

**Commodifying Urban Space:  
The Case of Branded Housing Projects in Istanbul, Turkey**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Since the 1970s, cities have become core areas for neoliberal restructuring strategies, policies and processes (Peck et al., 2009). Brenner et al. (2010) stress that different neoliberalization practices share the ambition “to intensify commodification in all realms of social life” (Aalbers 2013, 1054). In addition, prominent critical scholars including Lefebvre, Harvey and Castells agree upon the fact that “capitalist cities are not only arenas in which commodification occurs; they are themselves intensively commodified” (Brenner, Marcuse, and Mayer 2009, 178).

The research argues that commodification of urban space is deepening under neoliberal urbanisation by expanding the commodity realm into spatial practice (Lefebvre, 1990), and by producing simultaneously its enabling mechanisms. It grounds this argument by investigating commodification through the critical case study of branded housing projects developed in Istanbul, Turkey.

Housing enclaves have been expanding globally as part of neoliberal urbanisation and, as a particular version of contemporary housing enclaves, branded housing projects have been developed in Turkey since the early 2000s, following the intensification of neoliberal restructuring processes. Branded housing projects are housing enclaves produced under certain brands and provide key urban services within the confines of the projects. Housing enclaves and branded housing projects, in particular, present a representative case for various dynamics of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation.

The research undertakes this critical case study by analysing spatial practice of branded housing projects, to investigate deepening of commodification of urban space, together with analysing discursive formation and development processes of this phenomenon to investigate enabling mechanisms for this commodification. As a result, the research proposes the concept of hyper-commodification of urban space to explain multi-layered deepening of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation as its main contribution. The research also contributes to methodology by proposing a mixed method strategy bringing critical discourse analysis from communication studies and spatial analysis from urban studies together.

## DEDICATION

*To my beloved family*

*whereas there was nothing to be afraid of  
everything was nylon, that was all –T.Uyar*

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**\*\*TO BE INSERTED \*\***

**DECLARATION STATEMENT**

*Declaration statement* – Research Thesis Submission Form

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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

“Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography. That struggle is complex and interesting because it is not only about soldiers and cannons but also about ideas, about forms, about images and imaginings.” (Said, 1994, p. 6)

As Edward Said (1994, p. 6) points out, the struggle over geography is complex and multilayered. While on one hand, geography, and in particular urban space, is a product of tangible practice of political society, on the other hand, it is a product of subtle ideas and images. These dynamics of production of space do not act in isolation, but as Lefebvre (2009) argues by proposing the triad of production of space, they are in dialectical relationships. Therefore, investigation of any urban phenomenon requires a multifaceted approach including varying dimensions (e.g. political society, civil society, spatial practice).

Neoliberal urbanisation has become hegemonic in the production of urban space, and contemporary cities have become core areas for neoliberal restructuring strategies, policies and processes (Peck et al., 2009). As Harvey (2007, p. 3) states, neoliberalism has become “hegemonic as a mode of discourse” and has “pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world” (Harvey 2007, p. 3). Brenner et al. (2010) stress that different neoliberalization practices share the ambition “to intensify commodification in all realms of social life” (Aalbers, 2013, p. 1054). In other words, despite many differences in terms of their path dependent structures, scales, or institutional frameworks in actually existing neoliberalism(s); they share the aim of intensifying and expanding the realm of commodification. In addition, prominent critical scholars including Lefebvre, Harvey and Castells agree upon the fact that cities are “major basing points for the production, circulation and consumption of commodities” (Brenner et al., 2009, p. 178), and “capitalist cities are not only arenas in which commodification occurs; they are themselves intensively commodified” (Brenner et al., 2009, p. 178).

## 1.1) Research Aim

This research aims to investigate commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation, and argues that under neoliberal urbanisation commodification of urban space is *deepening by expanding the commodity realm into urban experience while producing its enabling mechanisms*. The research grounds this argument through the case of branded housing projects developed in Istanbul, and proposes the concept of *hyper-commodification of urban space* for commodification practices of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation.

Aligning with global neoliberal restructuring, cities in Turkey have been experiencing urban transformation processes intensely since the early 2000s. Kuyucu and Uysal (2010) argue that the 2001 economic crisis in Turkey was the breaking point for establishing a “fully neo-liberal system” (p. 1484). Through this restructuring, cities in Turkey have been facing a construction boom (Balaban 2012). Balaban (2012) defines this construction boom as the increase in the volume of construction activity in Turkey in terms of increase of the construction sector’s share in GDP, rising share of construction sector in employment, and financial and capital investments in construction by showing the unprecedented rises in these three areas between the years 2001-2007. In addition, according to the Statistics Institute of Turkey (TUIK) Building Permits Report 2013, the total area of buildings given building permits in the year 2012 was five times higher than in 2002, which shows continuity of this expansion in construction until 2013. In this period of urbanisation in Turkey, commodification of urban space is at the highest point of its history, along with privatisation and changes in housing production processes and in supply of social services. Şengül (2013) relates the contemporary conditions of urbanisation in Turkey with commodification of urban space and authoritarianism.

In this period, new laws and regulations were enacted to foster restructuring of urban areas. Balaban (2012) finds out that 78 laws and 10 by-laws which are totally or partially related to these issues were enacted between the years of 2002-2007 in Turkey. In addition, new actors and partnerships (public-private) were founded (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010). As a result, the governance of real estate markets has been radically restructured by the adoption of new law, regulations and legislative framework (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010, p. 1484).



According to Balaban (2012, p. 26), the public sector “enthusiastically contributed to the development of construction boom between 2002 and 2007 in Turkey”. In the post-2001 period, two public institutions play a core role in these state-involved practices in urban development: The Housing Development Administration of Turkey (TOKI) and Real Estate Housing Real Estate Investment Trust (Emlak Konut GYO). Firstly, TOKI is a state mass housing administration which was empowered and transformed into a state development agency as a part of neoliberal restructuring. By this transformation, TOKI has now accumulated authority varying from plan-making to giving building permits. TOKI was transformed from a public body aiming to provide affordable housing for the masses to a state developer acting in the housing market. Secondly, Emlak Konut GYO is a public company and TOKI enterprise, which develops for-profit-projects for upper-middle income groups sold in the housing market. The research focuses on the branded housing projects developed by this institution in partnership with private developers.

Branded housing projects have been developed in Turkey as a version of housing enclaves since the early 2000s, following the intensification of neoliberal restructuring processes. ‘Branded housing projects’ are housing enclaves produced under certain brands and sold together with the access rights to key urban services in Istanbul, Turkey. These projects have been produced as commodities for the market by construction companies or public-private partnerships under particular brands. In daily language and media coverage, the term ‘branded housing projects’ is used to define housing enclaves which provide various amenities (e.g. social facilities, open green spaces, private management) within the confines of the projects exclusively for the project residents. The projects can be considered as spatial products of the processes of the construction boom, new privatised forms of service provision, the focus of new actors and partnerships which have emerged in neoliberal urbanism, and as stages for a new highly mediated daily life under private management and surveillance.

The case of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey (and therefore in Istanbul) presents an illuminating example for investigating the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation, with its pace and the role of the state in this restructuring in Turkey.

## **1.2) Research Objectives and Questions**

The research has two main objectives, which are as follows: (1) **to investigate the main dimensions of the contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation** and (2) **to investigate enabling mechanisms of contemporary commodification of urban space**, both through the case of branded housing projects in Turkey. For the first objective, the research focuses on the relationship between commodification of urban space and the spatial practice experienced in branded housing projects. For the second objective, the research focuses on the development processes of branded housing projects (actors, partnerships, related laws and regulations) in order to explore the relationship between the emergence of branded housing and neoliberal restructuring in Turkey and the discursive formation of branded housing projects as a part of consent-building for commodification of urban space. Table 1.1 shows the main research objectives and questions.

## **1.3) Research Methods**

This research investigates commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation from a critical perspective and aims to question the dynamics behind this phenomenon rather than accepting the contemporary mainstream practice. The research follows a critical realist approach which “accepts neither a constructionist nor an objectivist ontology and instead takes the view that the ‘social world is reproduced and transformed in daily life’ (Bhaskar, 1989, p. 4)” (Bryman, 2012, p. 616), while proposing a theoretical framework merging Gramscian theory of hegemony with Lefebvrian production of space.

The research realises this investigation by undertaking a critical case study method, in which research proposes a theory and grounds it through a case study (Bryman, 2012, p. 70). It reviews related literature that argues that with neoliberal urbanisation contemporary commodification of urban space is deepening; and grounds this proposition with the case study of branded housing projects in Istanbul, Turkey. While grounding this argument, the research investigates the dynamics of contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation through a multi-layer analysis of branded housing projects.

