

Institutionalization of disaster risk discourse in reproducing urban space in Istanbul

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Received: November 2014

Final Acceptance: January 2015

Abstract

Government and real estate sector is utilizing “disaster risk discourse” as an ideological tool to legitimize the ongoing rush for urban redevelopment in Turkey. This article aims to explain “how” “disaster risk discourse” is institutionalized and became the primary tool in reproducing urban space.

We argue that, the ongoing “disaster risk discourse” defining the neoliberal urban transformation in Turkey is a versatile tool serving for state’s ideological, political and economical interests. These interests include defining redistributive and social policies, organisation of land-based interest groups, managing conflicts related to attempted urban strategies and centralisation of the power.

Istanbul clearly illustrates the institutional dynamics of urban redevelopment policies and formation of “disaster risk discourse”. Therefore, in this article we will analyse the urban political processes in the areas subject to “Law no. 6306, for the Regeneration of Areas under Disaster Risk” in relation to aforementioned dynamics. The article is based on the findings of the research carried for the PhD Thesis on “Dynamics of Reproduction of Urban Space in Istanbul”¹.

Keywords

Urban redevelopment, Disaster risk discourse, Institutional structure.

1. Introduction

Since the beginning of 2000s there have been substantial changes in laws and institutional structures to enable rapid urban redevelopment in Turkey. Different approaches, laws and institutions came into force. By the time this article is written, the policies demonstrate a convergence among the strategies over urban redevelopment, which is shaped around the “disaster risk” discourse. As a result, “Law no.6306, for the Regeneration of Areas under Disaster Risk” has become one of the primary tools in Turkey for redeveloping urban land.

Together with neoliberal urban transformation practices, natural disasters are becoming increasingly hazardous. The inability of welfare policies and public infrastructures of governments along with the collapse of traditional mutual aid, has led to the emergence of important risks in global scale. Thus, this process created a new urban geography with increased spatial inequality where risks and risk policies are scattered throughout the cities.

Istanbul has emerged as a centre of extensive urban transformation activities in recent years, with the real estate industry functioning in cooperation with public institutions. Meanwhile, there is a strong possibility of a destructive earthquake in Istanbul in the near future. Public administrations utilize the earthquake focused disaster risk as the main rationale for redeveloping the building stock. However, there is strong criticism and opposition from civil organizations and in the public opinion, concerning the effectiveness of the government’s urban transformation approach in mitigating earthquake risks and in delivering a healthy urban environment (Cinmen, 2011).

We argue that, the ongoing “disaster risk discourse” defining the neoliberal urban transformation in Turkey is a versatile tool serving for ideological, political and economical interests focusing on urban redevelopment. Definition of how these policies are institutionalizing over time necessitates an analysis focusing on the changes in the state’s social policies, organisation rules, conflict management strategies and power dynamics.

Istanbul clearly illustrates the institutional dynamics of urban redevelopment policies and formation of “disaster risk discourse”. Therefore, in this article we will analyse the urban political processes in the areas subject to “Law no. 6306, for the Regeneration of Areas under Disaster Risk” in Istanbul in relation to aforementioned variables.

The article is based on the findings of the research carried for the PhD Thesis on “Dynamics of Reproduction of Urban Space in Istanbul”. This specific analysis is based on the contents of policy documents and decisions, media releases of public bodies, private companies and civil and opposition groups; and also interviews carried out during the thesis research conducted with real estate developers and representatives of opposition groups are engaged in the study. Geographical representation of policy documents and secondary data, such as economic indicators, electoral data and are utilized to support the arguments.

The article consists of three main sections. In the first section, we propose a theoretical framework. In the second section, we evaluate Istanbul’s urban transformation processes after 2000 through the perspective of disaster risk policies. Finally, in the third section we analyse the urban redevelopment projects under the Law No: 6306 in terms of their contribution to redistribution and social policies, organisation of land-based interest groups, conflict management strategies and centralization of political power.

2. Institutionalization of risk discourses in urban policy

Institutionalization of the “disaster risk discourse” in Istanbul can be understood within the framework of the moralization of the immoral economy of urban redevelopment in Istanbul. To be able to explain how this process works, we have to answer two questions. The first question here is, “how can disaster risk discourse serve for moralization of something”, and the second question is, “what do we mean by immoral urban redevelopment”.

Giddens (1999: 5) argue that political decision-making processes are

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related to a considerable degree with the management of public's risk perceptions. Risk discourse is considered as one of the most effective pervasive tools to form and shape public morality (Ericson and Doyle, 2003; Hunt, 2003). According to Hunt (2003:165), this process has two impacts in everyday life; first is to enable the proliferation of bureaucratic regulation, second is to expand the effects of regulations by increasing the burdens of responsibilities of citizens.

Bureaucratic regulations regarding risks manifested through the changing social policies in Western Europe, parallel to the neoliberal transformation of economic, social and administrative structure. Welfare society is going through a reconstruction process, with an emphasis on increasing the opportunities for upward mobility and market participation. The policy approach has changed from "social protection", to "social investment" meaning that individuals are obliged to assume accountability for their own risks, as governments invest in support of equal opportunity and human capital (Pintelon et al., 2011). Therefore, safety products and services against broad range of risk issues, from burglary to retirement, are sold in the market; which in turn further "encourage individualization, differentiation and commodification of risk management" (Krahmann, 2007: 2).

Disaster risk is considered as one of the risk issues that have been utilized for legitimizing commercialized and individualized public policies. Along with the increasing impacts of disasters, in Turkish case as in other places with disaster history, disaster opportunism (Flaherty, 2010; Schenking, 2013) for economic and political benefits turned into a mainstream strategy for urban policymaking.

International institutions defines "disaster risk" as a form of "urban risks" including vulnerabilities caused by natural disasters such as flood, landslide, earthquake, hurricane, tsunami as well as environmental pollution, crime, fire, eviction, ethno-social conflicts, accidents, health risks, epidemics and unhealthy urban tissue. Global interest on risks related with

urbanisation problems has increased after 1980s. National, regional and international organizations started to work on collaborative studies, acts, movements, projects, and plans to mitigate urban risks. Starting from 1990s, several studies have been prepared by the UN Habitat (UNHSP, 2004), World Bank (Dickson et al, 2012), Regional Consultative Committee on Disaster Management (RCC, 2010), OECD, Red Cross and Red Crescent (IFRC, 2012) to analyse, mitigate and prevent risks.

According to Davis (2010), urban risk mitigation programs of international organizations are proposing comprehensive approaches, integrating infrastructure development and social wellness; and emphasizing the role of government as the leading example for safety standards. However, governments generally fail to manage disaster risk and mitigate hazardous outcomes. According to governments, risks are too great to resolve by short-term policies and costs of the realistic measures are too high; meanwhile, long-term precautions are politically undesirable, and governmental action and treatment of land-use policies are directly contradicting with the real precautions (Davis, 2010). In addition to these, international organizations' efforts are based on the results and statistics rather than the main reasons behind urban risks, and thus endanger the possibility for finding permanent solutions to disasters, even obstructing viable efforts in the meantime (McEntire, 1997). As a result, international aid is under criticism for its inability to collaborate with local experts and practices; and the financial burden of financial aid on giving countries (Balamir, 2007).

In addition to that, in contemporary approaches for disaster management, three main issues emerge (Satterthwaite, 2011; Albrito, 2012; Lall and Deichmann, 2012):

- Fostering participation and capacity development in local municipalities with a decentralized governance approach,
- Facilitating market based individual disaster prevention, together with the organization and audit of public bodies,

- Evaluating disaster risk within a developmental perspective with sustainable development discourse through fostering win win solutions.

