, a mosque, green space, a sport center, and terrace villas".

It is quite interesting to read that the households requested a five star hotel and especially the terrace villas. I will come to the terrace villas discussion in the next part.

Different than the glorifying news in the local media or elated explanations of the mayor to me about the participation, the more I maintained my field research, the more the project appeared that its sole objective is not to be a social project which provides a regeneration socially targeting to enhance the living qualities of the inhabitants. Rather, the project shows that there was no research considering the local's demands about the creation of a new living environment, although the project is supposed to have been established in their name. The most obvious indication of this is that the municipality did not make any surveys or research about the inhabitants even for the sake of formality. The mayor says in the magazine that they conducted hundreds of small meetings, however, they were not about the requests of the inhabitants – if there were actually any meetings at all. When I asked my interviewees whether the municipality made a survey, meeting or anything considering the opinion of the households, they said that they were not asked about anything. Almost all my interviewees complained about how quick the project started and went on without sufficiently supplying the locals with proper explanations. They said nobody asked them about what they do or do not want. Crucially an officer in the municipality also approved that they did not make surveys or such research about people's expectations. She continued:

> "Actually we enforced this project. If we included the citizens we wouldn't be able to pull off the project. So, we applied a direct enforcement to this project because it was a logical way to implement it, if you know what I mean".

Furthermore, when I asked her whether they worked together with the chambers or any urban experts to develop the project, she said they did not. One reason for this was to apply the project as fast as possible, as she told me. Her words were crucial:

> "Democracy is not good and applicable all the time. It slows you down. If we were totally democratic, today still we would have been discussing the project and about whether it should be like this or that. It is impossible to satisfy all the people".

This opinion about democracy might be an individual concern of the officer instead of the whole municipality, however, according to me, she spoke loudly about what the others in the municipality could not.

On the other hand, during my research I realized remarkable rumors and accusations towards the people originating from Erzurum in the region. What I was told from several interviewees is that the story starts from the very beginning of the project when the municipality asked the neighborhood executor of Karapınar to find a couple of notable persons in the region and invite them to a meeting with the municipality. The executor took some locals with the Erzurum lineage with him and went to the meeting at the municipality. Some of these people are the assistants to the neighborhood executor. The executor is not from Erzurum, also they do not support the same political party. Yet, the executor and the Erzurum people politically seem to support each other at the local level, other than making reconciliations with the Kurdish, more leftist, or poor squatter people. At the meeting, the forthcoming plan was explained with nice words and promises that none of the inhabitants under the project would have any problems. The concern of the municipality was to receive local support for the project. As I touched upon before, the mayor of the municipality would not take the risk of an unconvincing start of the regeneration. In order to keep the votes and prestige in the whole city he needed to gain support from the locals. However, my interviewees complained that their ideas were not even asked for, and only those of the Erzurum people were taken into consideration. Moreover, they claimed that the Erzurum people acted according to their selfish concerns; they did not reach an agreement with the other locals and plunged into the project without consulting or debating deeply.

Furthermore, some locals told me that during the meetings Erzurum people were promised to receive some advantages of the project and that is why they "sell the region out for money", with their words. However, I cannot justify these comments. These

Erzurum people were more mistrustful and distant to me. They did not want to discuss the project at length, and even two families did not want to talk to me at all, who were the only ones who did so during my entire research. There is only one point that I could uncover which might somehow indicate the "unfair" promises to the Erzurum people during my talk with one of the "notable" men from Erzurum. Before I remarked about the 250 Liras rent subsidy from TOKİ given to the locals until they move back to the region. In this case, this man will take two subsidies of 250 Liras, for a total of 500 Liras per month. Next to his own house there is a storage room which is around 20 m^2. Although each family unit receives one subsidy, this structure is also counted as a living space and therefore the family will gain an extra 250 Liras subsidy. When I was there, his family was getting ready to move out to their temporary flat. This is the only instance of a case that is unusual. In addition to this, he expressed his pleasures of having new, beautiful flats which will not suffer from earthquake and natural risks[28] (he will get two 90 m^2 and one 115 m^2) and criticized the ungratefulness of the others who are against the project. Moreover, he crucially indicated that the officers in the municipality executing this project stressed to them during the meetings that if there is approximately 60% support from the region, it would be enough for them to actualize the project. He was proud of being "one of the leaders who initiated the project and talked to people" about the benefits of the regeneration. On the other hand, the 60% support would not be measured with surveys or other methods. It was a general feeling that the municipality tried to obtain.

As a last crucial point to mention in this section, there is a very significant point about the convincing of people and signing of the contracts with TOKİ. I realized an interesting claim from the locals. When I asked them why they were convinced about the project or why they did not give voice to their complaints if they felt they were being treated unjustly, they commonly pronounced the same words. As Sami said, for instance:

> "All the other households just jumped in the project. Even they joined a queue to make the contract with TOKİ. I was the last household who gave the signature. I

[28] Here, once again we see the earthquake talk.

> had no chance to say no, I was the last person and it was too late do anything anymore".

At the beginning, when I started to hear this story from a couple of locals, I believed them. However, in time when I realized that I too often hear this story in the whole region, I started to question the reason of this claim. I thought, possibly there could be two ways to interpret this. Firstly, instead of accepting that they did not fight against what was dictated, they prefer to blame the others who "just jumped in the project" that "unfortunately there was no other option for them". Or secondly, the municipality told them that they were the last ones in order to accelerate the process of making the contract to start the constructions as soon as possible. During my interview with one of the aldermen both in the Greater Municipality of Eskişehir and Odunpazarı municipality, who politically supports the Republican People's Party mentioned the point I was wondering. As he claimed:

> "According to me, the municipality did not compromise with any of the households. None of the contracts were made in a healthy atmosphere with reciprocal talks. They call the people to their offices and say that everybody has already given their signatures and that there is only you remaining. And people just believed. They told people there is only a few remaining who did not sign. What few? What few?! You (officers) just forced people with these lies".

Whether his claims reflect the truth or not, he pointed out the concerns that I was thinking about. However, the complaints and discomforts of the local residents about the Erzurum lineage people and the contract signing processes are remarkable to reconsider the participation claims of the municipality.

What are the "Win Situations" for the Locals?

When we look at the settlement situation in the project zone, the big majority of the houses are single-storey dwellings and there are scarcely any tenants. As I said already, there are 736 dwellings in the zone. However, they are not all equally under the same legal structure. There are three different types of settlements, which are firstly the squatters, secondly the title deed owners, and thirdly, the allotment document owners

which I will explain one by one. Unfortunately, again, I could not reach the official numbers of these categories either at the municipality or in any published documents. Although I asked several officers whether they created the lists showing the participation of the neighborhoods, i.e. how many dwellings are included in the project from Erenköy, and how many of Erenköy houses are illegal or have title or allotment documents, they did not provide me the official numbers. One said:

> "I just performed my duties, and did not stick in the numbers. People came here and I applied the regulation in accordance to their situation. So, I can't show you here one by one who was in which neighborhood, or in which status, I even don't care. Do you understand me? I only care about the whole picture. I even don't have time to list them one by one, who is where".