<b>Research Objective 1</b>	<b>To investigate the dimensions of contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation</b> (the relationship between commodification of urban space and the spatial practice under neoliberal urbanisation)	<b>Chapters</b>
Research Question 1.1	What are the key features of contemporary commodification of urban space?	Chapter 2 Chapter 3
Research Question 1.2	What are the key spatial characteristics of branded housing projects?	Chapter 7
Research Question 1.3	What are the relationships of these key spatial characteristics with commodification of urban space?	Chapter 7
Research Question 1.4	What are the key urban experiences branded housing projects provide in their confines?	Chapter 7
Research Question 1.5	What are the relationships of these key urban experiences with commodification of urban space?	Chapter 7
<b>Research Objective 2</b>	<b>To investigate enabling mechanisms of contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation</b> (dynamics of production of representations of space and representational space in relation with production of social consent for commodification of urban space)	<b>Chapters</b>
Research Question 2.1	What are the key mechanisms which foster contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation (in Turkey and beyond)?	Chapter 2 Chapter 3 Chapter 5
Research Question 2.2	What are the new rules, regulations, laws, and legislations fostering contemporary commodification of urban space, implemented since 2000s in Turkey?	Chapter 5 Chapter 6
Research Question 2.3	What are the key development processes/models, partnerships, actors of branded housing projects?	Chapter 6
Research Question 2.4	What are the relationships of the key development processes/models, partnerships, actors of branded housing projects with commodification of urban space?	Chapter 6
Research Question 2.5	What are the dynamics of social consent production for the branded housing projects?	Chapter 8
Research Question 2.6	What are the relationships of the dynamics of social consent productions with commodification of urban space?	Chapter 8

**Table 1.1 Research Objectives and Questions**

Selecting an appropriate research strategy is an important aspect for a successful research design. Bryman (2012) defines three research strategies as qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. In order to investigate the aforementioned multifaceted phenomenon, the research applied a mixed-method strategy through qualitative and quantitative analyses of development processes, discursive formation and spatial practice of the branded housing projects. The research adopted this mixed method strategy in aiming for *completeness*, given “that a more complete answer to a research question or set of research questions can be achieved by including both

quantitative and qualitative methods” (Bryman, 2012, p. 637). Chapter 4 elaborates on the research methodology further.

#### **1.4) Structure of the Thesis**

This chapter, Chapter 1, introduces the research topic, research aim, objectives and questions. It also introduces the research methods applied in this research and concludes by presenting the structure of this thesis.

Chapter 2 critically reviews related literature including neoliberalization and neoliberal urbanisation, commodity and commodification, the production of space and the commodification of urban space, housing enclaves and their global increase, and branded spatial developments.

Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework produced to investigate the contemporary commodification of urban space through branded housing projects in light of the review of the existing literature. The theoretical framework discusses commodification (via Marx (2000), and Harvey (1985, 2005, 2007)), the production of urban space (see Lefebvre (1992)) and hegemony (Gramsci, 2000), and proposes an operational framework for the analysis. The research proposes this framework as a theoretical opening for investigating the dynamics of production of urban space, based on Kipfer’s (2002) argument on merging Lefebvrian production of space and Gramscian theory of hegemony.

Chapter 4 presents the methodology of the thesis. The thesis undertook a critical case study as method and applied a mixed method strategy for analysing the case. Chapter 4 explains the data collection and analysis methods applied in this research while reviewing the fieldwork in detail.

Chapter 5 introduces the case of branded housing projects in Istanbul while presenting the context of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey. The chapter starts with a brief overview of the development of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey in the 1980s and the 1990s and reviews housing production in Turkey. The chapter concludes with an introduction of the phenomenon of branded housing projects.

Chapter 6 presents an analysis of the development processes of branded housing projects. The chapter starts with a discussion of the deepening of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey in the post-2001 period, and then focuses on the restructuring of public institutions (TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO) as state developers in this period. The chapter elaborates on the development model which TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO applies to develop profit-oriented projects and concludes with a detailed discussion of the development processes of the four selected case projects.

Chapter 7 presents the analysis of spatial practice in branded housing projects. The chapter firstly presents the spatial patterns and responsive environments analysis of the selected four projects. Secondly, the chapter discusses the use of space and spatial experience in branded housing projects according to the resident interviews.

Chapter 8 discusses the analysis of discursive formation of the phenomenon of branded housing projects. Firstly, the chapter starts this discussion by presenting the analysis of news articles by adopting Kumar's dominance-resistance model and multi-modal discourse analysis. Secondly, the chapter continues with the multi-modal discourse analysis of print advertisements and the project catalogues. Thirdly, the chapter discusses the representational space in relation to the branded housing projects through the project resident interviews. The chapter concludes with a discussion of discursive formation and representations of space and appropriation of representational space, together with social consent production.

Chapter 9, the concluding chapter, discusses the results of the three-fold analysis in relation to each other, while proposing a concept for contemporary commodification of urban space as the 'hyper-commodification' of urban space. The chapter presents critical reflective discussion of key issues from each chapter, a summary of the important points, the limitations of the research, the main contributions of this research to the literature, and further research topics which have emerged and connect with this research.

## **CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter critically reviews the literatures on neoliberalization and neoliberal urbanisation, commodity and commodification, the production of space together with the commodification of space, housing enclaves and branded spatial development. It also aims to place the case of branded housing projects in a global context while identifying the gaps that the research addresses. The key aim of this chapter is to present the existing theories and approaches in relation with the research and produce a theoretical base for the theoretical framework of this research. Therefore, while Chapter 2 covers the reviewed literature related to commodification of urban space under neoliberalization, Chapter 3 focuses on a more detailed theoretical framework to approach the dynamics of this practice. These chapters address research questions 1.1 and 2.1 (see Table 1.1).

### **2.1) Neoliberalization and Neoliberal Urbanisation**

#### ***2.1.1) Historical Development of Neoliberalization***

Since the 1970s, neoliberalism has been a global phenomenon as a theory and practice (Brenner and Theodore, 2002; Harvey, 2007; Peck et al., 2009). As Harvey (2007, pp. 2–3) argues, this can be described as “an emphatic turn towards neoliberalism in political-economic practices and thinking since the 1970s”. Harvey (2007) defines 1978-1980 as a turning point in global social and economic history, as the period corresponding to the regime change in China through liberalisation, change in monetary policy in the US as well as Reagan's election with “policies to curb the power of labour, deregulate industry, agriculture, and resource extraction, and liberate the powers of finance both internally and on the world stage”, and Thatcher’s election in the UK (Harvey, 2007, p. 2). The transformation is not limited to the aforementioned countries, but is a global phenomenon including more “traditionally social-democratic or Christian-democratic states such as Canada, New Zealand, Germany, the Netherlands, France, and Italy” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 50).

Harvey (2007, p. 11) argues that the neoliberal project aims to disembed capital from the constraints of ‘embedded liberalism’ policies applied after WWII. In the embedded liberalism strategy, “market processes and entrepreneurial and corporate activities were surrounded by a web of social and political constraints and a regulatory environment that sometimes restrained but in other instances led the way in economic and industrial strategy” (Harvey, 2007, p. 11), while “[s]tate-led planning and in some instances state ownership of key sectors (coal, steel, automobiles) were not uncommon in this period” (Harvey, 2007, p. 11). It is a system designed to avoid pre-WWII conditions which threatened the capitalist system and interstate conditions which led to the war as well as “to ensure domestic peace and tranquillity”, as “some sort of class compromise between capital and labour had to be constructed” (Harvey, 2007, p. 10). Therefore, an international system was established: “through the Bretton Woods agreements, and various institutions, such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the IMF, and the Bank of International Settlements in Basle” (Harvey, 2007, p. 10). A common acceptance in state policy was that “the state should focus on full employment, economic growth, and the welfare of its citizens, and that state power should be freely deployed, alongside of or, if necessary, intervening in or even substituting for market processes to achieve these ends.” (Harvey, 2007, p. 10). According to Harvey, after World War II until the 1970s, this practice “delivered high rates of economic growth in the advanced capitalist countries” (Harvey, 2007, p. 11); however, by the end of the 1960s, internationally and nationally in different countries, embedded liberalism started to fail with the crisis of capital accumulation. As a result, neoliberalism emerged with trial-and-errors (Harvey, 2007, p. 13), as Peck (2008, p. 3) stresses that “neoliberalism has always been an open-ended, plural and adaptable project”.