Aforementioned urban risk mitigation approaches have characteristics that are in parallel with what Chakravorty calls as “globalization ideologies” (2003) including; facilitating market and commerce, decentralization of power, good governance and democracy. As Chakravorty (2003) claims, these ideologies can increase the harmful effects of economic globalization, by strengthening unsteady economic trends, and create development paradoxes, which may lead to regression in globally less integrated countries. Economic growth is primarily based on population increase and rapid urbanization in developing countries (Chakravorty, 2003) and economic development is perceived as one of the main reasons increasing disaster risks (McEntire, 1997). This is due to characteristics of global capital flows in some cases, and most of the time to local economy-politics. Economic growth is generally uneven and unpredictable. As a result, the negative effects of global inequality is rapidly increasing in the under-developed and developing countries (Chakravorty, 2003). Therefore, growing inequality together with the high cost of preparing against potential disasters indicates that disastrous outcomes are possible in near future, especially in cities of underdeveloped and developing countries.

Disaster risk discourse works in both ways; by individualizing the risks and making disaster avoidance as a moral issue, in which each citizen have their own responsibility for themselves as well as for their neighbours. Secondly, by commercializing the risks, disaster risk avoidance becomes a matter of market, where the avoidance options are shaped in market mechanisms. Therefore, it becomes a moral issue, in which individual citizens should behave responsible in avoiding the disaster risk by choosing the avoidance options proposed by market. And the market is paradoxically reproducing these risks. This paradox forms the

basis for the diverted use of “disaster risk” to legitimize economic growth, privatization and market-oriented urban policies.

When we come to the second question about the immoral urban redevelopment, we are referring to Buğra’s (1998) influential article “The Immoral Economy of Housing in Turkey”. In Turkish case disaster avoidance options are defined in the real estate market mechanisms and individual earthquake insurances. Therefore, it is crucial to illustrate how the real estate mechanism is shaped by the state to enable massive redevelopment in the name of avoiding disaster risks. Looking at the underpinnings of urban redevelopment in Turkey, we trace back to the massive urbanization processes in Turkish cities along with proliferation of informal settlements.

Buğra states that it is impossible to understand the informal housing sector without understanding the redistribution mechanisms of the state (Buğra, 1998). During the multi-party regime development within the political conditions after World War 2, economy has given way to patronage relations in exchange for vote for mass-based political parties. After 1950s by Demokrat Parti (Democratic Party) and then by Adalet Partisi (Justice Party), patronage relations are realized by using regulative powers of local municipalities through urban plans, to create individual interests by selectively distributing non-monetary resources (Öncü, 1988). The other dimension was non-exercise or partially exercising the legal controls over land (Öncü, 1988). This worked in two ways according to Öncü (1988); first, tacitly everyone knew that one way or another land control mechanisms can be loosen in exchange of individual interests, secondly this process had been useful for almost all of the social and economical groups including urban poor, new social classes, entrepreneurs and contractors, local politicians and administrators. Buğra (1998) indicates that informal housing policy of the state before 1980s was therefore morally accepted by general society as a solution for sheltering the urban poor in the absence of social housing policy.

After 1980s under the administra-

tion of Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party), the patronage relation was reshaped by the use of state power to selectively enable building-based redevelopment, by legalizing them and also by giving selective incentives in exchange of votes. This relation was maintained by decentralization of urban development powers to local municipalities, in order to be able to relate with local actors who will gain monetary interest from the redevelopment of their buildings (Buğra, 1998). Transformation of self-built houses into apartment houses by small contractors was one of the main elements of social welfare and urban policy, through which upward mobilization was sustained, social exclusion avoided and social integrity maintained (Buğra and Keyder, 2003).

1990s were the era in which deregulation of the financial institutions and liberalization of the economy was systematically realised (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu and Yeldan, 2000). Speculative economy started to dominate the economical sphere, income distribution worsened and state corruption increased (Cizre-Sakallıoğlu and Yeldan). Meanwhile, globalization influences were felt on the urban space. Industry has started to decentralize to peripheries of large cities and high-rise towers started to occur in large cities. In addition to that, forced migration from the eastern part of Turkey to especially İstanbul has changed the characteristics of the workforce distribution. State capacity was declining and informal economy was increasing (Keyder, 2005). Through these transformation process, the informal relations established for housing and title provision for new migrants paved the way for informal relations in the provision of middle and upper-middle income housing either (Buğra, 1998). Local municipalities used their power by selectively distributing the urban rent through informal relations to open forest areas and water basins for urban development in the name of improving squatter areas (Buğra, 1998). This process has changed the rule of the game, by incorporating the sale of public land to the large construction companies by local municipalities (Buğra, 1998). The

discourse of preventing the expansion of squatter settlements constituted the rationale behind the opening of new development areas (Buğra, 1998). As Buğra (1998) argues, this process of redistribution at the end of 1990s, proliferated the rent and privilege based economic and political relations on urban land, leading to “immoral” economy of housing.

Accompanied with displacement of industrial production from large cities and slowing rate of urbanization, construction sector began to decline and social security system became unsustainable in 1990s (Buğra and Keyder, 2006). Starting from the beginnings of 2000s, concentration of the political power on Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party) alone and structural reforms yielding to economic stability discourse helped for building a consensus over growth oriented neoliberal economical structure in Turkey (Uzgel, 2010; Ekzen, 2010). The strategies of neoliberal urban transformation processes started to gain acceleration, showing similar characteristics to the other cities integrating to global economy.

There is an extensive literature about changing roles of governments to facilitate market oriented spatial development in neoliberal economic restructuring processes (Harvey, 2005; Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Smith, 2002). The main motivations for urban restructuring include facilitating capital accumulation and increasing the competitive power of cities in global capitalist economy. This competition is generally based on policies regarding infrastructure management, production of high-quality residential and office space (Chakravorty, 2003), aesthetic and cultural improvements to attract tourists and high-quality service employees (Urry, 1995), as well as potential global investments of all kinds. According to Smith (2002), real estate capital controls land with the aim to generate profit through differential rent, itself produced through the construction and sale of luxurious residents, mixed-use complexes and office buildings in former working class and middle class residential areas. Smith (2002) defines the main characteristics

of gentrification period as public-private partnerships based on fluid global capital; having “zero tolerance” for any anti-gentrification movement; and outspreading from the centre to the periphery. For this reason, social groups, especially those working in informal jobs connected to central facilities, established due their proximity to the city, voluntarily or involuntarily move away from the central locations due to rising habitation costs in central locations, in addition of the fact that they have become undesirable urban residents.

Legal and institutional arrangements intended to facilitate the process of construction and redevelopment of existing buildings gained acceleration in parallel with increasing capital accumulation in large Turkish cities. Mass Housing Authority (TOKİ) has gained more power to increase the available land on market, new infrastructure developments came into agenda and new partnership mechanisms began to flourish. Abandoned industrial sites and historical centres became subject to urban regeneration and new investment opportunities were created.

In Turkish cities, dynamics of existing institutional structures are changed by the involvement of new financial regulations, expanding real estate market and urge for re-regulating social policies to prevent social unrest. “Law no. 6306, for the Regeneration of Areas under Disaster Risk” accompanied with “disaster risk discourse” should be understood within this framework, as an integral part of Turkish version of neo-liberal urban transformation practices. How disaster risk policies shaped and transformed into regeneration policies is worth considering. However, what is interesting more is how existing redevelopment practices of Turkish cities, combine with disaster risk discourse to form a new powerful and flexible urban regulation tool, above all previous planning regulations.

The literature urges us to deal with redistributive practices and the informal relations between land-based interest groups to understand the dynamics of the redevelopment of Turkish cities. Parallel to that, the state’s conflict management strategies in an

era of massive gentrification is another crucial point to understand the policy formation, which in turn leave us with a more centralized state power.