First of all, the number of the squatters on the project land is approximately 260. They illegally occupy the public land and do not have any legal document that binds the land to them. However these "occupiers" officially used to pay for the services such as electricity and water, even though there might be some unlicensed usage as an exception. Also they pay the adequate price (*ecrimisil*) to the administration for their settlement which is also known as the "occupation money" in public, which might be thought of as rent money for the usage of the public land.

The second category is the title deed owners, which comprise approximately 400 dwellings. They have the title deeds, however, many were illegal squatters at the beginning of their settlement. In time, thanks to *gecekondu* amnesties, they possessed their title deeds. Also, many reconstructed or changed the initial structure of the dwellings as they became title owners. However, among the 400, only 10 constructions are licensed. Although inhabitants own their own land, 390 households have unlicensed/illegal settlements (*kaçak yapılaşma*) which means that they either do not have official approval for their construction and consequently are unauthorized, or they did not obey the obligatory rules of the zoning legislation when they constructed the dwellings.

Lastly, 53 dwellings have the deed allotment document (*tapu tahsis belgesi*) which means that these houses were located in the public land as squatters, but later had a

permission from the legal authorities which allows them to legally settle on the land. This right was enacted in 1984 with the Law No. 2981. The allotment document is given to squatters for structures that were built before the issue time of the law. Although the deed allotment document is not a title deed and although it does not give an absolute right to the settlers, the settlement is accepted by the legal authorities, and it gives right to inhabitants to change the allotment document to title deed when their lands are zoned for construction. Hence, the allotment document might be seen as a passage between illegal squatting to owning a title deed. Indeed, many of the deed owners who were illegal occupiers when they first built their *gecekondu*s received the allotment documents as a first step, and later gained possession of the title deed.

All these groups signed an agreement with TOKİ stating that they will receive their new dwellings from the project and they will pay the required monthly payment to TOKİ. However, how were the payments calculated? This was one of the most enduring questions that I tried answer repeatedly, and finally achieved. At first I asked to municipality, however the officers did not want to share the details with me. Instead, they told me that the calculations were complicated, and the criteria was changing if the locals have title deeds, a zoning license or other such legalities. On the other hand, the locals I talked with seemed to absolutely not understand the process. When I asked whether they signed an agreement with the municipality or TOKİ – and I knew that they did –, some said they did not, some said they did but they did not get the papers that they signed, and only a few said they have the papers and were willing to show me for an instant, but I could not analyze the content quickly enough. They did not want to share the details of the contracts with me because they were apprehensive of resulting future trouble. Finally, I talked to a member of a professional chamber who had an acquaintance with a person in the region. Hence, he requested the contract from him and I obtained this at the end of my last field trip, in November, 2012.

In the contract we see, for instance, that the lands which are zoned for housing are more valuable than the others. However, the location is also very important. The ones from Karapınar are more valuable than Huzur and Erenköy. Even inside these neighborhoods, the land value changes. There are six different zones under the project area. For

example, it says, in simple terms, that "if you have your title deed in the zone 1, every 3.83 m^2 of your land is counted as 1 m^2 of a TOKİ construction" or "if you have your title deed in the zone 6, every 1.15 m^2 is counted as 1 m^2 of a TOKİ construction". Or, if the land is not zoned for housing, then the ratio may decrease to 6.38 m^2. This means, if you have 100 m^2 of land, it is equal to 15.6 m^2 of TOKİ dwellings.

Here I can give the example of the title owner who signed the contract that I was given. He has 324 m^2 of land in the 3rd zone of the project quarter. His land is divided to 1.99 which is the ratio for the 3rd zone. Thus, he gets the right to have 162 (324 m^2/ 1.99) m^2 dwelling from TOKİ. In addition, the value of his house and trees are calculated – which I will further explain under the squatters' conditions – and equalized to 21 m^2 of TOKİ construction. Therefore, in total, he has 183 m^2 right to dwellings. He chooses to get one 115 m^2 and one 90 m^2 dwelling which makes 205 m^2 in total. The other 22 m^2 (205 m^2 – 183 m^2) will be paid by him to TOKİ, which is calculated as 19 thousands Liras (22 m^2 x 875 Liras/m^2). 875 here is the unit price per square meters. This price also changes according to the dwellings in Karapınar, or Erenköy, or whether the dwelling is at the ground floor, top floor, or the middle floors.

Hence, the person in our example was able to get two dwellings. However, the calculations are incomprehensible for the locals. Most of the title and allotment document owners were angry because they felt that "they did not receive what they deserved", as they expressed. Frequently I heard of such struggles that, for instance, although s/he had more land than her neighbor, she could not get the 2nd dwelling as her neighbor did, which is in the end unfair for her. Almost all of the title or allotment owners asked me how it can happen that s/he has 200 m^2 of land but it is counted as 150 m^2. As an example, Fatma, Mürvet's daughter, laments that their 299 m^2 of land has become 199 m^2. However, I was not aware of the calculations at that point. Although Fatma conceded that she has the contract, she did not want to show me this, while still asking me to understand her problem. However, I kept asking the municipality about the anger of the locals. At the end one officer explained it without mentioning the details:

> "You have a tendency to find the locals right, but they are really talking ignorantly. Nobody would come here to make buildings for them and give

> exactly the same amount of land that they have because then it cannot gain anything. None of the building contractors *(müteahhit)* would do it, nor would TOKİ. So, TOKİ tells them OK; I build new houses for you and give, for example, 30% of the dwelling area. The locals are paying the price of it of course. Without paying the price it is impossible. There is no way just to give without taking. So, just accept TOKİ like a building contractor".

This explanation actually showed me how the municipality sees TOKİ as a building contractor and how it would not build without making any gains. Thus, these talks indicate that TOKİ is no longer recognized by the project planners as a state institution which makes social housing without profit concerns, but like a private company focused on economic profit. Still more, it is obvious that there is a lack of information and communication between the inhabitants – who are found as ignorant – and municipality. In my opinion, the locals deserve to be better informed about the calculations or other processes that affect them in general.