Neoliberalization is not a neutral process though. Peck et al. (2009) exemplify this with the case of Pinochet’s Chile as “the first example of neoliberal ‘shock treatment’ ” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 50). After the military coup<sup>1</sup>, along with the IMF, ‘the Chicago boys’, a group of economists who were followers of Friedman’s neoliberal theories and affiliated to the University of Chicago, were in charge of restructuring the economy of Chile (Harvey, 2007, p. 8).

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<sup>1</sup> Turkey’s neoliberalization experience was also backed up with a military coup in 1980, which is discussed in **Chapter 5** in detail.

“They reversed the nationalizations and privatized public assets, opened up natural resources (fisheries, timber, etc.) to private and unregulated exploitation (in many cases riding roughshod over the claims of indigenous inhabitants), privatized social security, and facilitated foreign direct investment and freer trade. The right of foreign companies to repatriate profits from their Chilean operations was guaranteed. Export-led growth was favoured over import substitution.” (Harvey, 2007, p. 8)

According to Harvey (2007, p. 7), restructuring of the Chilean state after the coup is the “first experiment with neoliberal state formation”. In addition to *neoliberal shock treatments* like Chile, “following the debt crisis of the early 1980s, neoliberal programs of restructuring were extended selectively across the global South through the efforts of US-influenced multilateral agencies to subject peripheral and semi-peripheral states to the discipline of capital markets” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 50). In this respect, the dynamics of neoliberal restructuring from *embedded liberalisation* have many various strategies directed by international organisations such as the IMF or the World Bank. The international organisations played active roles in encouraging/supporting the neoliberalization processes while becoming “centres for the propagation and enforcement of ‘free market fundamentalism’ and neoliberal orthodoxy” (Harvey, 2007, p. 29). Countries were obliged “to implement institutional reforms, such as cuts in welfare expenditures, more flexible labour market laws, and privatization” (Harvey, 2007, p. 29). Through these global restructuring strategies, “[b]y the mid-1980s, ... neoliberalism had become the dominant political and ideological form of capitalist globalization” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 50).

Within the global restructuring after the 1980s, the concept of neoliberalism itself has become an important “terminological focal point” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 184). On the other hand, its wide usage and being a “terminological focal point” in various areas of discussion brought contradiction and ambivalence to the concept as well. Brenner et al. (2010, p. 182) point out this ambivalence by defining neoliberalism as a “rascal concept – promiscuously pervasive, yet inconsistently defined, empirically imprecise and frequently contested”. As Brenner et al. (2010) argue, neoliberalism as a concept connotes various (contradictory) meanings and is affiliated with different approaches. In order to shed light on these different definitions and affiliations, prominent approaches to the concept are discussed in the following sections.



## **Roll-back and Roll-out Neoliberalism**

Peck and Tickell (2002, p. 384) propose two related concepts to discuss the change in neoliberalization as roll-back neoliberalism and roll-out neoliberalism. The two concepts are defined in relation to dismantling the Keynesian state and deregulation, and a new phase of regulation and neoliberal state-building. In this process of transformation, the state and the means of regulation have been transformed from *Keynesian state to neoliberal state*.

According to this framework, this is a transformation from “antiregulation” to “metaregulation” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p. 384). Peck and Tickell (2002) define two phases for this change: (1) from the late 1970s and during the 1980s (from proto to roll-back neoliberalism) and (2) early 1990s (roll-out neoliberalism). While the former is “a shift from the philosophical project of the early 1970s ... to the era of neoliberal conviction politics during the 1980s” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p. 388), the latter is the era “in which new forms of institution-building and governmental intervention have been licensed within the (broadly defined) neoliberal project” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, pp. 388–399). While roll-back neoliberalism is the phase of dismantling the previous forms of regulation and state, roll out neoliberalism is the phase of restructuring the new forms of neoliberal state and regulation.

As Brenner et al. (2010, p.330) point out, these neoliberalization practices and phases share an ambition “to intensify commodification in all realms of social life” (Aalbers, 2013a, p. 1054). In other words, although they differ in terms of path dependent structures, scales, or their institutional frameworks, these neoliberalization practices share the aim of intensifying and expanding the realm of commodification.

### ***2.1.2) Approaches to Analysis of Neoliberalization***

In this section, some approaches to analysis of neoliberalization - the varieties of capitalism, historical materialist international political economy, governmentality and variegated neoliberalism - will be briefly discussed through following Brenner et al.’s (2010) classification.

## **Varieties of Capitalism Approach**

The *varieties of capitalism approach* discusses the concept of neoliberalism in relation to the differences between capitalist countries in a sense of regime competition between different varieties of capitalism. In this respect, it is based on the different practices in different countries as they are varieties of capitalist models. The two models are highlighted as liberal market economy - the American model - and the coordinated market economy - the German/Scandinavian model. Within this approach, the characteristics of the models as independent factors are discussed extensively. However, a convergence of these regimes after the 1990s crisis poses questions regarding this approach, while the approach responds to this with the claim of the expansion of one particular model (American) (Brenner et al., 2010). In summary, in the varieties of capitalism approach, “*neoliberalism* is understood primarily as a national regime type, in the train of Albert’s notion of ‘neo-Americanism’ and the stylized concept of the LME [liberal market economy]” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 186).

According to Brenner et al. (2010), this is a methodological nationalism approach, which has three analytical consequences: Firstly, “the system-like character of neoliberal institutional and policy arrangements is presupposed rather than interrogated” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 187). Secondly, neoliberal practices “are presumed to be comprehensively, pervasively developed across the entire regulatory surface of the national territories in which they are embedded” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 187). Thirdly, “the ‘outside’ of the neoliberal regulatory universe tends to be conceived in terms of (competing) national developmental models, in the form of varieties of CMEs [coordinated market economies]” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 187).

## **Historical Materialist International Political Economy**

*Historical materialist international political economy* focuses on the concept of neoliberalism in relation with global, market-driven restructuring. According to this approach, neoliberalism is a “global regime of growth that has emerged following the destabilization of earlier, Keynesian-welfarist and national developmentalist regulatory arrangements during the post-1970s period” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 190). The emphasis in this approach is on the global characteristic of neoliberalism. In addition, according to this approach, there is a direct connection between *neoliberalization* and

*globalisation*. Neoliberalism is considered as “a disciplinary framework of power that delinks significant dimensions of economic life from political control, especially at a national scale” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 192). The role of supranational organisations in this restructuring is one of the important discussion points of this approach (Brenner et al., 2010).

### **Governmentality Approach**

The *governmentality approach* discusses the concept of neoliberalism “in terms of neoliberal modes of subject (re)formation and strategies of rule, rather than to visualize an administratively bounded ‘neoliberal state’” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 199). Governmentality approaches neoliberalism in terms of biopolitical modes of governance through contextual political dynamics. (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 199). According to Ong (2006, p.101), neoliberalism is “perpetually embedded and disembedded in hybrid, liminal settings, ‘space[s] of betwixt and between’” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 200). According to this approach, neoliberalism is an abstract framework rather than tangible aspects (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 200). In addition, the governmentality approach puts emphasis on the “contextually embedded character of market-oriented forms of regulatory restructuring” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 200). Therefore, the uneven development of neoliberalism can be understood as accumulation of contingencies or combination of local regulatory projects. In this respect, it puts emphasis on the specificity of neoliberalism projects contextually (Brenner et al., 2010).

### **Variegated Neoliberalization**

The *variegated neoliberalization* approach is rooted in geographical political economy, while “positioning the problematic of variegation, or systemically produced geoinstitutional differentiation, at the heart of a reformulated conception of neoliberalization” (Brenner et al., 2010, p. 207). The approach has two main aspects: the uneven development of neoliberalization and the neoliberalization of regulatory uneven development. Whilst the former is related to the continuous production of differentiations in market-oriented regulatory restructurings, the latter is related to the continuous production of marketized macro-spatial institutional frameworks (Brenner et al., 2010). In other words, while the former is about production of different versions of

neoliberalism(s), the latter is about restructuring the existing institutional frameworks in the direction of neoliberalism.

The approach acknowledges the differences in the development of neoliberalization while relating these to the production of marketized macro-spatial institutional frameworks. Through this process-related definition, the approach urges the replacement of neoliberalism as a phenomenon with neoliberalization as a process. Peck et al. (2009, p.51) points out the difference between the end state of -ism and the process of neoliberalization – “an uneven, contradictory, and ongoing *process of neoliberalization*”.