3. Istanbul after 2000

After the 1999 Marmara (Gölcük) earthquake near Istanbul, the issue of “urban risk” entered the urban agenda in Turkey under the title of “earthquake risk”. It was realized that Turkish cities and buildings were not earthquake resistant. Since 1999, new legislations have been prepared and various councils and committees have been established. The Disaster Coordination Centre was established in 2000 and Istanbul Disaster Prevention Reduction Basic Plan was prepared in cooperation with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in 2002 (JICA and IBB, 2002). Based on the data acquired there, scholars from Istanbul Technical University, Middle East Technical University, Bosphorus University and Yıldız Technical University prepared Istanbul Earthquake Master Plan in 2003 (Balamir, 2004). Academic and regulatory efforts dedicated to earthquake preparedness continued until the end of the 2000’s. They neither transform into a long-term plan with public participation, nor were they supported by a legal basis and coordination structure.

Disaster management policies in Turkey were perceived as lagging behind developed countries, characterized by policy deficiencies, institutional shortcomings, coordination problems and lack of legislation (Balamir, 2007). Urban administrations tend to focus merely on building risk and risk prevention is handed over to the market, which in turn reinforces unequal social distribution of risks (Balamir, 2007).

The destructive earthquake, which hit Van in September 2011, became the turning point in terms of disaster risk discourses in Turkey. The historical speech that the then Prime Minister gave, right after the Van earthquake, indicated that necessary arrangements would urgently be put forward in order to improve urban building quality (Hürriyet Gazetesi, 2011). The Prime Minister promised that, in order to prevent such losses from occurring in

² "By-Law of the Law no. 6306, for the Regeneration of Areas under Disaster Risk", published in Official Gazette in 15.12.2012.

³ A web site was established by Ministry of Environment and Urbanisation to give information about Urban Transformation: <http://www.kentseldonusum.gov.tr/>

⁴ Constitutional Court decision number 2012/87, dated February 27, 2012.

every earthquake, they would make all necessary changes in construction and building permit audit processes, even to the extent of risking their political power where the situation required, and that the TOKİ would be given the authority to urgently solve this problem. Indeed, soon after this speech, law No: 6306 was launched, which is generally called the "Disaster Law" or the "Urban Transformation Law". By-laws for implementing the Disaster Law have been prepared soon after it is publicized², and steps have been taken to clarify some of the ambiguities. "The General Directorate of Urban Transformation and Infrastructure" has been established within the Ministry of Environment and Urbanization.

This law drew a significant public reaction. There have been different perceptions and approaches about the law. A considerable effort were spent to swaying the public opinion in favour of the law, through large scale publicity works by the government. The Ministry of Urbanization and TOKİ have emerged as the main authorities managing this campaign³. While this law is received positively by real estate developers and the construction sector; Chambers of City Planners and Architects, as well as some other opposition groups have opposed this law. At the beginning, the law was superior to the other laws about urbanization. However, as a result of the efforts of opposition groups, the items of the law which were against the civil law were deleted pursuant to the decision of the Constitutional Court⁴.

To understand the rationale behind the law, it is important to define the urban relations as well as economic conditions changing after 2000s in Istanbul. The studies about the Istanbul in 2000s, illustrates that large infrastructure investments, privatization of public lands, transformation of squatter settlements, renewal of historic settlements, regeneration of abandoned industrial areas and encouraging all possible real estate developments on available lands constituted the characteristics of urban transformation (Tekeli, 2013; Enlil, 2011; İslam, 2010). Powerful actors such as newly emerging big developers, investors and public

institutions, are changing the characteristics of housing provision. As a result, private-property-centred housing policy is becoming dominant, which in turn leads to the transfer of property into construction sector capital (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010). Istanbul's construction sector capital is primarily developed by the growth-oriented policies of recently emerging conservative-elite coalitions in close relations with state and state institutions (Eraydin ve Taşan-Kok, 2014; Gülhan, 2011). This dynamic, different from the previous patronage relations, gave way to the selective distribution of rent from the higher ranks of state power. Especially with the authorities transferred to TOKİ collaborating with emerging big construction businesses, housing production and provision numbers increased in enormous rates (Gülhan, 2011). The social consequences of this spatial restructuring process along with increasing gentrification were defined as social exclusion and spatial segregation (Keyder, 2005; Eraydin, 2008; İslam, 2010).

Economically speaking, after 2000s the tendency was towards intermediary services and commerce rather than industrial production (Ekzen, 2010); and as a result growth rates were high. The credit expansion of this period allowed project development and construction companies to find the needed funds for construction and redevelopment activities (Keyder, 2010). However, it is indicated that this growth method were not sustainable in the long run because of increasing budget deficit, low rates of women participation into workforce and increasing unemployment rates (Pamuk, 2012). As a result, 2008 global financial crises had considerable impacts on hot money flow and export based Turkish economy, and the state started to take precautions to prevent recession (Ozturk et al., 2013; Aydın, 2013).

In parallel to these developments, in 2011 before the general elections central government have launched various mega projects, which are incompatible with metropolitan level plans; such as the new motorway including third bridge over Bosphorus, the third airport, new city decision and "Kanal

Istanbul”.

We claim that the increase in the construction size after 2011 (see Figure 1) is closely related with the efforts to overcome the recession. In this process, “who will use the ownership rights in which condition” was redefined along with reregulation of capital accumulation strategies and social and political relations. This reregulation process manifested itself through the increase in the powers of central government, authoritarianism, interventionism, conservatism, entrepreneurialism and populist politics; carrying the institutional base of the urban politics into a new dimension (Eraydin & Taşan-Kok, 2014).

Gezi protests started in May 2013 against the shopping mall construction project in Taksim Gezi Park as the peak point of the oppositions against urban redevelopment and the authoritarian policies of the state; and as a result, the state’s approach for urban movements became apparent. Meanwhile, corruption accusations, indicating the informal relations between construction companies and government by the end of 2013 caused the Minister of Environment and Urbanism to resign from his job. Even though there had been considerable increase in anti-development urban movements, construction and redevelopment processes continue in full force.

The role of legal and institutional regulations in facilitating the movement of the construction sector should not be underestimated in reacceler-

ating the growth of the sector and increase the housing provision, which was dropped after the global crises. Environmental Plan and previous regulations were limiting the further growth of the city to the peripheries. The poor building quality of the existing settlement areas and earthquake risk considered as an opportunity for construction companies. However, despite the mushrooming regeneration projects in the city centre, especially dense neighbourhoods surrounding the centre, which were transformed from squatter settlements, were hard to redevelop. The high building density, complex ownership patterns and unresolved plan conditions restricted the mobility of the medium and large-scale contractors in these areas. With this respect, various drafts of laws for facilitating urban redevelopment were prepared and institutional arrangements were developed within municipalities. However, none of them were efficient nor applicable. In addition to that, lack of permanent and comprehensive urban policy regarding earthquake risk even after the 1999 Earthquake, was considered as a great opportunity for the state to make new regulations in the name of “disaster risk” after 2011 Van Earthquake. As a result, Law No: 6306 potentially creates a great arena for real estate sector, by speeding up the legal and bureaucratic procedures, bypassing democratic planning processes, resolving ownership and planning problems and increasing development rights.