In addition to calculations, another crucial point of contention of the title and allotment document owners is the two storey quota of the land. They complained that, because of the low quota, the building contractors have not entered the region since the profitability of construction was not high enough to initiate fabrication of new structures. If there had not been the two storey quota, they would have made an agreement with a building contractor who would have built a four storey apartment building having two flats in each floor and s/he would have been given half of the apartment. As they say, they requested several times to raise the quota to four or five storeys because then building constructors would come to the area, build apartments, and share the profits with the title/allotment owners. In this way it would have been possible for the locals to get four to five flats from an apartment building which would have been much more profitable for them than making a current TOKİ contract. As the Odunpazarı Municipality says, they made a request to the Greater Municipality to change the high level city plans so that Odunpazarı would raise the quotas, which the Greater Municipality rejected. Although the neighborhood executor of Karapınar, JDP proponents, the opposition towards the Greater Municipality, as well as some of the public opinion construe this as a result of the political struggle between two municipalities, a planner at the Greater Municipality whom I made an interview with claimed that the Odunpazarı Municipality

sent them a request which was not rational or operable. It was not possible to actualize since such projects change the whole planning structure of not only a couple of neighborhoods, but also the surrounding districts, as well as not only the housing plans but also the parks, social needs of the districts, schooling structure, etc.

Under the two storey quota condition, working with TOKİ opened the road of actualization of the project in a straightforward way. At the beginning, the plans were about building five storey apartments. I had the chance to make a short interview with the mayor of the Greater Municipality. As he said, TOKİ and Odunpazarı received the permission for the higher buildings directly from the Ministery of Environment and Urban Planning by ignoring the zoning regulations of the Greater Municipality.

I asked to the mayor of Odunpazarı Municipality about the reason of running the regeneration project with TOKİ and whether there was a way to apply it without the involvement of TOKİ. According to him they could have also worked with the private construction companies, however, they wanted to reassure the public about the security and healthiness of the project especially through a collaboration with a public institution which is in this case directly under the control of the prime ministry. As he continues:

> "Our work with TOKİ will remind *even* the most disadvantageous groups in the region that the public administration is with them, supporting them. That's why this project contributes to the peace between the administration and different economical classes. Our municipality is building a bridge between the public administration and citizens".

However, the officers' ideas were different than the mayor and they mentioned a very significant point that I tried to indicate in the first chapter about the rising power of TOKİ. As one said:

> "We make this project with TOKİ in order to be able to change the zoning regulations of the quarter by using a powerful agency. This is a daily thing now in Turkey as TOKİ makes such regeneration projects because it has the power to change the zoning regulations".

On the other hand, currently the project consists of eight to ten storey apartment blocks instead of five storey buildings. As I learned in my field research, the municipality and TOKİ had to take a special permission from the military since there are obstructions which restrict the height of the buildings due to the requirements of air navigation and the Air Force. Thus, with the permission, the obstruction level was raised from five to eight storeys. In the picture below in Figure 9, we see the high apartments of the Karapınar part of the project. These apartments can be seen from everywhere, even more than 10 km away from the city.

Figure 9 - Photograph of the 14 apartment blocks from the Karapınar side, looking approximately to the west. On the empty land in the center, the villas will be built. The city center is on the right, Erenköy is on the left. Photo taken by Muammer Civelek, September, 2012.

In fact, initially the project figurations were shown to the public as five storey apartment buildings, which are still possible to see on the municipality's official webpage (Figure 10). This point is seemingly upsetting the local community. During my research, the majority emphasized that they were given different promises than what is occurring now. One title deed owner from the Karapınar neighborhood expressed with anger that during the conveyance of the title to TOKİ, he signed a contract and agreed to take a flat on the top floor of a building in the Karapınar region. However, he only agreed about the top floor because he thought that the building would be five storeys. Now he will have to move to the 8th floor which he does not want. Considering that he is an old man,

it is possible that he could not follow the changing plans of the project. Nevertheless, he thinks that the municipality could have better explained what he was signing in the contract.

Figure 10 – Proposed 3-D figuration of the Karapınar project, before the construction plans changed. Source: Odunpazarı Municipality webpage, http://www.odunpazari.bel.tr/Galeri.aspx?AID=13, accessed October 9, 2012.

In the end, all of the title and allotment owners who I met with think that they were fooled both by the municipalities and TOKİ. They are asking this question: how and why does the quota on floors rise up to eight from two? They said, they even did not want to have 8 storey apartments since it is too high. Furthermore, they think that TOKİ makes the most profit in comparison to other participants of the project, such as themselves, the municipality, the construction companies, etc. The most common sentence I heard was that they were not offered what they actually deserved for the dwellings by TOKİ. Although there were some interviewees who are getting three dwellings from the project, they were not satisfied since they think that they could have stayed on their own land where they are accustomed to living, and at the same time build their own dwellings with the shape and style that they wanted if the quota was higher than two storeys. However, as they express, TOKİ takes their land, builds high apartments which are much more profitable for the land utilization, gains handsome profits especially from the villas, and still does not want to fairly compensate the locals. In a group talk at the municipality, when I told the officers that locals think it would be much better for them to work with a building contractor, an officer said:

> "They (the locals) talk nonsense. Building contractors did not come there because of the quotas. So, now it is TOKİ who comes into the neighborhoods, makes buildings, and offers new places for the citizens […] Thanks to such a big power the neighborhood is changing, otherwise nobody would come to the region and they (the locals) would not have the chance to change their houses".

Hence, the municipality sees the project as an opportunity which would not happen without TOKİ and therefore, the locals should be thankful. However, the locals are additionally distressed that they even become indebted to TOKİ for the flats that they feel are compensated inadequately. It is significant to mention that all the inhabitants of the region I had interviews with are indebted to TOKİ with the average debt being 35-40 thousand Liras, which is also confirmed by and officer in the department of city planning at the municipality.

However, complaints of the title and allotment owners are not limited to these. Especially the ones living in Karapınar, whose houses will be demolished for the second phase of the project and where the terrace villas will be constructed, complain about their situation by claiming that they live in the highest land-value region and they have the most beautiful panorama of the city[29]. Nevertheless, they say, the winners of the game are TOKİ which builds high-income dwellings for profit as well as the future dwellers who will come to their land to enjoy its beauty. Crucially, some of the title deed owners on the lands of future villas told me that they requested to get the villa on their land, however, they are prohibited from doing so. For instance, a young man stressed that his brother lives abroad and would have helped him if he could have had the villa on his land. Another old man, Bayram, whose family were squatters in the beginning, took the allotment document in 1984, and finally the title deed in 2009, but their 399 m^2 land on the allotment decreased to 355 m^2 after the title deed. Finally the land was equalized to 260 m^2 with the TOKİ contract. As he complains, he would prefer to stay on his own land and would like to be given the villa instead of the two 90 m^2 and one 125 m^2 dwellings as he made the contract with TOKİ in exchange for 42 thousand Liras debt. Similarly, Mustafa's family came from Ağrı in 1964 and constructed a squatter house in Karapınar. They got their allotment document in 1984 and now

[29] These comments about "the most beautiful panoroma and location" are frequently expressed and used as a tool for maneuvering or a justification of the situation or claims of both the inhabitans and the municipality.