In this respect, the research follows the variegated neoliberalization while focusing on the process of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey. Whilst approaching the process of neoliberal urbanisation, neoliberal restructuring in Turkey is considered as an on-going process rather than an end state.

### ***2.1.3) Theory and Practice of Neoliberalism***

Harvey (2009) argues that neoliberalism is “a class project, masked by a lot of neo-liberal rhetoric about individual freedom, liberty, personal responsibility privatisation and the free market” aiming “towards the restoration and consolidation of class power”. In this respect, neoliberalization can be interpreted as either a utopian project “to realize a theoretical design for the reorganization of international capitalism” (Harvey, 2007, p. 19) or a political project “to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites” (Harvey, 2007, p. 19). Brand and Sekler (2009, p. 6) argue that neoliberalism is a “theory and an intellectual movement”, “an elite strategy to reconfigure the Fordist compromise” and “a social practice” (Keil, 2009, p. 231).

Harvey (2007, p. 21) emphasizes the “tension between the theory of neoliberalism and the actual pragmatics of neo-liberalization”. Peck et al. (2009) state the differences and contradictions between the theory and practice of neoliberalism. As the roots of the concept of neoliberalism go back to the Mont Pelerin Society, which includes prominent figures including Hayek and Friedman (Harvey, 2007, pp. 19–20), “[w]hile neoliberalism aspires to create a utopia of free markets, liberated from all forms of state

interference, it has in practice entailed a dramatic intensification of coercive, disciplinary forms of state intervention in order to impose versions of market rule and, subsequently, to manage the consequences and contradictions of such marketization initiatives” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 51). In addition, Peck et al. (2009, p. 51) point out that while in theory neoliberalism implies that self-regulation of markets is the source of optimum allocation of resources and investments, the practice of neoliberalism “has generated pervasive market failures, new forms of social polarisation, a dramatic intensification of uneven spatial development and a crisis of established modes of governance”. More importantly, the authors argue that these differences are not accidental side effects, “rather, they are among its most diagnostically and politically salient features” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 51).

Aalbers (2013b, p. 1084) argues the difference between theory and practice of neoliberalism from a different angle, while criticising the concealing effect of theory on actual reality. According to Aalbers (2013b, p. 1084), “the policies and practices of privatization are more central to neoliberalism than the ideology of free markets”, and the practice of neoliberalism is more about re-regulation than deregulation. In this sense, according to the author, neoliberalism is rather about accumulation, re-regulation, and privatisation. In addition to this criticism, Peck et al. (2009, p. 52) draw attention to the role of discourse in the sense that “[t]he notion of a freestanding, self-regulating market has been exposed as a dangerously productive myth”, as well as noting that “neoliberalism’s evocation of a spontaneous market order is a strong discourse—that is a self-reinforcing myth rather than an accurate depiction of neoliberal statecraft”. In other words, these criticisms question the idea of free-market and its place in the theory of neoliberalism. Parallel with these criticisms, Harvey (2007, p. 19) argues that in the process of neoliberalization, the theory of neoliberalism as a utopian project has played a role in the “justification and legitimation for whatever needed to be done” to achieve the practical goal of restoring the power of the economic elite. Neoliberalization is a redistributive process rather than being generative (Harvey, 2005, p. 32). It aims to redistribute wealth and income rather than create it. Harvey argues that neoliberalism needs ways “to transfer assets and redistribute wealth and income either from the mass of the population towards the upper classes or from vulnerable to richer countries” (Harvey, 2005, p. 32).

#### **2.1.4) *The Role of the State in Neoliberalism***

Aalbers argues that states are “not external but central to neoliberalism” (Aalbers, 2013b, p. 1084) despite the theory (and discourse) of neoliberalism claiming the contrary, and “state intervention under neoliberalism has actually been severe” (Aalbers, 2013a, p. 1054). In fact, according to Aalbers (2013a, p. 1054), “[a]ctually existing neoliberalism was never really devoted to creating free markets”, and for the practice of the neoliberal state “giant corporation, not the market, becomes the model to which both government and the market have to adapt” (Aalbers, 2013b, p. 1084).

Harvey (2007, p. 7) defines *neoliberal state* as “a state apparatus whose fundamental mission was to facilitate conditions for profitable capital accumulation on the part of both domestic and foreign capital”. According to Harvey (2005, p. 32), the state plays a crucial role in promoting and backing up the processes of neoliberalization with its role of legality and monopoly of violence. Extreme examples for this are neoliberal restructuring programmes enforced by military coups in Chile and Turkey, as Aalbers (2013a, p. 1054) emphasises the role of the state in the “forced introduction of market models and regulation in most sections of life”.

#### **2.1.5) *Actually Existing Neoliberalisms and After Neoliberalism Debates***

Brenner and Theodore (2002, p. 353) describe “ongoing neoliberalization processes through the concept of actually existing neoliberalism”. The authors propose the concept of “actually existing neoliberalism” in relation to the difference between local practices and broad geographical scales. In order to understand actually existing neoliberalism, “the path-dependent, contextually specific interactions between inherited regulatory landscapes and emergent neoliberal, market-oriented restructuring projects at a broad range of geographical scales” (Brenner and Theodore, 2002, p. 351) need to be explored. In this respect, the focus of the concept of actually existing neoliberalism is on the relationship of the practice of neoliberal restructuring strategies with the existing structures and regulatory frameworks (Brenner and Theodore, 2002, p. 361)

Neoliberal programmes are “introduced within politico-institutional contexts that have been moulded significantly by inherited regulatory arrangements, institutionalized practices and political compromises” (Peck et al 2009, p. 54), which demonstrates the

importance of path-dependency in shaping variations of actually existing neoliberalism(s). Hirsch and Gillespie (2001, p. 69) emphasise that the concept of path dependency offers a possibility to reconsider “the role and importance of history and temporality” in various disciplines and debates from chaos theory to path creation approaches in social sciences. More specifically, Mahoney (2001, p xi) points out that “crucial actor choices may establish certain directions of chance and foreclose others in a way that shapes long-term trajectories of development”. Notably, new institutionalism puts an emphasis on the path dependent characteristics of institutional change. As Ingram and Silverman (2002, p. 6) summarise with reference to North (1990), “the options for new institutions derive in a large way from pre-existing institutions”. As a result of these processes, neoliberalization is introduced to the existing institutional frameworks, embedded in those frameworks while transforming the frameworks simultaneously, and thus producing variegated versions of actually existing neoliberalism(s).

Brenner and Theodore (2002) propose five methodological premises to analyse actually existing neoliberalism: the problem of capitalist regulation, the unstable historical geographies of capitalism, uneven geographical development, the regulation of uneven geographical development, and the evolving geographies of state regulation (Brenner and Theodore, 2002, p. 356). The authors propose a critical perspective for analysis of the impacts of neoliberal restructuring: actually existing neoliberalism can be explored through “the historically specific regulatory landscapes and political settlements”; “the historically specific patterns of crisis formation, uneven development, and socio-political contestation”; “the subsequent interaction of market-oriented neoliberal initiatives with inherited regulatory frameworks, patterns of territorial development, and sociopolitical alliances”; and “the concomitant evolution of neoliberal policy agendas and restructuring strategies” (Brenner and Theodore, 2002, p. 357). In addition, Peck et al. (2009, pp. 49–50) propose the concept of actually existing neoliberalism as an analytical basis for explorations of implementations of neoliberal projects in different contexts and frameworks (see also Boyle, McWilliams and Rice (2008) case study of Glasgow in this respect). According to Peck et al. (2009, p. 50) this leads to “a conceptualisation of contemporary neoliberalization processes as catalysts for and expressions of an ongoing creative destruction of political-economic space at multiple geographical scales”.

## After Neoliberalism Debates

With the effect of the crisis of 2008, another discussion around the concepts of *neoliberalism*, *neoliberalization* and the *neoliberal city* focuses upon the *end of neoliberalism* debate. This contemporary debate provides insights into the evolution and direction of contemporary urbanisation patterns. Some examples of these debates are discussed as Keil's (2009) "roll-with-it-neoliberalization", Hendrikse and Sidaway's (2010) "neoliberalization 3.0" and Aalbers' (2013) "quantitative shift".