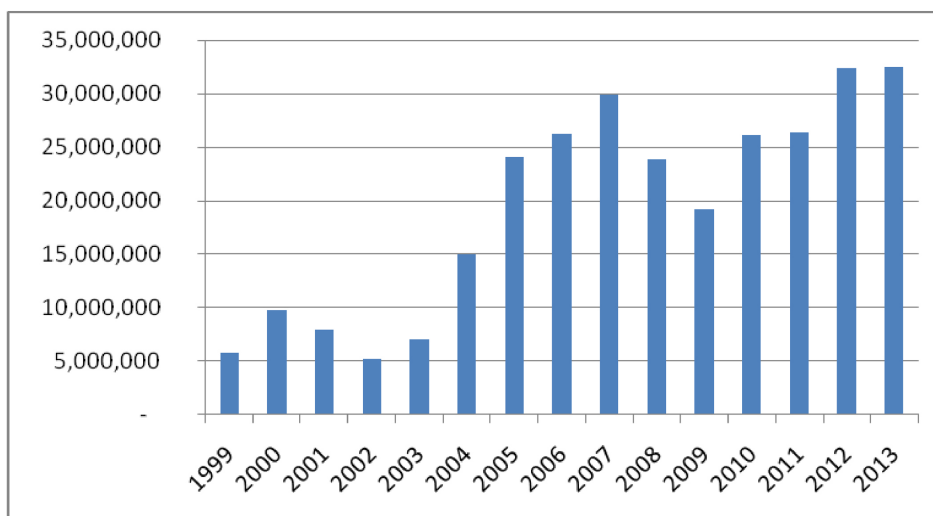


Figure 1. Size (sm) of construction permits given per year in Istanbul.

4. Risky area implications

Before exploring the details about the “risky areas” and “reserve areas”, to define the mechanisms in which “disaster risk discourse” is employed and created, we will define the main characteristics of the law No. 6306 and its possible consequences.

Within the law, three important concepts are defined: Risky Areas, Risky Buildings and Reserve Areas. Risky Areas are supposedly the areas which may cause loss of life and property due to the properties of the ground or the conditions of the buildings. They are decreed by the Council of Ministers upon the request of Ministry of Environment and Urbanism (ÇŞB) or municipalities or provincial special administrations. When the Cabinet of Ministers identifies an area as “risky area”, the buildings in that area will definitely be demolished and redeveloped by the related institution, private sector or TOKİ. On the other hand, “Reserve Areas” are identified by the Cabinet of Ministers, as areas for new developments. And, individual “risky buildings” are the buildings with demolition risk, that should be identified by property owners through consultation of licensed institutions. Planning authority for risky areas are either in ÇŞB or in municipalities that ÇŞB authoriz-

es. There is no clear-cut definition for the determination of both reserve and risky areas. Therefore it is clear that the law gives considerable power to central government to make redevelopment plans and to open new development areas in every possible land without any significant restriction.

The one possible restriction is the negative consent of the landowners. To overcome this issue, for the areas pursuant to law, negotiation with landowners should be maintained. The possibly incentive development rights defined in the plans are one part of the issue, second part is about resolving the landowners who are against the redevelopment. Previous laws were requesting unanimity for decisions of redevelopment or planning. What's new in Law No: 6306 is a new quorum defined as 2/3 of the property owners, about the decisions related to the new allotments, redevelopment project and contractors. The properties of the disagreeing owners will be seized and sold via auctions and if not sold, these will be expropriated and the state treasury, TOKİ or municipality will become a shareholder in the urban transformation process. This is one of the most important innovations of the law in terms of facilitating urban redevelopment, forcing people to accept the de-

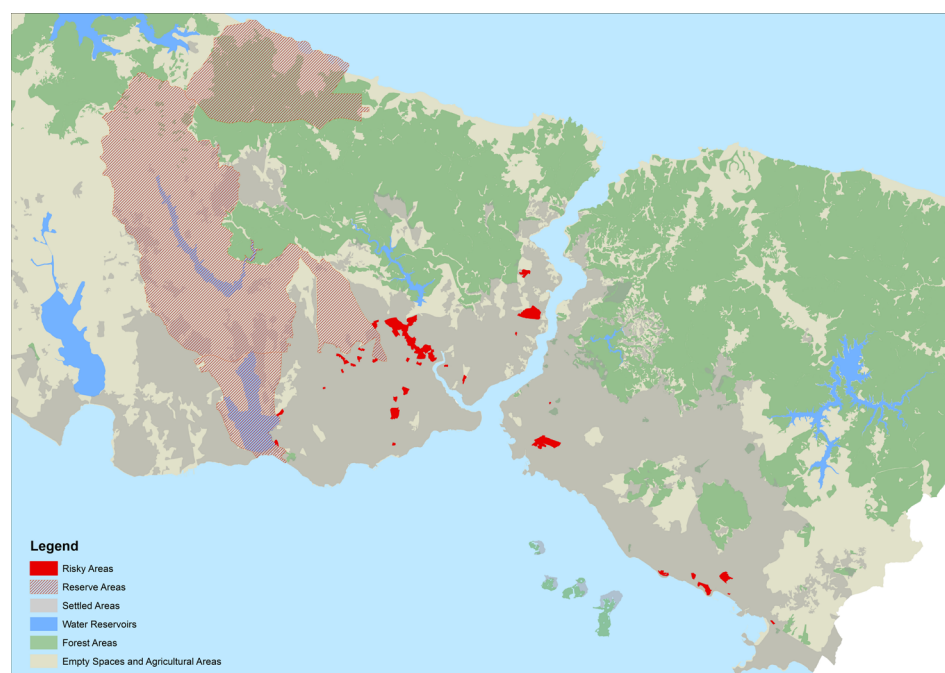


Figure 2. Reserve areas and risky areas pursuant to the Disaster Law (as of November 2014).

cisions of the majority.

Another important dimension of the law is about the aids and tax incentives defined in the associated by-law. In areas pursuant to this law, tools such as rent allowance, tax exemption and interest discount can be utilized for tenants, landowners and developers, which makes redevelopment process more desirable for all the parties involved. Therefore, it is clear that, far from proposing a comprehensive institutional regulation for disaster management, the law is defining the conditions of the workings of construction business.

Locations of the “Reserve Areas” in Istanbul were determined by the decisions of Council of Ministers, published in the official gazette on September 8, 2012. These areas are defined as “reserved for new settlements to be constructed after unpermitted, unauthorized and risky buildings are cleared out, in order to eliminate disaster risk.”⁵ In addition to housing reserve areas, the decision includes the designation of an airport location on the Black Sea coasts of Istanbul and there are speculations that Kanal Istanbul project will pass through. The reserve area is 42,534 hectares in total. Besides reserve areas, 43 areas in 16 districts of Istanbul were designated as risky areas as of November 2014. The

sizes of the risky areas change from 1.7 to 158 hectares, making a total of 1144 hectares.

A geographical study was conducted with the aim to analyse the spatial distribution of the possible consequences of aforementioned process. Figure 3 was produced through superimposing following data on GIS:

- High earthquake risk districts⁶,
- Geologically unfavourable areas and wetlands (river and lake protection borders) (IMP, 2006),
- Designated “reserve areas” and “risky areas”,
- Drinking water basins and forests,
- New highway under construction.

As it may be observable from the map, northern part of Istanbul is composed of forests, water basins and agricultural areas. These constitute the ecological corridors of Istanbul, whose natural diversity and sensitivity was taken into consideration in planning studies⁷. In addition, these natural assets are the sources of clean water and air need for human population of Istanbul. The settled area inhabited by nearly 14 million people has already put pressure on the limits of these ecological entities.

According to the Figure 3, there is no direct relationship between designated “risky areas” and earthquake risky districts defined by Earthquake

⁵ Cabinet of Ministers decision number 12689, dated August 13, 2012 and published on September 8, 2012.

⁶ Istanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, İmar ve Şehircilik Daire Başkanlığı, Şehir Planlama Müdürlüğü (2006), 1/100.000 Ölçekli Çevre Düzeni Planı Raporu [1/100.000 scale Istanbul Environmental Plan Report], p.823.

⁷ 1/100.000 scale Istanbul Environmental Plan Report.