Mustafa lives in the same house with his wife and four children with 750 Liras monthly income, whom I got used to seeing at the coffee house of Karapınar. He was complaining with anger:

> "Look now, this part, our place we live now will be the villas' place. Why is it my place to become a villa and I cannot live there anymore? Don't misunderstand me, I'm not against the rich people, but there is a big unfairness here. You (TOKİ) are taking my 400 m^2 place from me and count it only as 300 m^2 and then you put villas on my place and sell the each of them for 400 thousand Liras. Is this fair now? You tell me is this just?"

Moreover, a mother and daughter, Fatma and Mürvet in their 80s and 60s, respectively, emphasized how many difficulties they faced when they first came to their place to build a squatter house in the mid-1960s. There were rarely houses around with no roads. The daughter comments:

> "We sank in mud up to our knees when we worked altogether with the children to build our place. After that, we didn't have proper roads, everywhere was muddy and we had to put plastic bags on our shoes which we took off when we arrived in the down town. Later we acquired our allotment document and finally the title deed. After all the difficulties and labor now we have to move. […] Isn't it our right to stay on our land? OK, TOKİ comes to make the regeneration project, that's OK. But why are we banned to take these villas? How many times I went to the municipality to tell them we are ready to pay whatever they ask. Didn't they tell us this is a regeneration on site? Why aren't we allowed to live on our own land but they make big money from our place? If they say we can get it but we have to pay, even we accept it. We anyway pay 48 thousand Lira now in exchange for two dwellings in this big concrete jungle".

Considering the anger of the deed and allotment owners about the villas, the mayor, who claimed that the locals demanded "a shopping mall, a five star hotel, and luxury villas", now looks quite contradictory in the face of these testimonies.

Squatters' Payments and Conditions

If we come to the locals without official documentation, the situation for them is very different compared to the ones with the title deeds and allotments. In general, title and allotment owners feel themselves luckier than the squatters. They pity the squatters' position in the project that they lose their place and their payments are higher in general while their new housing conditions are less favorable. However, there were also some households who blamed the squatters and found that they brought the situation on themselves. For instance, a woman in Karapınar with Erzurum origin and who fully supports the project said:

> "If they (the squatters) cannot pay they can go somewhere else. Why didn't they apply for a title deed when they had the chance? Am I fool here that I converted my land to a title and paid 30 thousand Liras for my deed but they sit on the public land for free? I am not sad for them, they deserved this".

Another woman exactly used the same words for the squatters. When I reminded her that there are some squatters who applied but could not make the payments to obtain the title deeds. She agreed that there might be some situations like that, however she insisted that she knows some squatters who thought they would live on the public land forever which made her feel deceived.

To begin with the squatters' place in the project, one of the very significant points that surfaces is the size of the dwellings they were offered. They do not have the right to choose the size of their apartments and they either have to move in to 75 m^2 flats or leave the region by getting paid the quittance money for their house, trees, coop, etc., which generally is between 10-15 thousand Liras. Thus, they have been proposed only one option, which is a forced option of signing the TOKİ contract. However, the indebtedness of the squatters is the highest compared to the title and allotment owners since the squatters do not have their own land to be compensated for. The only criteria for the compensation due is the quittance money. The price per square meter for the 75 m^2 dwellings is 850 Liras. Therefore the whole flat is 63 750 Liras (75 m^2 x 850 Liras). If the quittance money is calculated as, let us say, 10 thousand liras, then the rest of 53

750 Liras has to be paid to TOKİ. During my talks the approximate indebtedness of the squatters was between 50-60 thousand Liras which is a huge quantity of money for them, as they said.

The payments will be monthly to TOKİ for the duration of 180 months. The increase rate in the monthly payments from one year to another will be calculated according to the lowest rise in the salary of all civil servants. If the principal amount is 50 thousand Liras, then the monthly pay would be 277 Liras. Or, if it is 60 thousand Liras, the monthly payment is 333 Liras. Hence, it would be over optimistic to assume that there would not be payment problems in this project. As I know from other TOKİ payment conditions, if people cannot pay for two consecutive months they are sent a notice, and if they do not pay for an additional two month term, TOKİ then has the right to assign their dwelling to someone else. For the Karapınar project we do not know about such restrictions as of yet. When TOKİ gives the dwellings to the locals after the constructions are done, they will sign a dwelling delivery contract with TOKİ which will state the payment conditions; i.e. which bank to pay, when and how, and other rules, as a lawyer explained me who deals with other TOKİ housing units in Eskişehir.

Significantly, the households generally do not have sustainable jobs. They either do seasonal work such as construction and associated odd jobs, or work in the informal economy with low payments without work security. The ones who have sustainable jobs earn the minimum wage of Turkey which is currently 701 Liras per month (the net minimum wage). Already as a woman in Huzur told me, their monthly TOKİ payment is 310 Liras and they will not be able to pay. That is why they have already started to search for someone who wants to take over their dwelling and payment. This way of assigning the flats and payments to someone else will be one of the ways for the locals to leave their region. Similarly, a woman in Karapınar said they already found someone who promised to take over the payment. She and her husband do not work, have two children, and are used to living with the green card[30]. Actually their situation is quite tragic. Because they had the green card they could not apply and get their title deed.

[30] This is a card which is given to the citizens of Turkey who do not have any social insurance and whose income is less than the 1/3 of the minimum wage of Turkey. With this card the households get free health care.

However, now they have lost their green card because of the contract with TOKİ so that now it looks on paper as if they have property of their own. She seemed very frightened by the situation and said that:

> "We are totally aggrieved. We cannot pay this money. We have to give it to someone. We have already found him. We have to find somewhere else for us. I don't know, somewhere".