Firstly, Keil (2009, p. 232) argues that "another round of restructuring" followed roll-back neoliberalism and roll-out neoliberalism, which is *roll-with-it neoliberalism*. Keil (2013) defines roll-with-it neoliberalism as a social formation with reference to the previous two. The author claims that while the earlier two modes are defined according to transformation from a Keynesian social formation, roll-with-it neoliberalism is self-referential: "To 'roll-with' neoliberalization means that political and economic actors have increasingly lost a sense of externality, of alternatives (good or bad) and have mostly accepted the 'governmentality' of the neoliberal formation as the basis for their action" (Keil, 2009, p. 232). Keil (2009, p. 232) defines roll-back, roll-out and roll-with-it neoliberalism concepts as "phases, moments and contradictions in neoliberalization". Whilst defining roll-with-it neoliberalism as a phase historically, Keil (2009) defines these three concepts as simultaneous, interactive and in dialectical modalities:

"While in the first instance I have introduced the concept of roll-with-it as a new phase of neoliberalization, which replaces and supplements roll-back and roll-out historically, it also, in the second instance, refers to a moment of neoliberalization which exists alongside and intertwined with its historical predecessors. Roll-back and roll-out have not ended but rather continue to work through the affected societies. The three moments are simultaneous and interactive. In the third instance, then, these three moments are dialectically related to one another. Actors moving along their various registers create new contradictions, struggles, conflicts and possibilities." (Keil, 2009, p. 232)



Secondly, Hendrikse and Sidaway (2010) propose the concept of ‘neoliberalism 3.0’<sup>2</sup> while arguing that contemporary changes in neoliberalism form a new version of neoliberalism. This conceptualisation is rooted in technological conceptualisations. According to the authors, “neoliberalism 3.0 works with an already quite thoroughly neoliberalized space; it substantially extends it and seeks new paths, bonds, appeal, and power” (Hendrikse and Sidaway, 2010, p. 2038), which presents an approach close to Keil’s self-referencing. According to the authors, “the great crash of 2008 ended up consolidating neoliberalism 3.0” (Hendrikse and Sidaway, 2010, p 2041). Hendrikse and Sidaway (2010) list characteristics of their conceptualisation as:

“1. *A fiscal crisis of the state*”;

“2. *Further marketization of remaining social/state assets*”;

“3. *Practices of audit and the rhetoric of accountability established during rollout neoliberalism are being modified.*”;

“4. The pursuit of *social affinities and alliances in support of these strategies*”;

“5. The *tightening nexus (unleashing after 9/11) of security, geopolitics, and neoliberalism*”;

“6. ... Neoliberalism 3.0 therefore also *accompanies further shift of geopolitical and geoeconomical power South and East*”. (Hendrikse and Sidaway, 2010, pp. 2038-2040)

Thirdly, Aalbers (2013b, pp. 1083–1084) argues that “neoliberal practice is alive and kicking”, although the 2008 crisis “heralds the failure not only of an economic system but also of an ideology”, and therefore “the ideology of neoliberalism may have failed”. In other words, as Smith (2010, p. 265) argues, neoliberalism is “dominant but dead”. According to Aalbers (2013), the crisis has been responded to not through withdrawal of neoliberal policies, but with more neoliberalization. In this sense, although calls for new regulations seem contrary to neoliberalization at first sight, these state interventions are about “facilitating the financial sector and well-off investors to make a lot of money

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<sup>2</sup> “We posit what is emerging might be understood as a neoliberalism version 3.0. Our reference to a figure that was coined to refer to the semantic and mobile web, more deeply connecting people, machines, and code, might be taken as a literal reading of Ong's (2007) description of neoliberalism as a “mobile technology”. But we draw equally on Rogers's (2009) characterisation of a shift from “the digitized” to “the natively digital” that has featured in the evolution of the Internet and associated technologies. For Rogers, there is a distinction “between the objects, content, devices and environments ‘born’ in the new medium [natively digital], as opposed to those which have ‘migrated’ to it [digitized]” (2009, page 1).” (Hendrikse and Sidaway 2010, p 2038)

at reduced risks” (Aalbers 2013b, p. 1087). In addition, “the end result of this crisis may very well be further dismantling of the welfare state” (Aalbers 2013b, p.1085). The author also points out examples for this practice of more neoliberalization at different scales, such as “bail-outs and stimulus packages for the financial sector and other giant corporations, the socialization of private debt and the privatization of public debt and risk, ... austerity measures” (Aalbers, 2013b, p. 1088). In this sense, according to Aalbers (2013b, p. 1088), the shifts in policies propose a *quantitative shift* rather than a new phase. In other words, it is rather an increase in neoliberalization practices than a substantial change in the dynamics of the system.

Lastly, Peck et al. (2013, p. 1091) argue that “neoliberalism has once again risen from the ashes” of the 2008 crisis. According to the authors, neoliberalism responded to the crisis with more neoliberalism, which is parallel to Aalber’s analysis:

“New rounds of neoliberal medicine are now being administered, in alarmingly high doses, in the context of a still highly volatile geo-economic (dis)order. ... Across the interstate system, orthodox neoliberal nostrums regarding the putative virtues of deficit reduction, austerity programming, public-sector downsizing and growth restoration at any cost resound with drumbeat monotony.” (Peck et al., 2013, p. 1091)

According to Peck et al. (2013) it is not possible to conclude that the ‘after-crisis’ is simply a neoliberal redux nor that it is a period of post-neoliberalism. It is a particular deepening of neoliberalization, as neoliberal urbanisation has deepened in the post crisis period<sup>3</sup>.

### ***2.1.5) Neoliberal Urbanisation***

Cities “have become strategically central sites in the uneven, crisis-laden advance of neoliberal restructuring projects” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 49). According to Peck et al.

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<sup>3</sup> “the medium-term prognosis for cities looks depressingly familiar: more social-state retrenchment and paternalist-penal state expansion, more privatization and deregulation, more subjection of urban development decisions to market logics, a continued delinking of land-use systems from relays of popular-democratic control and public accountability, more courting of mobile events, investment and elite consumers, and a further subordination of place and territory to speculative strategies of profit-making at the expense of use values, social needs and public goods.” (Peck et al., 2013, p. 1092)

(2013) cities are key areas for neoliberal roll-back strategies since they were the central places for Keynesian systems, as well as being at the “institutional and geographical forefront of neoliberal rollout programs” as the “loci for innovation and growth, and as zones of devolved governance and local institutional experimentation” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 57).

“... cities and their suburban zones of influence have become increasingly important geographical targets and institutional laboratories for a variety of neoliberal policy experiments, from place-marketing, enterprise zones, local tax abatements, public-private partnerships and new forms of local boosterism, through to workfare policies, property redevelopment schemes, new strategies of social control, policing and surveillance, and a host of other institutional modifications within the local state apparatus.” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 58)

Peck et al. (2009, p. 58) define the aim of these policies as “to mobilize city space as an arena both for market-oriented economic growth and for elite consumption practices”.

## **2.2) Commodity and Commodification**

Commodity, as a multifaceted concept, contains ambiguous meanings and contradictions, while having abstract and concrete sides. These aspects mostly nest within each other. Castree (2004, p. 21) criticises the ambiguity of using the concepts of commodity, commodification and commoditization in the existing literature and points out that this ambiguity may cause confusion and even loss of meaning of these three concepts. Following this criticism, this section reviews the definitions and discussions of commodity, commodification and commoditization in the literature in order to position this research, and at the end clarifies the research’s position.

### **2.2.1) Commodity, Commodification, Commoditization**

Marx (2000) discusses commodity in relation with *use-value*, *exchange-value* and the *value*. Marx (2000) argues that the commodity form has two sides: the *use value* and the *exchange value*. Firstly, the source of the use-value is defined as the utility of a thing, and this utility is defined as “being limited by the physical properties of the

commodity” (Marx, 2000). Therefore, the use-value is a value produced by the characteristics of commodities. Secondly, Marx (2000) defines exchange value as abstract and independent from use-value. It is an abstraction from the qualities, in other words, the use value, of the commodity.

“Exchange-value, at first sight, presents itself as a quantitative relation, as the proportion in which values in use of one sort are exchanged for those of another sort, a relation constantly changing with time and place. Hence exchange-value appears to be something accidental and purely relative, and consequently an intrinsic value, i.e., an exchange-value that is inseparably connected with, inherent in commodities, seems a contradiction in terms.”  
(Marx, 2000)

The *strange* character of commodities is hidden in their relationship with other commodities in motion, in other words in *exchange*, not in their use value:

“The form of wood, for instance, is altered, by making a table out of it. Yet, for all that, the table continues to be that common, every-day thing, wood. But, so soon as it steps forth as a commodity, it is changed into something transcendent. It not only stands with its feet on the ground, but, in relation to all other commodities, it stands on its head, and evolves out of its wooden brain grotesque ideas, far more wonderful than ‘table-turning’ ever was.”  
(Marx, 2000)

If exchange value is not related to the use-value of commodities, how can it be determined? To understand use value and exchange value, thirdly, Marx (2000) proposes the concept of *value*. According to Marx (2000) “As values, all commodities are only definite masses of coagulated labour time”. In this respect, commodities are “both objects of utility, and, at the same time, depositories of value.” (Marx, 2000). Marx (2000) defines value as another abstraction which is related to labour force embodied in the commodity. By abstracting from their use value, Marx (2000) asserts that, “the common substance that manifests itself in the exchange-value of commodities, whenever they are exchanged, is their value”. Therefore, by being abstracted from *use values*, the only thing in the exchange relationship is the *value*. In this framework, it

appears that exchange value is defined in relation with other commodities with their *values*.