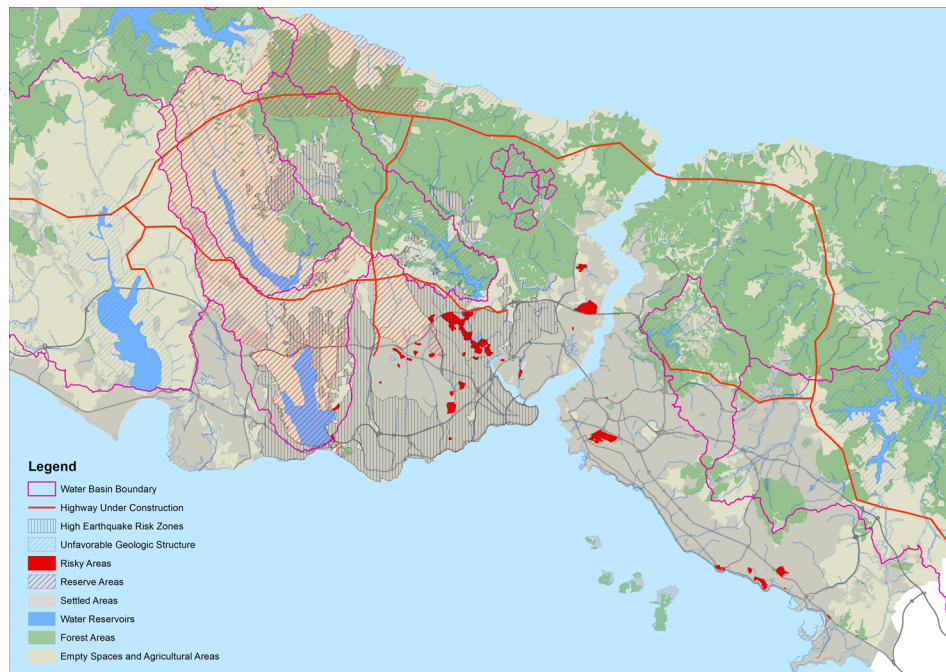


Figure 3. The spatial analysis of disaster risk discourse.

Table 1. The list of risky areas defined pursuant to Law No: 6306 in Istanbul (as of November 2014).

Decision Date	District	Risky Neighborhoods	Area (sm)
01.08.2013	Bağcılar	Çınar- İnönü - Sancaktepe - Yavuzselim - Merkez	220,783
16.04.2013	Bağcılar	Demirkapı	32,271
16.04.2013	Bağcılar	Evren	19,380
16.04.2013	Bağcılar	Göztepe	207,287
16.04.2013	Bağcılar	Kemalpaşa	54,244
22.04.2013	Bayrampaşa	Vatan	227,026
08.07.2013	Beşiktaş	Etiler / Rumelihisarı (Akat)	31,883
22.10.2012	Beyoğlu	İstiklal	92,169
24.09.2012	Beyoğlu	Örnektepe - Söğütözü	30,240
24.09.2012	Esenler	Atışalan Havaalanı	73,186
03.04.2013	Esenler	Çiftelavazlar	82,872
11.03.2013	Esenler	Oruçreis 1	72,559
03.04.2013	Esenler	Oruçreis 2	51,149
24.09.2012	Esenler	Tuna	25,640
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Bağlarbaşı	164,226
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa-Karadeniz-Karayolları	1,582,476
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Kazım Karabekir - Fevzi Çakmak	593,320
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Mevlana	453,699
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Pazariçi Güney	188,023
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Pazariçi Kuzey	166,674
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Sarıgöl-Merkez	58,232
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Yeni Mahalle	109,103
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Yıldıztabya Batı	422,735
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Yıldıztabya Doğu	141,663
24.12.2012	Gaziosmanpaşa	Merkez	49,441
18.11.2013	Gaziosmanpaşa	Sarıgöl- Yenidoğan	332,000
12.11.2013	Gaziosmanpaşa	Bağlarbaşı (2)	55,000
01.04.2013	Güngören	Tozkoparan	577,081
09.05.2013	Kadıköy	Fikirtepe	1,341,759
30.09.2013	Kartal	Yukarı Mahalle	109,071
30.09.2013	Kartal	Kordonboyu	31,109
16.09.2013	Kartal	Yunus	178,237
28.01.2013	Küçükçekmece	Fatih	74,101
28.01.2013	Küçükçekmece	Kanarya	92,251
13.08.2013	Pendik	Batı	543,183
18.09.2013	Pendik	Dumrupınar - Orta	919,059
07.10.2013	Pendik	Kaynarca	52,363
03.01.2013	Sarıyer	Çamlıtepe (Derbent)	281,946
24.12.2012	Sarıyer	Fatih Sultan Mehmet (Armutlu)	1,406,035
28.01.2013	Sultangazi	Cumhuriyet	180,816
19.08.2013	Tuzla	İçmeler	67,831
16.09.2013	Üsküdar	Burhaniye	17,750
24.12.2012	Zeytinburnu	Sümer	38,201

Master Plan. There is no evidence of any other scientific research or public consultation in determining “risky areas” and “reserved areas” either. Given the comprehensive scale of the research in Earthquake Master Plan, we cannot claim that the buildings designated in “risky areas” even in the lower risk zones are prone to earthquake risks; however there is no known research to claim vice versa. To be brief, there is no evidence to demonstrate the relation between earthquake risk and determined risky and reserve areas.

There is no direct relationship between “risky areas” and “reserve areas” either. The designated “reserve areas” include high earthquake risk zones and wetlands that are unfit for development such as forests, drinking water basins, agricultural areas and archaeological sites. Since the “Reserve Areas” partially coincide with earthquake risk zones, these areas also carry earthquake risks and flood risks after development, unless further precautions are taken. Additional precautions in new settlements mean additional costs for construction; therefore, the affordability of earthquake prevention is not addressed by these policies. Transfer method is generally reserved to the post-disaster redevelopment stage, meanwhile displacement and resettlement stages are carried out in alignment with the general growth pattern of the city. However, considering the spatial distribution of the designated Risky and Reserve Areas in Istanbul and the policies regarding these areas, it is not possible to find any relation between these areas and the policies in terms of transfer logic. Moreover, the environmental consequences of this developmental approach are the most heavily criticized outcomes. The process has already started to destroy the forests, water basins and agricultural lands by opening those areas for development and motorway construction.

When we evaluate risky areas and reserve areas from the perspective of urban development patterns, we may see that the decisions of new airport and new settlement areas (reserve areas) and urban transformation areas (risky areas) connected together with new motorway are mutually support-

ive of each other. A new city, half the size of Istanbul's settled areas will be created on the Kayabaşı, Bahçeşehir, Ispartakule axis on the European side, which will be connected to highway and airport. Also there are speculations that the Kanal Project will pass through this reserve area. The land rent speculation has already started in these areas, which is observable in real estate web sites⁸. In addition, when we consider decreasing industrial sector development in parallel with the decreasing population growth rate in Istanbul, there are concerns about over-production of new housing stock. Additionally, the existing pattern of commercial and small production activity in transforming neighbourhoods is going to erode or change without any comprehensive strategy to ensure a balanced land-use allocation. The current site selection tendencies imply that newly created service sector areas can lead to irregular changes in the speed and direction of growth. The foreseen result is that Istanbul will be subject to new developments that are not based on land use planning, where residents' needs are neither addressed by urban planning intentions nor by public participation.