Ironically, there is another point to touch upon in the scenario. Just as the squatters who do not have a chance other than accepting the offer from the municipality and TOKİ – and all of them accepted as the local authorities pointed out as a success story which I will mention later more deeply– the citizens with title deed or deed allotment document are not allowed to choose the 75 m^2 flats. Although there was not much demand for these small flats from these groups, still some of the retired people or some inhabitants living alone with the pension fund had difficulties. A 53 years old lady with a deed allotment document lives alone with the pension money, 600 Liras monthly, funded from the state through her dead father to her, was strongly complaining:

> "How can I pay 47 thousands Liras now? I asked them to give me one of those little flats which is enough for me. But they said I am not allowed. Then I asked at least to give me a 90 m^2 one. However they said I am late and I have to take a 115 m^2 one. My monthly payment will be 305 liras, half of my income will automatically go to the payment, and plus the electricity, gas, water, and contribution fee to the caretaker. I asked them instead to give me a small flat without any payment. I went to the municipality for tens of times to say I cannot pay this money. But they were kidding me, the officers of the state were kidding me. They said I might start saving money until the payments start. Can you believe? I couldn't save any money in my whole life, how can I save money now? They were just kidding me there…"

Example: Ihlamurkent and Payment Thoughts on the Karapınar Project

About the payment difficulties of the low-income households I find it significant to point out another TOKİ housing project, which might help to foresee what could happen in Karapınar as well. Ihlamurkent TOKİ Houses were built with the collaboration of

Odunpazarı Municipality. Without mentioning the details, this project of 2118 dwellings took place on the periphery lands where there were no housing units initially. The project was finished in three phases but here I will only mention the second phase. I could have chosen another phase of the project or even a different low-income housing project of TOKİ in Eskişehir, however, my first contact with one of the low-income TOKİ projects in Eskişehir was the second phase of Ihlamurkent.

The project was targeted at low-income citizens by using the criteria of income to determine whether a person or family was eligible for a dwelling. It might be important to touch upon the fact that there were a large number of deceptions as seen by the lawyer who responsible for the second phase of the project. Although people did not have low income, such as doctors, and lawyers they found ways to obtain the dwellings. They, for example, used their neighbors or family members to sign the contract with TOKİ. I got this information from my interviews with the site manager of the second phase of Ihlamurkent whom I name as Osman here. Each phase has a site manager to deal with the administrative and economic issues. The second phase contains 830 dwellings, however, he knows the general atmosphere and processes of the other two phases. He stressed that 600 households resigned from their dwellings, of which half gave the reason of payment difficulties.

I had interviews with the lawyer of the second phase who initiates legal proceedings against the households for failure of payment of the contribution fees. He showed me the files of the apartment blocks. We randomly picked a file which shows the indebtedness of an apartment building in 2010. Among the 80 dwellings in the building 25 of them seemed to have payment difficulties of the contribution fee. Moreover, six had legal proceedings brought against them. He explains that when a household does not pay the contribution fee for approximately ten months, then the site manager and lawyer start legal proceedings, although occasionally they give more time if they know the situation of the household. The monthly contribution fees are 27 and 35 Liras which is determined by the size of the dwellings. He showed this file to me to give an idea of the general payment problems of the households since, as he says, we cannot see entire

range of the payment difficulties if we only check the numbers of the legal proceedings. He adds that:

> "I am not responsible for the assigning-resigning problems. It is an issue between TOKİ and the people. However when I ask householders why they did not pay the contribution fees, they mostly give the reason as their payment to TOKİ and that they can't manage to pay all of these payments monthly".

Moreover, he says there are even more payment problems under the first phase dwellings since there are more low-income citizens. The lawyer continues giving similar examples from different projects as well as asserting that similar payment difficulties will appear in the Karapınar project.

On the other hand, I asked the executor governor of Karapınar about his expectations on TOKİ payments. As he expressed:

> "In my opinion, many people can pay the debts. Maybe *only* 20-30% of them might not pay. I don't think it will be more than this".

He underestimated 20-30% of people by stressing on "only". When I asked what will the 20-30% do, he answered with a very normal and calm voice tone that they will find somewhere else that suits them. When I replied, however, that this was their place which suited them, he asked back:

> "Shouldn't we make the project and clean the region then? Should we leave it this way then that it doesn't have any quality? […] Here (the quarter) needs to change and maybe some people might pay a price for it who were anyway illegally on the lands of the public".

Other than the executive governor, the officer at the municipality gave a similar assumption for the rate of defaulting on payments. According to the officer, 80% would not have problems in making the payments, and the rest would very easily find someone to assign the dwelling to, and in the end would not be at a loss. The officer claimed that:

> "Whatever happens, whether they can pay or not, at the end this is a good project for everybody. We make it possible for them to get a new house which is not a

> squat. If they do not pay or do not want to live here they always have the "chance" to assign their contract to someone else, get their money, and find another place which is suitable for them, do you understand me here?".

This was terrific to hear. The officer's claims were as if we were not talking about the housing needs and future difficulties of the locals but another daily thing, or as if the municipality and TOKİ offered many "chances" to the locals from which they would benefit under all circumstances. Later, when I asked her whether they consider to protect the social structure of the neighborhood, she said they "of course did so as I can see through their 'regeneration on site' mission". I then asked about if the value of the dwellings rise because of the new households or popularity of the project and the locals start to rent or sell their houses to make money and leave the region accordingly. She answered happily:

> "Then this means they make profit from the houses, which means they make it thanks to this project. As I said, this is a beneficial project for everybody".

I replied that if the locals leave the region then it would not really be a regeneration on site or the meaning of the project would change, which claims now to make the regeneration in order to give healthy houses for the local population. She replied that:

> "But at the end anyway they win because they sell or rent their house, make money and move somewhere else. What is wrong with this? They are wining too".

Moreover, during the interview with the mayor I touched upon the same question and asked whether the payment difficulties might expel some citizens from the region or whether the increased dwelling values might push locals to sell their houses and move somewhere else which could eventually change the social structure of the neighborhood. His reply was evasive:

> "Our project is not a disintegrative but an integrative project. This project combines every kind of social and economic background together in peace. Why should people leave the region? They will feel the peace and stay here".

About the integrative concerns of the regeneration he further stressed that this project is an inclusive project that *even* the citizens without the allotment and title will become dwelling owners. If the logic of the social housing projects is to make low income citizens into house owners, the word "even" as the mayor used sounds absurd.

Besides, creating diversity is a usual claim that we are accustomed to hearing about in the local media. The project asserts that any kind of a social and economic backgrounds will live peacefully together and learn from each other. Similarly, the neighborhood executor of Karapınar claims that:

> "Let me give you an excellent example. There will be a big diversity and peaceful atmosphere here. Our children and the rich children will play together and develop a learning process. For example, our kids really like to use swear words because our families are not educated to teach that swearing is a bad thing. On the other hand the rich kids have good education and they do not use bad words. So, when our kids play with the rich ones they will swear first, and the rich kid will ask what he said. Our kid will say that it is a bad word. Then the rich one will reply that 'no, you shouldn't use bad words because my mother and teacher told me that we shouldn't use them'. Then our kid will think about it and say to himself that 'oh, ok, then I shouldn't use it either'. So, our kids will learn these things from the rich ones. However, the rich kids do not know how to play the street games because they mostly do not go out much and they have their computers and house games. But our kids will teach them how to make street games. Therefore, they will learn from each other".