In this respect, the commodity is something that holds three values – *use value*, *exchange value* and *value* – each of which is related to different aspects of commodification discussions. The following sections will widen the discussion through the processes of commodification and various approaches to commodity.

### **Commodification**

In the literature, various definitions for commodification as a concept and a process are developed. To illustrate, while Castree (2003, p.278) defines commodification as a “process where qualitatively distinct things are rendered equivalent and saleable through the medium of money” (Prudham, 2009, p. 124), Ben Page (2005, p.295) defines it as a process “during which a thing that previously circulated outside monetary exchange is brought into the nexus of a market” (Prudham 2009, s.124). On the other hand, Sayer (2003, p. 343) defines commodification “as a change from producing what previously or otherwise might have been simply use values to producing goods for their exchange value”.

Prudham (2009, p. 125) defines commodification by relating the *process* with *use value* and *exchange value*, the aim of production, social consumption, commodity form and the role of money in exchange as “interlinked processes whereby: production for use is systematically displaced by production for exchange; social consumption and reproduction increasingly relies on purchased commodities; new classes of goods and services are made available in the commodity-form; and money plays an increasing role in mediating exchange as a common currency of value”. The author defines “moments of commodification” as stretching, which is “the development of relations of exchange spanning across greater distances of space and time (market expansion)” (Prudham, 2009, p.125), and deepening, which is “systemic provisioning of more and more types of things (goods and services) in the commodity-form” (Prudham, 2009, p.125).

Radin (2005) proposes another definition considering the role of alienation in commodification that “commodities are things that can be legally and physically alienated from those who own or produce them” (Castree, 2004, p. 29). Radin (2005, p.

81) defines *contested commodification* as “instances in which we experience personal and social conflict about the process and the result” of commodification while exemplifying *contested commodities* as “babies? Sexual services? Kidneys and corneas? Environmental pollution permits?” According to the author, a complete ban on commodification of these controversial things may produce worse results than commodifying them, which is defined as a *double bind*: “both commodification and noncommodification may be harmful ... under our current social conditions.” (Radin, 2005, p. 87). Radin’s (2005, p. 83) approach is a search to find a mid-way between universal commodification and non-commodification, “a notion of incomplete commodification”.

“I think we should recognize a continuum reflecting degrees of commodification that will be appropriate in a given context. An incomplete commodification – a partial market inalienability – can sometimes reflect the conflicted state of affairs in the way we understand an interaction. And an incomplete commodification can sometimes substitute for a complete noncommodification that might accord with our ideals but cause too much harm in our nonideal world.” (Radin, 2005, p. 85)

From a cultural and anthropological perspective, Appadurai (1988) approaches commodity “by focusing on its total trajectory from production, through exchange/distribution, to consumption” (Appadurai, 1988, p. 13) and proposes that “the commodity situation in the social life of any ‘thing’ be defined as the situation in which its exchangeability (past, present, or future) for some other thing is its socially relevant feature” (Appadurai, 1988, p. 13). The author classifies the commodity situation as “(1) the commodity phase of the social life of anything; (2) the commodity candidacy of anything; and (3) the commodity context in which anything may be placed” (Appadurai, 1988, p. 13).

### **Commoditization**

Kopytoff (1988) defines commodity from a cultural perspective, which leads to defining the concept of *commoditization*. According to Kopytoff (1988, p. 68), a “commodity is a thing that has use value and that can be exchanged in a discrete transaction for a counterpart, the very fact of exchange indicating that the counterpart has, in the

immediate context, an equivalent value”. According to the authors, the production of commodities is not only a material process, but also a “cultural and cognitive process” (Kopytoff, 1988, p. 64), and commodities must be “also culturally marked as being a certain kind of thing” (Kopytoff, 1988, p. 64).

This cultural definition of commodity is different than the Marxist definition of commodities with their use values, exchange values and values as depositories of labour. Kopytoff (1988) uses an extreme case to explain his conceptualisation: the commoditization of humans as slaves.

“What we see in the career of a slave is a process of initial withdrawal from a given original social setting, his or her commoditization, followed by increasing singularization (that is, decommoditization) in the new setting, with the possibility of later recommoditization. As in most processes, the successive phases merge one into another. Effectively, the slave was unambiguously a commodity only during the relatively short period between capture or first sale and the acquisition of the new social identity; and the slave becomes less of a commodity and more of a singular individual in the process of gradual incorporation into the host society. This biographical consideration of enslavement as a process suggests that the commoditization of other things may usefully be seen in a similar light, namely, as part of the cultural shaping of biographies.” (Kopytoff, 1988, p. 65)

Commoditization is defined as a *process of becoming* by Kopytoff (1988), “rather than as an all-or-none state of being” (Kopytoff, 1988, p. 73). According to Kopytoff’s (1988) conceptualisation, a thing is commoditized when it enters the realm of exchange, and may be decommoditized after being bought and sold. In other words, a thing can be commoditized through exchange while being independent of its mode of production or the dynamics behind the production processes.

From Kopytoff’s (1988) perspective the key for commoditization is exchangeability of the things. In terms of expansion of commoditization, the author defines two levels:

“Its [Commoditization’s] expansion takes place in two ways: (a) with respect to each thing, by making it exchangeable for more and more other

things, and (b) with respect to the system as a whole, by making more and more different things more widely exchangeable.” (Kopytoff, 1988, p. 73)

### ***2.2.2) Concepts Related to Commodity and Commodification***

In the literature, commodity and commodification are two concepts discussed in relation with the concepts of commodity fetishism, spectacle, reification and sign value, which are discussed in this section.

#### **Commodity Fetishism**

“Things lie, and when, having become commodities, they lie in order to conceal their origin, namely social labour, they tend to set themselves up as absolutes. Products and the circuits they establish (in space) are fetishized and so become more ‘real’ than reality itself - that is, than productive activity itself, which they thus take over.” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 81)

Marx (2000) asserts that, while exchanging the commodities, the social relations behind the production of these commodities are concealed; therefore, commodities are fetishized by being abstracted from these social relations. As Prudham (2009, p. 132) argues “it is by no means obvious even to curious consumers where commodities originate and what kinds of social and environmental inputs went into their production and circulation”. In other words, commodities conceal the social labour which produces them as well as other factors such as exploitation and alienation, and this concealing effect is behind the fetishism of commodities.

Walter Benjamin (1999) discusses commodity fetishism through the concept of *phantasmagoria*<sup>4</sup> in the Arcades Project – his unique work on Paris Arcades. Benjamin’s work aims to capture the essence of 19<sup>th</sup> century capitalism. According to Ferris (2004), Benjamin’s Arcades Project is influenced by Marx’s commodity fetishism through Lukacs’ accounts and the analysis of Freud. Ferris (2004, p.118)

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<sup>4</sup> The dictionary meaning of phantasmagoria is “a confusing or strange scene that is like a dream because it is always changing in an odd way” or “a constantly shifting complex succession of things seen or imagined” (Merriam-Webster, 2013).



argues that the “development of a phantasmagoric world fueled by fetish is the total event this project aims to capture”.

“Phantasmagoria: a *Blendwerk*, a deceptive image designed to dazzle, is already commodity itself, in which the exchange value or value-form hides the use value. Phantasmagoria is the whole capitalist production process, which constitutes itself as a natural force against the people who carry it out.” (Tiedemann, 1999, p. 938)

The concealing effect in phantasmagoria is more than the commodity as an embodied artefact concealing production relations, or the *value*, but “a dream world created by the arcades as a means of sustaining an economy based on the consumption of commodities” (Ferris, 2004, p. 116).