4.1. Social policies

The falling rate of urbanization in Istanbul, and the saturation of the building stock along with increasing capital accumulation have considerable effects on employment opportunities and social welfare in the relatively poor neighbourhoods. The main imperatives behind this new urban poverty, which inevitably may lead to social exclusion, are characterized by permanent unemployment, eradication of the need for artisans and small tradesmen, social integrity issues for newcomers, loose attachment to place of origin, and cultural isolation of recent male migrants (Buğra and Keyder, 2003). Formal and informal employment opportunities in old working class neighbourhoods have been in decline due to the decentralization of industry to the surrounding cities (Buğra and Keyder, 2003). Along with the changing economic structure, the demand for better educated and qualified labour force is

⁸ As an example, see <http://www.sahibinden.com/ilan/emlak-arsa-satilik-deha-dan-dursunkoyde-kanal-Istanbulu-tepeden-goren-yatrmk-arsa-140310558/detay>.

⁹ DİE [State Statistical Institute- former Turkish Statistical Institute] year 2000 population census data on unemployment rates, education levels, participation of women in the workforce and household size, a poverty scale has been created and areas with high unemployment rate, low education level, low participation of women in the workforce and high household size have been identified as high poverty areas.

increasing. This process also transforms the characteristics of informal jobs, from industrial and construction jobs to less paid irregular service jobs (Buğra and Keyder, 2003).

In order to analyse the geographical distribution of poverty in Istanbul, the following data was juxtaposed:

- Poverty ratio by districts (DİE, 2000)⁹,
- Distribution of industrial buildings in 2000 (IMP, 2006),
- Service sector employment rates by districts (DİE, 2000),
- Higher education rate by districts (DİE, 2000).

According to the results displayed in Figure 4, high poverty areas are distributed in both eastern and western sides of the Bosphorus. Inner zones, away from the coastal areas, which have been developed in parallel with the development of industry, demonstrate similar characteristics. Especially in the western side, labour force is dependent on industrial establishments, which are scattered through the neighbourhoods. In areas of average and low poverty, service sector employment rate is observed to be high. According to 2000 data, historical centres were the other poverty zones, inhabited mainly by people working in informal sector and service jobs. The western part of the city demonstrates the character-

istics of middle class housing estates benefiting from advantages offered by their proximity to motorway connections and large industrial zones. Industrial buildings are scattered through poverty districts and other peripheral locations.

Since 2000s, industrial establishments located in central and coastal areas have been observed to transform into sites for mixed-use real estate projects. Also the industrial facilities scattered through high-density residential districts are also transforming in parallel with large industrial facilities. This process leads to transformation small enterprise capital into small or medium sized real estate capital or the transfer of the facilities to peripheries. This process will increase the idle workforce in neighbourhoods where unemployment problems prevail. Especially the low higher-education level in these neighbourhoods is an indication that these areas will not be able to fulfil the employment needs of the newly emerging sectors.

The residents living in risky areas are aware of the situation that, the risky area decision has nothing to do with disaster risk but about rent opportunities. Even though rent increase for the residents is not the case for all risky areas, the growth of construction sector and perceived gains, raise the expectations

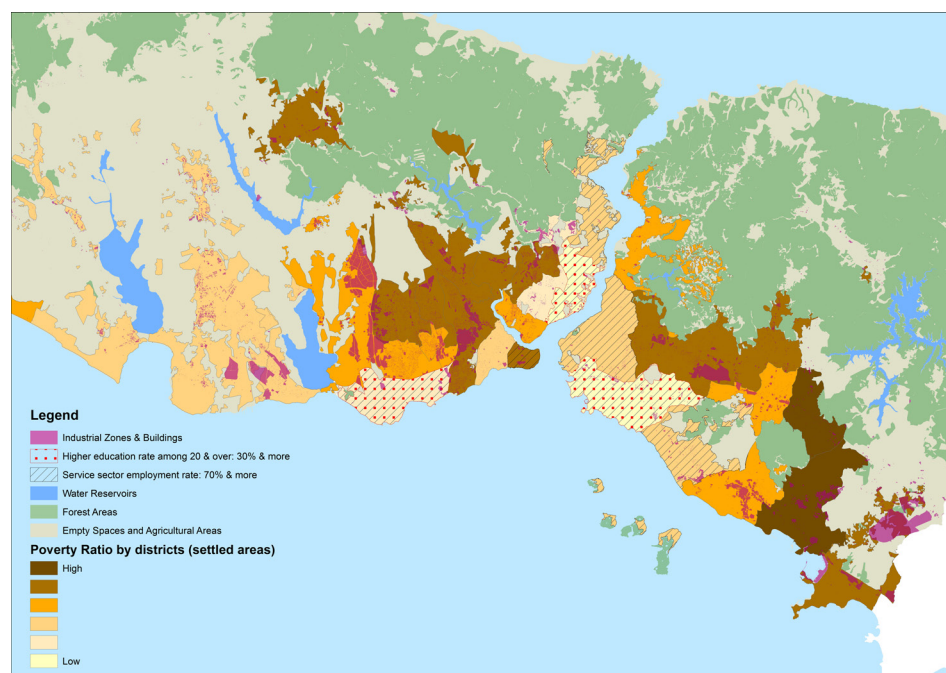


Figure 4. Geographical analysis of social risks in Istanbul (2000).

of the residents in some neighbourhoods. Considering the individualization and commercialization of risks, it seems meaningful to observe the rent expectations in these neighbourhoods. It needs further exploration to present reliable evidence to claim that rent expectations are considered as social security and accumulation tool for the people living in risky areas. However, it won't be speculative to argue that residents are re-evaluating their expectations from urban redevelopment areas.

In a striking case, in 2011, a municipality led urban transformation project, which was claimed to be earthquake-oriented, was launched in Fikirtepe Neighbourhood (İBB, 2011). Fikirtepe Project aims to double the development rights, in an area that is already densely populated and suffering from infrastructural problems and poverty. The idea was to merge the existing properties into larger development parcels to make them more feasible for transformation by market forces. This approach created great enthusiasm among land developers and property owners. Many companies prepared projects to redevelop and they have been able to reach agreements with the majority of the property owners. According to the press coverage, the public has the conception that "Fikirtepe residents hit the jackpot" (Milliyet Emlak Gazetesi, 2011). Despite several authority transfers and changes in the project, the transformation process has started, and people started to get evicted from the project area. The director of Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Urban Transformation Directorate admitted that mistakes have been made in the Fikirtepe case, but he believes that this process constitutes a positive example in terms of the social acceptance of the concept of "urban transformation"¹⁰. Fikirtepe neighborhood is designated as risky area for the utilization of the benefits of the Law No: 6306. And the process was accelerated since then.

The problem with the redistribution of this benefits is, it is based on party politics and used selectively by local and central administrations. This process calls forth a new form of patronage relations. 12 of the 16 district municipi-

palities involving risky areas are from the same party as the ruling party. The authority for planning and implementation in the 27 of the 34 project areas in 12 districts rest with district municipalities, for the other 7 is district municipalities are working in collaboration with TOKİ or ÇŞB. In the other 7 project areas in 4 districts which are ruled by Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi (Republican People's Party), district municipalities are not authorized except for 2 areas in Kartal. The increase in development rights in these areas depends on district municipalities' or ÇŞB, which means it can be easily manipulated in accordance with the deals between parties involved in implementing the projects.

4.2. Organising land-based interest groups

As it was foreseen by Buğra (1998), in 2000s informal relations of the private actors with public bodies in housing provision is consolidated and they are becoming legitimate. In the risky areas different public private partnerships are emerging.

As a striking case in one of the districts, the municipality has established a company to undertake the implementation of risky areas. The company has invited the large construction companies to engage in the redevelopment of the neighbourhoods. Some of the construction companies reached a deal with municipalities over the lands of hundreds of landowners in exchange of in advance payments to the company of the municipality¹¹. Leaning on their own risk, now they are waiting for the municipality to complete the planning studies, project designs and negotiation processes.