He was also proud that he proposed this excellent example of how the different income classes would integrate as a result of the project to the mayor during a meeting in the council of the municipality, which was well received by the audience and even garnered clapping hands. Besides, the claim of the executor is significant in terms of the opinion on the "*gecekondu*" vs. "rich" discourse, where the *gecekondu* children are supposed to model themselves after the richer ones and learn politeness and good habits from them (Ayata, 1989:116).

Furthermore, I asked the municipal officer, who I mentioned above, about her opinion on the diversity or whether the locals will feel comfortable or move out of the region. She replied with an repetitive answer that:

> "They might move out. Yes. But in the end they do not lose. As I said they make money. So, in any case, they win".

However, all these explanations were either over optimistic in that they just assume the process to happen in a peaceful and happy way, or they did not seriously consider the diversity but used the term as an angelic figurehead. There will be the villas on the one hand and the people who do not have a regular job on the other. As Fainstein (2005:13,14) asserts crucially, if the lifestyles are too incompatible between the social groups, bringing them together and simply assuming to create diversity might only increase the prejudice of these groups against each other. However, the diversity may be achieved if the national state targets the creation of equity between different social and income groups by supplying equal access to housing and social life (Fainstein, 2005:12-16). On the other hand, condemning squatters to large monthly payments, normalizing the process in which 20-30% of the locals leave the region because of the payment difficulties, romanticizing the social diversity through the integration of rich and poor children, or claiming that this is not a disintegrative but an integrative project with hollow pretenses do not reflect the principle of equal access of different social groups to housing and the creation of diversity accordingly.

Regeneration on Site?

What is more, all the 75 m^2 apartments are built in Erenköy, which seems like a crucial matter for the squatters. This means, even though you live in Karapınar as a squatter, you are forced to relocate to Erenköy. Also we should consider that the majority of the squatters lived in Karapınar rather than Erenköy as the executor of the Karapınar neighborhood informed me. All of the squatters I talked to complained about this problem that they do not want to leave their own neighborhood where they have lived for 40-50 years. Their neighbors and friends having the title deed or deed allotment document will still stay in Karapınar whereas the squatters will have to leave to Erenköy, which is at the other edge of the project. From that time on they will both be separated from their neighborhood and also need to pay for public transport in order to reach the center, which is a significant amount of money as they all stressed upon. They

are treated as "4th, 5th or 6th class citizens or not even as citizens" in the city as Salih in the coffee house of Karapınar bemoaned to me. He continued:

> "I even haven't gone to Erenköy three times in my 50 years of life. First of all it does not suit my political view. They are more conservative and strange there. Why should I go there? Why am I forced to go there when I even don't want to go for a visit? They (TOKİ and municipality) just throw us there to get rid of us. No one asks us whether we want to live there or not. But here is a good, beautiful area with the best panorama of Eskişehir. Of course they don't want us to enjoy this view".

As I mentioned above, the mayor claimed that the project is not disintegrative but integrative. However, gathering all the squatters at the farthest edge of the project zone from the city center contradicts the "integrative" nature, as well as the "regeneration on site" principle. As I mentioned in the section of the principles of the project, the mayor claimed in our interview that they consider the social ties of the people to their neighborhoods. He was saying that:

> "[…]We looked after their vicinity rights of the locals and allocated the dwellings from their own neighborhood. Although there may be some small bifurcations along the way, we are making a regeneration on site".

The small bifurcations here refers to dislocation of all the squatters in Karapınar and shifting them to Erenköy. However, in the local and national broadcasts he underscores their sensitivity on neighbor relations and regeneration on site. As he stated in the local magazine Fallow:

> "Everybody will get their house from their neighborhood. The ones from Erenköy will stay in Erenköy, and ones from Huzur will stay in Huzur. By this way they will not be separated from their neighborhood and neighbors".

I am not sure whether mentioning only Erenköy and Huzur was a coincidence or he did not include Karapınar on purpose, however, still we often see "on site regeneration" claims in the media. Furthermore, when I asked a municipality officer (planner) the reason of the shift of squatters to Erenköy she asserted that:

> "It is just nothing else than the technicality of the project. The optimum way of drawing the project required this".

When I asked about the reactions of the squatters about moving to Erenköy she said that:

> "Of course there were reactions and they didn't want to go to Erenköy. But there was nothing to do about that. We wouldn't have changed the plans. And they had to accept this".

In addition to the special rezoning or relocation of the squatters to Erenköy, another point of discussion for the squatters is the size of the offered flats. 75 m^2 is not adequate for many squatter families. For example, Salih has a wife and six children. He is already anxious about how to fit into a 75 m^2 space. Currently Salih's house is bigger than 100 m^2 and additionally he has a garden with 30 trees. The same anxiety is shared by other squatter families as well. Two squatter neighbors in Erenköy complained about the general structure of the project, such as they did not know about the project until the very last minute and could not know what to do, however, it seems they had to accept the current situation. Therefore, the largest point of contention for them was the diminutive size of the new dwellings. Sayide is in her 30s and lives with her parents and brothers. She wonders how five of them can live in such a small flat. Her only solution is maybe to get married one day and live somewhere else but she is still worried about the rest of her family. Similarly, Melek has the same concerns. She is married, has two kids and says:

> "You should go and see where they are putting us. They are like little prisons. There is a kitchen but not even two people can stay there at the same time. Also there is a balcony, not even for two people to smoke there. A family will move in there. But it is not for families. Maybe a student or a retired lady would live there well, but they didn't consider the families at all"

One day when I was sitting with an officer from the municipality (she is in early thirties and single) for a tea in a park which is constructed by the Odunpazarı Municipality (she wanted to show me the park of which the municipality is proud, and so is she), we came to the size of the dwellings. She asked whether I have already been inside the 75 m^2

flats. I answered that I could not see the dwellings in Erenköy since the security guards called the municipality to request entry for me, but then were denied. Then she replied:

> "Oh, I really would like you to see those little flats. You can't imagine. When you see them you will say 'ooh such lovely flats'. They are so nice and beautiful. I *even* said I *could* live here. […] But people are so ungrateful. *We construct* such a lovely place *for them* and make them house owners, but they don't understand this. Am I not right?"

When she was telling me about "such lovely flats" that they construct "for the people", she was talking as if they construct them for free. Once, when I was talking to Salih about "becoming a house owner", he replied with an anger that:

> "They (municipality and TOKİ) talk as if they are doing a favor for us. They say that they are giving a house to us. Don't we have a house, do we need in tents now?".

Furthermore, during our talk in the park, when I reminded the officer that the size of the dwellings might be small for the families, she continued with an anger:

> "They are talking as if they were living in palaces. For example, they say they can't put a table in the kitchen. OK, the kitchen might be small for the table. But, for god's sake, have they ever eaten the food on the table?"