“For Benjamin, the construction of the Parisian arcades after 1822 marks the coming together of a capitalist economy with the dominant technological advance of the age: the use of iron in architectural construction. This joining of forces led to an unprecedented ability to display manufactured goods, so much so that the Arcades took on the character of a fairyland – as the title of the essay Benjamin originally planned to write reflects: ‘Paris Arcades: A Dialectical Fairyland.’ This fairyland subsequently becomes a phantasmagoria, a dream world created by the arcades as a means of sustaining an economy based on the consumption of commodities.” (Ferris, 2004, p. 116)

Benjamin’s work is valuable to understanding the contemporary fetishism of commodities and commodification in terms of their relationship with images and dreams. In this respect, it is critical to question the role of presentation and representation of commodities in concealing their true nature and the production relations behind them.

## **Reification**

Lukács (1971, p. 84) asks the critical question of “how far is commodity exchange together with its structural consequences able to influence the *total* outer and inner life

of society”. According to Lukács (1971, p. 91), “[r]eification requires that a society should learn to satisfy all its needs in terms of commodity exchange”. The concept of reification Lukács (1971) proposes is closely related to quantification and rationalisation:

“The separation of the producer from his means of production, the dissolution and destruction of all ‘natural’ production units, etc., and all the social and economic conditions necessary for the emergence of modern capitalism tend to replace ‘natural’ relations which exhibit human relations more plainly by rationally reified relations.” (Lukács, 1971, p. 91)

In other words, reification “refers to the phenomenon (and the resulting phenomena) of a ‘definite social relation between men’ appearing [emerging and seeming] in the form of a ‘relation between things’” (Arato, 1972). Therefore, according to Lukács, human relations are replaced with reified forms of relations. When it is reified, it is a part of the world of commodities. Lukács (1971) argues that, however, this is not the whole story:

“The transformation of the commodity relation into a thing of ‘ghostly objectivity’ cannot therefore content itself with the reduction of all objects for the gratification of human needs to commodities. It stamps its imprint upon the whole consciousness of man; his qualities and abilities are no longer an organic part of his personality, they are things which he can ‘own’ or ‘dispose of’ like the various objects of the external world.” (Lukács, 1971, p. 100)

As a result, what Lukács argues is a detachment of needs from humans and transformation of them into ‘things’. When they are detached and ‘thingified’, they can be commodified.

### **Spectacle and Commodification**

“The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. ... All that once was directly lived has become mere representation.” (Debord, 1994)

While developing the spectacle as a concept, Debord (1994) discusses various issues including representation, reality, illusion, image, commodity, alienation, commodity fetishism in relation with the concept of spectacle. Debord (1994) argues that spectacle as the image becomes more real than the reality itself, and in a sense, annihilates the reality. According to Debord (1994), this is “the outcome and the goal of the dominant mode of production”, while being in the “heart of society's real unreality”. The spectacle is defined as a “social relationship between people that is mediated by images”, rather than being a “collection of images” (Debord, 1994).

Debord (1994) defines the language of the spectacle as a composition of “signs of the dominant organization of production signs which are at the same time the ultimate end products of that organization”. Via spectacle, all social life turns out to be “mere appearance” (Debord, 1994):

“The present stage, in which social life is completely taken over by the accumulated products of the economy, entails a generalized shift from having to appearing: all effective “having” must now derive both its immediate prestige and its ultimate *raison d'etre* from appearances.” (Debord, 1994)

According to Debord (1994), spectacle is “capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image”:

“The self-movement of the spectacle consists in this: it arrogates to itself everything that in human activity exists in a fluid state so as to possess it in a congealed form as things that, being the negative expression of living value, have become exclusively abstract value. In these signs we recognize our old enemy the commodity, which appears at first sight a very trivial thing, and easily understood, yet which is in reality a very queer thing, abounding in metaphysical subtleties.” (Debord, 1994)

Debord (1994) puts emphasis on the concept of commodity and its expansion in lived experiences via spectacle. The world of spectacle is “the world of the commodity ruling over all lived experience” (Debord 1994). Debord (1994) conceptualised the totality of commodification:

“In its most advanced sectors, a highly concentrated capitalism has begun selling ‘fully equipped’ blocks of time, each of which is a complete commodity combining a variety of other commodities. This is the logic behind the appearance, within an expanding economy of ‘services’ and leisure activities, of the ‘all-inclusive’ purchase of spectacular forms of housing, of collective pseudo-travel, of participation in cultural consumption and even of sociability itself, in the form of ‘exciting conversations’, ‘meetings with celebrities’ and suchlike. Spectacular commodities of this type could obviously not exist were it not for the increasing impoverishment of the realities they parody.” (Debord, 1994)

In this sense, commodification and commodity form is conceptualised as an expanding phenomenon to experience since it is commodifying “‘fully equipped’ blocks of time”. In this respect, Debord (1994) relates commodity/commodification with the colonisation of social life: “With the coming of the industrial revolution, ... the commodity emerged in its full-fledged form as a force aspiring to the complete colonization of social life”. The concept of spectacle is defined as “the historical moment at which the commodity completes its colonization of social life.” (Debord, 1994).

Kellner (2003, p. 2) argues that Debord’s conceptualisation “describes a media and consumer society organised around the production and consumption of images, commodities, and staged events”. According to the author, the structural shift to the society of spectacle involves *commodification of sectors of life* which have not been commodified before, as well as extending bureaucratic control to the areas of leisure, desire and everyday life. Debord (1994) emphasises the illusion in consumption patterns and relates this illusion in consumption with the spectacle: “[t]he real consumer thus becomes a consumer of illusion. The commodity is this illusion, which is in fact real, and the spectacle is its most general form”. In addition to this illusion, Debord puts another emphasis on *passivation effects of spectacle*, as Pinder (2000) summarises that “social life is so colonised by the commodity and administrative techniques, so saturated in an accumulation of spectacles, that people are more like spectators than active agents” (Pinder, 2000, pp. 361–362).

## **Baudrillard's Sign Value**

Another conceptual, and controversial, approach to commodity, use value and exchange value is Baudrillard's sign-value. According to Baudrillard's post-modernist approach, "commodities are not merely to be characterized by use-value and exchange value ... but sign-value - the expression and mark of style, prestige, luxury, power, and so on - becomes an increasingly important part of the commodity and consumption" (Kellner, 2013). The concept of sign value is related to prestige that commodities are perceived to provide for the owners: "the more prestigious one's commodities (houses, cars, clothes, and so on), the higher one's standing in the realm of sign value" (Kellner, 2013). Kellner (2013) points out the relativity of sign value that "sign values take on meaning according to their place in a differential system of prestige and status".

### ***2.2.3) Fields in Commodification Literature***

Commodification is a topic in the literature discussed in various fields in relation with various issues including nature and environment, exchanging living things, culture and heritage, in addition to the production of urban space.

## **Commodification of Nature and Environment**

Prudham (2009, p. 123) points out that the "nexus of commodification with environmental change and environmental politics is of immense and growing interest to geographers and activists alike", while proposing three main reasons for this interest: rising environmental damages and hazardous consequences of commodity production; rising privatisation and commercialisation (and commodification) of nature including human and non-human elements; rising engagement of nature in the commodification chain through immaterial features such as use of pastoral mythologies for selling products or "representations of pristine and wild spaces circulated to sell travel and adventure tourism".

One of the leading discussions in the area of commodification of nature is around the commodification of resources that are vital for human life such as water. Swyngedouw (2005, p. 83) argues that there is a relationship between neoliberal policies and recent water privatisation and "water has become one of the central testing grounds for the

implementation of global and national neoliberal policies”. Swyngedouw (2005) also points out the role of the state in this privatisation movement by arguing that without the regulation of the state, it is not possible to accomplish this privatisation. Jaffe and Newman (2013, p. 320) stress the changing approach to water as an economic asset<sup>5</sup>:

“Beginning with the Dublin Statement and Principles of 1992, which controversially declared that ‘water has an economic value in all its competing uses and should be recognized as an economic good,’ private water firms, international institutions, states, and other actors have increasingly framed water in these economic terms, rather than as a public good or an entitlement (United Nations, 1992).” (Jaffee and Newman, 2013, p. 320)

### **Commodification of Living Things**

According to Radin (2005), commodification of living things is one of the contested commodities. The literature covers various discussions including the public-private ownerships of information derived by the Human Genome Project (Parry, 2004), whole organism patent attempts (e.g. the oncomouse case of Harvard College (Prudham, 2007)) and controversial seed patents of companies such as Monsanto and Nestle. Various professions have roles in commodification of living things. To illustrate, Scheper-Hughes and Wacquant (2002) state that various professions have roles in accelerating commodification of human body parts, such as reproductive medicine, transplant surgery, as well as bioethics, journalism and other cultural specialists. It is an extreme version of commodification which emerges with medical practice while having discursive sides (e.g. the role of journalism (Seale et al., 2006, p. 25) ).