In one of the risky areas, a private company was developing their own urban redevelopment project in a neighbourhood with regard to previous urban development laws. They were almost completing negotiation and planning processes with related institutions, before the Council of Ministers decided to designate the area as Risky. Now the position and involvement of the company is ambiguous, as the authority of the implementation is transferred to the district municipality.

¹⁰ İdris Atabay (General Director of Urban Transformation, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality), Disaster Law: A New Period in Real Estate?" Panel presentations, Arkiparc "Future of Real Estate, Real Estate of the Future" meetings, September 6, 2012.

¹¹ As an example, see: <http://www.ihlas.com.tr/>.

In another case, which was part of a larger urban regeneration project, a construction company had started to negotiate with the landowners and sign a protocol with them to make the redevelopment together. The regeneration process was progressing slower than the expectations of real estate sector, and this construction company was demanding more development rights. They tried to force Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality to change the plans in that specific neighbourhood, but they did not succeed. After the Law No: 6306 took effect, the area was designated as Risky Area by ÇŞB to enable desired plan conditions to come into force and speed up the procedures. It is important to acknowledge that the owner of this construction company is a member of local city council from the ruling party in another district.

The projects which started earlier by TOKİ or TOKİ cooperation with district municipalities, were transferred under this law to benefit from the advantages of the law. It is observed that, TOKİ partnerships are giving way to the partnerships between local municipalities of ruling party and construction companies. However, the character of these partnerships are defined by the higher ranks of the government authorities.

In addition to that, planning and project development companies involved in these processes worth considering. 10 of the 41 project areas are designed by the same design office.

As a result, district municipalities governed by ruling party are cooperating with the construction and project development companies in various ways to handle urban redevelopment projects in Risky Areas under the supervision of the actors in central government. This organization style is getting mainstream, limiting the other possibilities. The law is not only facilitating this cooperation, but also legitimizing it.

4.3. Conflict management strategies

Increasing rent expectations in the redevelopment areas started to change the form of the organizations in the neighbourhoods. New neighbourhood associations are formed to deal with

ownership issues during redevelopment processes.

In one of the Risky Areas in Kartal district, there used to be a neighbourhood association, which was formed to oppose the regeneration plans. However, in time construction companies started to visit the neighbourhood because of the increasing land values. They have changed their opinions and change the name of the association, and transform into a platform to protect their ownership rights as well as to follow up the deals of landowners with the construction companies. The neighbourhood designated as Risky Area, and then the people in the platform started to get nervous about their administration, following the claims of secret deals between them and the construction company. Therefore, recently they established a new association to protect the interests of the landowners. There are similar organizations in the Risky Areas, where the landowners are not against redevelopment but demand initial information, participation and their property rights to be preserved.

In Fikirtepe, an association was formed to pursue the deals with construction companies too. There is a representative of each urban block in the association and the contractors communicate with the landowners through the association.

In some of the districts governed by ruling party, the public opposition against the redevelopment is so few that the demolishing of the buildings and construction of the new buildings was realised by public ceremony.

However, there are neighbourhood in which strong opposition against redevelopment still prevails. In these neighbourhoods, the residents are historically engaged in opposition groups and parties. In two of the neighbourhoods, the landowners organized to file a lawsuit against the Risky area decision and they succeed in their case in first degree courts. However, the cases are now in constitutional court and the related authorized institutions are determined to continue with the project. As a result, some of the municipalities open information offices about urban redevelopment, employing sociologists and urban planners. And also some

of the municipalities started to launch web sites to give brief information about the redevelopment areas.

Increasing development rights all over the city, where social policies are insufficient serves at least ideologically as an example for possible individual interests. The landowners want to protect their rights to take advantage of the increasing development rights, but both 2/3 rule and the power of construction based organization creates unrest among them. Even though further research is a necessity to understand the whole picture about urban movements in Risky Areas, it is possible to claim that, in general there is a tendency towards two new kinds of organisation models in neighbourhoods related with urban redevelopment. One of them concentrates on protecting ownership rights and demand participation and briefing leaning on the legal system. Second type, opens channels to relate with the effective actors in construction business and parties to make most of the redevelopment.

4.4. Centralisation of political power

The whole process functioning under the Law No: 6306 is transferring the power about urban planning and implementation to the central government. Power to decide which area will be subject to regeneration, power to make plans, power to decide which construction company will be enrolled are all in the hands of the actors in the central government. Moreover, the law gives the opportunity to the central government to decide which neighbourhood will benefit from the redevelopment and which will suffer from it. This process calls forth a new informal and formal hierarchical relation of interest where the power in the higher ranks is increasing more and more.

5. Conclusion

"Disaster risk discourse" legitimizes and accelerates the neoliberal urban transformation process peculiar to Turkey, which is actually lead by economic and political strategies. It is obvious that this approach based on urban redevelopment, will further increase social-spatial inequalities and cause irreparable ecological damage

by leading to unbalanced land-use allocation, environmentally insensitive urban development; and disregarded social-welfare and democratic rights. The law No: 6306 serve as a versatile tool shaping new urban redevelopment policy focusing on ideological, political and economical interests. The law and its implementations show that it is far from avoiding earthquake risk, rather it reproduces a new geography of environmental and social risks.

This study illustrated that to understand how risk discourse works in actual relations and how it is reproduced; it is crucial to understand the institutional dynamics focusing on social and redistribution policies, organisation rules, conflict management strategies and power dynamics in relation with the "Law no. 6306, for the Regeneration of Areas under Disaster Risk". Redistribution policies have always been related to redevelopment practices in Turkey, the study showed that the law facilitates local municipalities to redistribute benefits through the supervision of central power. And this process calls forth a new form of patronage relations which should be studied further. The partnership model, which is becoming mainstream, is the cooperation between district municipalities (mostly governed by ruling party) and construction companies under the control of central government. The law helps the state to manage the opposition of landowners by offering a combination of benefits and punishment. Therefore, new types of neighbourhood organizations are developing based on ownership rights; some of which focus on protection and others participating for making most of it. All these processes facilitate the consolidation of existing hierarchical relations and centralisation of power. To sum up, the law No: 6306 is a flexible tool for the state to control redevelopment business by enabling selective implementation of deregulation in return for monetary, ideological and political interests.

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İstanbul'da kentsel mekanın yeniden üretiminde afet riski söyleminin kurumsallaşması

2000'li yılların başlarından itibaren hızlı kentsel yeniden geliştirmeyi kolaylaştıracak şekilde yasal ve kurumsal düzenlemelerde köklü değişimler gerçekleşmiştir. AKP iktidarı dönemine tekabül eden bu yıllarda birbirinden farklı yaklaşımlar, yasalar ve kurumlar geçerli olmuştur. Ancak bu makalenin yazıldığı dönem itibariyle kentsel yeniden geliştirme ile ilgili stratejilerin birbirine yakınlığı ve "afet riski" söylemi etrafında şekillendiği görülmektedir. Sonuç olarak, "6306 sayılı Afet Riski Altındaki Alanların Dönüştürülmesi Hakkında Kanun" Türkiye'de kentsel arsanın yeniden geliştirilmesinde temel ve belirleyici araçlardan biri olarak ortaya çıkmaktadır.

Bu çalışma, söz konusu "afet riski söylemi"nin kentsel mekânın yeniden üretiminde nasıl birincil araç olduğunu açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma "İstanbul'da kentsel mekânının yeniden üretim dinamikleri" konulu doktora tezinin bağlam bölümünü

oluşturmaktadır¹².