She talked as if the squatters cannot deserve or demand such things since they do not have such a life style. Besides, in another discussion an officer accepted that they might have made a mistake about the squatters' dwellings.

> "It is true that we got a lot of complaints from the squatters about the size of the dwellings. However, our concern was to help them to pay their debt easier with the smaller dwellings. But yes, we could have asked them what they wanted. This project is our first regeneration project, we might have made a mistake".

If we consider the average indebtedness of the squatters is 50 thousand Liras for the 75 m^2 dwellings, it would increase by 15-20 thousand Liras for the 90 m^2 ones. In this case the monthly payment would increase which would create more payment difficulties and in consequence more dispossession and displacement of the squatters from the region.

Thus, the point is not only the size of the dwellings but also questioning the housing and, even more correctly, the displacement strategy of TOKİ. This means, the officer in the municipality thinks that they considered an easier payment for the squatters through small dwellings, however, they neglected to ask why the squatters have to become that much indebted if the project is a "social housing" project targeting the "right to housing" and to decrease the social inequality.

Ideas About the Old and New Life

After discussing the conditions of the locals and how they "welcome" the project as distinct from what is claimed in the local media, I would also like to touch on the general concerns of the locals about their current and forthcoming life style. First of all, I would like to start with their gardens. All the households in the region have a garden or garden-like entrance to their houses. Whoever I visited in the quarter – squatters or title owners – came to the issue of their trees, even though sometimes I did not ask about it. Especially the older people tell the stories of their trees, how old they are, how many trees they have, how they planted the trees, etc. Also, they make the connection between their trees and life style which they will not be able to have anymore, as they stressed. One old lady complained intensely about the trees and her life:

> "I have cherry trees, apple trees, quince trees, and in the front garden I have a plum tree. I planted them all and they grew big in years. […] Every morning I come here (where we sat in the garden), take the fresh air, water the plants, do this and that. In the apartment building is it ever possible to find this!? […] When we move out from here, they (TOKİ) will cut all of the trees. But then I decided to cut them before they do. I don't know how I will be able do it, but I would burn them for this winter that at least I would not have to pay for buying coal for a while".

Another old lady told me the similar things:

> "From morning to night I spend my time here (garden). I water the trees and flowers, I let off the steam".

Then she asked me or she stressed whether this is possible to have such a life in the apartments. I told her maybe she can go down stairs and sit in a park. Then she said:

> "Is it the same as here? Will I have my trees? Also, there would be rules everywhere. They even would not let people sit on the grass. Also, can I go in and outside as easily as I do now? Consider my age my daughter".

These similar concerns are easy to mention here from several households, especially from the older residents. Moreover, one of the other main concerns is about their comfort of life. As they all stress without any exception, they would miss their current easy life. They all talk about their gathering with their families and friends, barbeques in the garden, tea parties at nights, or their independent life where they do not need to account to anybody for their home life etc. As Sayide in Erenköy pointed out:

> "I'm a hard core person (damar insanıyım). When I turn hard core arabesque music all the way up, no one can stop me. I turn it up all the way and sing along. You tell me if you can have all that in an apartment building! The neighbors would knock so that I turn the volume down, and when I don't they would come and a fight would break out. That's what'll happen in an apartment building."

About these kind of apartment blocks life fears, Sami told me about his expectations and the relationship with his wife:

> "I am getting tired by working the whole day in here (work place-coffee house). Then I go to home to relax. Then if my wife touches on my nerves maybe I have a fight with her, maybe I hit her even. And nobody comes to me to ask what I am doing. But in the apartment life it will be different. I even won't be able to fight with my wife the way I want".

I was surprised by his words. I said I do not agree that anybody deserves violence. He said maybe I am right, but this is their culture, he cannot change so fast, and also still nobody has the right to get involved within their house. After that he followed:

> "Think that we moved to an apartment. My wife says that I should bring the garbage bin downstairs. Have I done any such thing in my life? No! Then, I will say that I am not doing it. But what will happen when she replies that 'but Mr. Doctor downstairs or Mr. Lawyer upstairs do it!'"? Then there will be a fight. But

> then we won't be able to fight in the way we want because they will come to us and say that we can't fight like that. Then should I be a killer?".

Another common point I would like to stress is about the mystification of the apartment life, especially among the women. Although they all say that they will miss their neighborhood relations, gardens, and life style, I realized mostly among the women that they elaborate or even boast about the forthcoming apartment life. I often hear that they need to change their furniture, even though it will cost a lot of money. When I asked why they do not take their current furniture they gave similar reactions. For instance, Melek in Erenköy who will move to a 75 m^2 flat insisted that:

> "You mean this ropy furniture to the apartments? Of course we have to change both the furniture and domestic appliances. These old things do not suit the apartments".

Besides, it seems that while locals share the ideas about the apartment life, they affect each other as well. For example, Nesrin from Huzur asserted that when everyone renews their furniture, "of course she will not lag behind them" and that she will replace the old furniture and domestic appliances as well. Moreover, the people were joking about their clothing as well. Many said they will have to change their clothes and adapt the new apartment style. When we talked about the new clothing concern, Sayide told me her father's words:

> "He says to us that when we move to the apartment he will get a suit and a tie, and sit in the flat in that form. He says, with the apartment life, he will change after this age".

In the same parallel, a group of women in Huzur, when we all together sitting and drinking teas in one of their gardens, were talking about becoming an "apartment lady" and that they will change their furniture and shift to the necessities of the apartment life. When I asked whether this change will be an easy one, they said the human being can integrate into anything, so they will integrate into the apartment life. I heard this "apartment lady" comment from a man as well, who wants to make his wife a lady in the apartment, which he equates to a comfortable life. However, another man in Karapınar who was totally against the project spoke out angrily that:

> "I hear what these idiots say about their wives! They think that they will make their wife a "lady" in the apartments. Such a stupid thought! Turkish women even do not have "ladyness" in their blood. A Turkish woman cannot turn out to be a lady".

Correspondingly, it seems that these concerns on the division between the "*gecekondu* lifestyle" and "apartment lifestyle" are widely talked about, however, there are various expectations from the apartment life. Although the scope of this research is not able to make any kind of generalizations about the future ideas, noticeable concerns that were frequently expressed were about the gardens and comfortable life with the neighbors, the new necessities in the apartment life, and worries about the privacy in the apartments, which differ through the multiple impacts of the gender, age, income level, and future expectations of the residents.

CONCLUSION

Reorganization of urban space is not a new appearance of the neoliberal economy. One of the most important indications of this claim is given by Harvey who explicates the investment and reshaping of the build environment in Paris, which led to absorption of huge quantities of capital and labor power in the second half of the 19th century. However, as a turning point from the Keynesian economy in the late 1970s, the neoliberal era has broadly influenced the urban processes which have built new characteristics of the age. Thus, cities themselves have become entrepreneurial entities as a strategic route to economic success abided by the enterprising capacities of different partners and stake-holders. In this regard, in order to attract new investments, tourists, artists, and skilled employees; becoming a "world city", "knowledge city", or "smart city" has brought the commodification of the urban space and reshaping the build environment as the needs of the cities' enterprising strategies. Therefore, building the business quarters, developing the flagship urban projects, hosting the international games and conferences, promotion of cosmopolitan city-life, and the regeneration of the old industrial and squatters zones have become crucial developments and rent seeking activities of the neoliberal cities. Accordingly, the construction sector has created enormous profits by the reorganization of the built environment.

Since the beginning of the 1980s, Turkey has adapted the neoliberal economy as well. Since then we have seen significant administrative changes which have affected urban developments. One of the most important changes has been giving more administrational power and budget to municipalities, which meant to achieve more room for urban reshaping activities. Moreover, the urban investments of municipalities have increasingly been implemented by the partnerships with the private sector. Additionally, establishment of the Mass Housing Administration (TOKİ) in 1984 has been another development which would affect the urban processes most in the future decades. Although the initial mission of TOKİ's establishment was to provide housing

subsidy for the lower income classes, tolerating the explosion of *gecekondu* settlements was a cheaper solution to the housing needs of the cities' newcomers. Moreover, this toleration was a tool for the populist governments to gain votes from these populations.

On the other hand, through the numerous new legislations TOKİ has been reorganized since 2002, when the Justice and Development Party has come into power. With these laws, TOKİ has become a super power in the construction sector. Through the partnerships with municipalities and the private sector, TOKİ has entered into a myriad of urban regeneration projects. Meanwhile, a hegemonic discourse of the fatal effects of the natural catastrophes, fears, and the significance of secure human life has been developed. By using the consequences of the violent earthquake instances, the JDP government and TOKİ have been underlining the requirement of constructing safer cities. Hence, *gecekondu* settlements have become the targets to be declared as "zones of risk". Although the regeneration projects are decided top-down, they are justified as "win-win" projects from which "everyone will gain". However, such projects of TOKİ carry the profit-oriented logic rather than welfare or social housing considerations. One of the most obvious examples of this logic is the dispossessions. Even though a project is claimed to be a "regeneration on site", the quantity of the TOKİ compensation creates difficulties. As the Karapınar project indicates, some of the locals have already considered resigning from the contracts even before the payments start. Another case showing the profit oriented implications of TOKİ is constructing luxury housing units and/or commerce centers in the regeneration zones which increase the land values and supply massive economic returns.

Significantly, Eskişehir, which has seen large urban developments and city branding campaigns particularly in the last decade, enters in the regeneration activities as well. Crucially, Karapınar Valley project has been the first *gecekondu* regeneration project in the city which is carried out by the partnerships of TOKİ and Odunpazarı Municipality, and built by the private construction companies by the tender offers on the 50 hectares zone, whose location has increasingly gained centrality as the city has grown. In addition, a new regeneration project will be implemented again by the same partners after the Karapınar project is completed. The new project will cover another 50 hectare

zone around the *gecekondu* regeneration area. The reason of the regeneration is clear: "zone of risk". Thus at the end of these two regeneration projects the view of the quarter will be entirely changed which would require additional research to put into the context of the current urban regeneration discourse.

On the other hand, the project finds its roots by the akin discourses on natural disasters. Now, TOKİ and the municipality claim that they cannot take a risk to leave the quarter on its own since everybody's lives and property are so important not to neglect. Furthermore, the "win-win" character of the claims is another promotional tool of the project. Thus, the project is said to be a turning point for the city and everyone in it. Nevertheless, only the economic and political benefits of TOKİ and the municipality are clear. Otherwise, they apply a top-down regeneration decision even without making a survey study from the locals, which would normally be done to show how participatory the project would be. However they glorify the "social sides" of the project that they considered the "regeneration on site" and *even* the squatters gain from the project. Moreover, people demolish their houses in a festival atmosphere, as they claim.

However, as my case study indicates, complex economic, social, and cultural struggles and expectations have occurred among the locals. For instance, regarding the economic considerations, while the title owners seem to contest the amount of land s/he takes, the squatters battle with the future payments to TOKİ as being the group that has the highest amount of payments. However, concerning the social aspects, the size of flats given to squatters and the location of these apartments cause distress to squatters. Moreover, while some of the locals cannot relinquish their trees, gardens, and neighbors, some think that the new life will prohibit the privacy of domestic life, whereas some desire to become an apartment lady. Thus, regenerations bring multifaceted dimensions and expectations together, rather than the simplified assumptions about winners and losers.

Considering the fact that *gecekondu* settlements have revealed intense public debates since the 1950s, these discussions have affected the self-positioning of the *gecekondu* in the society as well. Explosion of *gecekondu* settlements in the big cities has created a

contradiction with the urban modernization of Turkey which meant to be apartmentization. These "chaotic" "shanty" settlements and their lifestyles have been perceived as if they carried a homogenous character. Thus, the word of *gecekondu* has been identified with the lasting miserable imagery of city contamination and abominable housing conditions. This imagery not only has penetrated in the middle classes but also impinged on the *gecekondu's* self-perception of finding itself different than the "others". Inevitably, the binary opposition between the "*gecekondu*" and "modern" has had the influence on shaping an illusion of the modern lifestyle which is associated with the apartment.

Although there are economic and social struggles of inhabitants that are brought on by the regeneration that need to be comprehended carefully, there are obviously other aspects that require attention, such as emancipation from the negative stigmata on *gecekondu* and becoming a "part of the modern life" by moving to the apartment. On the other hand, several mystified imageries of future apartment life arouse among the *gecekondu* inhabitants depending on age, gender, family structure, income level, political views, and the like. Therefore, there is no homogenous generalizations on how the locals desire to see themselves in their future, or what they expect from the good future. When the regeneration is done and if the locals start to move to their new flats in summer 2013 as they are promised, the mystified imagery about the apartment life and the new social relations in the new environment will give place to reality. The consequences of these complex interplays are difficult to foresee presently, and more attention and research should be paid to the developing situation of the Karapınar regeneration project in the future in order to make a comprehensive analysis of the socio-cultural and economic impacts of the "new life", which would include more perspectives other than those of just TOKİ and the municipalities.

CURRICULUM VITAE

Educational Information:

Bachelor Degree: Political Science and Public Administration Middle East Technical University in Ankara, September 2005-July 2010.

Erasmus Program: Political Science in University of Marburg, Germany, 2008-2009.

Master Study: Cultural Differences and Transnational Processes; A Joint Master Programme in Social and Cultural Anthropology in University Vienna, March 2011-March 2013.

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