İlk bakışta, bu söylemin neoliberal kentsel yeniden yapılanma sürecinde devam eden kentsel yeniden geliştirme telaşını meşrulaştırmak üzere ideolojik bir araç olarak geliştirildiği görülmektedir. Ancak, temelde yatan küresel ekonomik ve siyasi güçlerin tanımlanması kentsel politikaların oluşum mekanizmalarını anlamak için yeterli değildir. Bu çalışmada, Türkiye'de 2010 yılından sonra gelişen ve neoliberal kentsel dönüşümü tanımlayan "afet riski söylemi"nin devletin ideolojik, siyasi ve ekonomik çıkarlarına hizmet eden çok amaçlı bir araç olduğu iddia edilmektedir. Bu çıkarlar ise, yeniden dağıtım mekanizmaları ve sosyal politikalar, kentsel arazi ile ilgilenen çıkar gruplarının örgütlenmesi, uygulanan kentsel stratejilerin oluşturduğu kentsel muhalefetin kontrol edilmesi ve iktidarın merkezileşmesi olarak tespit edilmiştir.

Türkiye'nin küresel ekonomik yapıya entegrasyon sürecinin 2001'de gerçekleşen yapısal dönüşümlerle birlikte ekonomi büyük oranda finansallaşmış,

¹² İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, Fen Bilimleri Enstitüsü, Şehir ve Bölge Planlama Anabilim Dalı, 2012'de başlayan, devam eden tez çalışması.

üretimden ticaret ve aracılık hizmetlerine doğru bir yönelim gerçekleşmiştir. Bu dönemde her ne kadar ekonomik büyüme oranları yüksek görünse de, sürdürülebilir olmayan, ihracata ve sıcak para girişine dayanan bu büyüme 2008 küresel finansal krizinden oldukça etkilenmiştir. Devletin bu krizin etkilerini azaltmaya ve ekonomik gerilemeyi engellemeye yönelik bir dizi önlemler aldığı bilinmektedir. Küresel krize bağlı olarak düşen konut satışlarının yükselmesi ve inşaat sektörünün yeniden ivme kazanmasında, sektörün hareketini kolaylaştırmaya yönelik yasal ve yönetsel düzenlemelerin işlevi azımsanmayacak derecede önemlidir. Mevcut yapılaşmış alanların genel yapı kalitesinin düşük olması dönüşüm açısından inşaat firmaları için bir fırsat olarak görülmüştür. Ancak, dönüşüm merkezi alanlarda hız kazanmışsa da, özellikle merkezi bölgenin hemen çevresindeki eski gecekonduların dönüşümü ile oluşmuş olan yoğun apartman dokusu mahallelerin yeniden geliştirilmesinde zorluklar yaşanmaktadır. Yapı yoğunluğun yüksek olması, kullanıcı ve mülk sahibi sayısının fazla olması ve çözülemeyen imar durumları bu bölgelerde hem orta hem de büyük ölçekli müteahhitlerin hareketini zorlaştırmıştır. Bu açıdan, 6306 sayılı yasa ile gayrimenkul sektörünün beklentilerini karşılayacak şekilde, yasal süreçleri hızlandırma, demokratik planlama süreçlerini baypas etme, mülkiyet ve imar sorunlarını çözme, yapılaşma yoğunluğunu arttırma gibi konularda kolaylık sağlanması öngörülmüştür.

Bu tür bir yasanın kamu tarafından kabul edilmesinde afet riskine karşı depreme karşı güvensiz yapıların yıkılıp yeniden yapılmasının gerekliliğine dair vurgunun önemli düzeyde işlevsel olduğu görülmektedir. Nitekim tam da kriz etkilerinin gayrimenkul sektöründe gerilemeye yol açtığı dönemde Vanda gerçekleşen ve büyük kayıplara yol açan deprem, iktidar açısından önemli düzeyde avantaja dönüştürülmüştür. Dönemin Başbakanı tarafından depremdeki yıkımları engellemeye yönelik olarak kısa zamanda TOKİ'nin yüksek düzeyde yetkili kılınacağı ve güvensiz yapıların en kısa zamanda yenilenmesinin yolunun açılacağı dile getirilmiştir. Daha sonra 6306 sayılı

yasa çıkarılmış ve Çevre ve Şehircilik Bakanlığı depreme karşı acil güvenlik maksadıyla yeniden geliştirmeyi kolaylaştıracak ve yeni alanları imara açacak önemli yetkilerle donatılmıştır. Bu yeni araçlar 1999 depreminden sonra ortaya çıkan depreme karşı güvenlik anlayışından oldukça farklı, depreme karşı hazırlıklı olma konusunda geliştirilmekte olan güncel bütüncül yaklaşımlardan oldukça uzakta, yalnızca yapıların dönüşümüne odaklı fakat plansız ve çevresel ve sosyal olumsuzluklar üreten bir gelişmeyi öngörmektedir. 6306 sayılı yasa kapsamında geliştirilen araçların nasıl uygulandığı ve ne tür bir kurumsal yapılanma oluşturduğu araştırmanın ana sorusunu oluşturmaktadır.

Çalışma kapsamında "6306 sayılı Afet Riski Altındaki Alanların Dönüştürülmesi Hakkında Kanun"un İstanbul'daki uygulamaları; yeniden dağıtım mekanizmaları ve sosyal politikalar, arazi üzerindeki çıkar örgütlenmeleri, muhalefeti yönetme stratejileri ve iktidarın merkezileşmesi başlıkları altında incelenmiştir.

Yeniden dağıtım mekanizmaları Türkiye'de daima kentsel gelişim ve dönüşüm uygulamaları ile iç içe olmuştur. Gelişen gayrimenkul sektörü mülk sahiplerinin kazanç beklentilerini yükseltmiştir. Bu kazanç beklentisi, emek gücünün sanayisizleşmenin etkisiyle yeni sektörel dönüşüme uyum sağlayamaması, işsizliğin artması, sosyal refah politikalarının giderek özelleştirilmesi ile birlikte değerlendirildiğinde anlamlı görünmektedir. Yasa kapsamında belirlenen Riskli Alanlar incelendiğinde, bu dönemde söz konusu patronaj ilişkilerinin merkezi hükümetin denetiminde ve kontrolünde, yerel belediyelerin işbirliği ile gerçekleştirildiği tespit edilmiştir.

Neoliberal kentsel yeniden yapılanmanın ana unsurlarından biri olan kamu-özel işbirlikleri ise Riskli Alanlarda çeşitlilik göstermektedir. TOKİ ve İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi'nin yetkileri giderek azalmaktayken, işbirliklerinin iktidar partisinin denetiminde, aynı partiye mensup ilçe belediyeleri ile yakın ilişkide bulunan inşaat şirketleri arasında gerçekleştiği tespit edilmiştir.

Bu dinamiklere paralel olarak, yasa

ve beraberindeki kurumsal düzenlemeler, kentsel muhalefeti yönetmek açısından araçlar ortaya koymaktadır. Mülk sahipleri, yaşadıkları yerdeki çoğunluğun belirlediği yöntemle uyumsuz davrandıkları durumda haklarını önemli ölçüde kaybetme riskiyle karşı karşıya kalmaktadır. Dolayısıyla mahallelerde özel mülkiyet hakkı tabanında gelişen yeni örgütlenme biçimleri oluşmaktadır. Bu örgütlenmelerin bir kısmı yasal yollarla haklarını korumaya odaklanırken, bir kısmı da inşaat

sektörüyle girişilen işbirliklerinde aktif rol alarak kazançlarını yükseltmeyi hedeflemektedir.

Bütün bu süreçler mevcut resmi ve gayri resmi ilişkilerle kurulmuş hiyerarşik yapının sağlamlaşmasını ve iktidarın daha fazla merkezde toplanmasını gündeme getirmektedir. Özetle, 6306 sayılı yasanın, devletin, mali, ideolojik ve siyasi çıkarlar karşılığında gayrimenkul sektörünün hareketini kolaylaştırmak için kullandığı esnek bir araç olduğu tespit edilmiştir.