### **Commodification of Culture and Heritage**

Roland (2010, p. 4) argues that the “profitable objectification of people, places, and practices in tourism constitutes cultural commodification”. Heritage (either cultural or

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<sup>5</sup> A controversial interview with a former Chairman of Nestle exemplifies this attitude: “And there are two different opinions on the matter. The one opinion, which I think is extreme, is represented by the NGOs, who bang on about declaring water a public right. That means that as a human being you should have a right to water. That is an extreme solution. And the other view says that water is a foodstuff like any other, and like any other foodstuff it should have a market value.” (Wagenhofer, 2005)

material) plays a critical role in cultural commodification and tourism. Halewood and Hannam (2001, p. 565) exemplify how cultural heritage can be alienated and transformed for the sake of marketing a tourist experience through the example of Viking themed events in European countries: “In 1998, ... the total number of all varieties of these events in Europe was 48, with over 5000 people actively participating in their organization, and the events attracting upwards of 15,000 tourists daily”<sup>6</sup>. Shaw and Williams (2004, p. 24) approach this issue from another angle, and propose that commodification for tourism is not only based on labour, capital and resources used in production, but also based on the “ ‘sign value’ or symbolic value of the tourism experience”.

## **2.3) The Production of Space and the Commodification of Urban Space**

### ***2.3.1) The Production of Space***

The main idea behind Lefebvre’s conceptual framework is that “(Social) space is a (social) product” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 26). Lefebvre (1992) proposes a conceptual triad for the production of space: spatial practices, representations of space and representational space. While spatial practice is the “space as physical form, real space, space that is generated and used”, representations of space “is the space of savoir (knowledge) and logic, of maps, mathematics, of space as the instrumental space of social engineers and urban planners, of navigators and explorers” and representational space is the space “as produced and modified over time and through its use, spaces invested with symbolism and meaning, the space of *connaissance* (less formal or more local forms of knowledge), space as real-and-imagined” (Elden, 2004, p. 190).

Lefebvre (1992) emphasises the *unity of space* - “a unity of the forces of production and their component elements (nature, labour, technology, knowledge); structures (property relations); superstructures (institutions and the state itself)” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 85). The concept of social space “sets a very specific dialectic in motion, which, while it does not

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<sup>6</sup> “The Anglo-American stereotypical representation of Viking heritage is of sea-faring, sexist, and blood thirsty men raping and pillaging. ... In contrast, in Scandinavia the image of Vikings in popular culture finds fewer references to war and warriors. Here the Viking representation is very much concerned with the people who “abroad were known as pirates, but at home lived in a well ordered society” (Vestfold Kommune Tourism 1998). European Viking heritage tourism has largely attempted to give greater credence to the latter representation. However, it is often still the more bloodthirsty image that initially inspires tourists to visit sites.” (Halewood and Hannam, 2001, p. 565)

abolish the production-consumption relationship as this applies to things (goods, commodities, objects of exchange), certainly does modify it by widening it” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 85).

As the concealing factor of the production dynamics of space, Lefebvre (1992, p. 27) proposes a *double illusion*: the illusion of transparency and the ‘realistic’ illusion. While the “illusion of transparency has a kinship with philosophical idealism, the realistic illusion is closer to (naturalistic and mechanistic) materialism” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 30). In addition to these illusions, another concealing effect is the commodity fetishism: “Products and the circuits they establish (in space) are fetishized and so become more ‘real’ than reality itself - that is, than productive activity itself, which they thus take over” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 81).

### **2.3.2) Commodification of Urban Space**

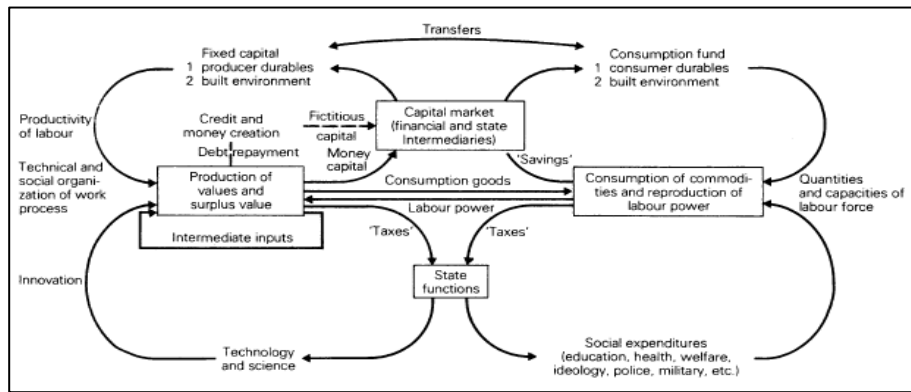
“Space: how practical! It may be sold and bought. It expands the realm of the commodity.” (Lefebvre, 2009, p. 245)

Brenner et al. (2009, p. 178) argue that according to radical scholars including Lefebvre, Castells and Harvey, cities are “major basing points for the production, circulation and consumption of commodities, and their evolving internal socio-spatial organization, governance systems and patterns of socio-political conflict must be understood in relation to this role”. In addition, according to radical scholars, “capitalist cities are not only arenas in which commodification occurs; they are themselves intensively commodified” (Brenner et al., 2009, p. 178). Therefore, urban space is the medium for the production, circulation and consumption of commodities, as well as being a commodity itself.

### **Circuits of Capital, Over-Accumulation Thesis and Its Critiques**

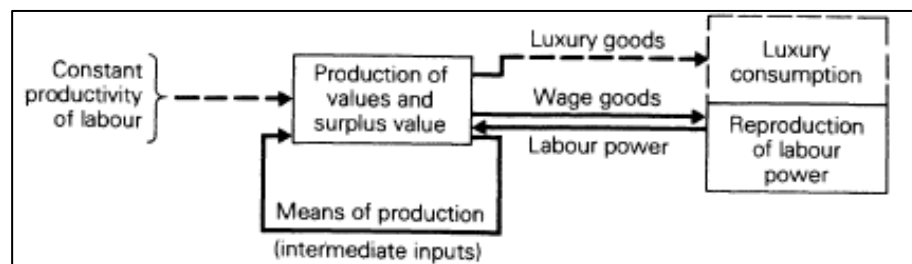
In terms of commodification of space, the operations of capital on urban space are crucial. Harvey (1985, p. 9) discusses three circuits of capital, which are primary, secondary and tertiary circuits, according to Marx’s theory of accumulation. Figure 2.1 shows the relationship between these three circuits.





**Figure 2.1 Relations between circuits (primary, secondary and tertiary) of capital**  
(Harvey, 1985, p. 9)

**The primary circuit of capital** is the primary capitalist production process (Figure 2.2). Harvey (1985) notes, with reference to Marx, that this is a process with contradictions in terms of accumulation of capital and can lead to capitalist crises.



**Figure 2.2 Primary circuit of capital** (Harvey, 1985, p. 5)

Harvey (1985, p. 4) describes this as a tendency “toward over-accumulation - too much capital is produced in aggregate relative to the opportunities to employ that capital”, and this over-accumulation produces crises, which is the main motive of capital moving into the built environment.

1. Overproduction of commodities - a glut on the market.
2. Falling rates of profit (in pricing terms, to be distinguished from the falling rate of profit in value terms, which is a theoretical construct).
3. Surplus capital, which can be manifest either as idle productive capacity or as money capital lacking opportunities for profitable employment.

4. Surplus labor and/or a rising rate of exploitation of labor power. (Harvey, 1985, pp. 4–6)

Harvey (1985) asserts that in the production process for the primary circuit of capital, Marx makes a tacit assumption that “all commodities are produced and consumed within one time period” (Harvey, 1985, p. 4) and he suggests considering “the problems posed by production and use of commodities requiring different working periods, circulation periods, and the like” (Harvey, 1985, p. 4). In this sense, Harvey (1985) considers this problem in the confines of fixed capital and consumption funds. Firstly, fixed capital is defined as items which “can be produced in the normal course of capitalist commodity production, but they are used as aids to the production process rather than as direct raw material inputs” (Harvey, 1985, p. 6). Therefore, there are “certain peculiarities that attach to its mode of production and realization” (Harvey, 1985, p. 6). In addition, fixed capital is used in the long term. Harvey (1985, p. 6) distinguishes “between fixed capital enclosed within the production process and fixed capital that functions as a physical framework for production” (which he calls “the built environment for production”). Secondly, Harvey (1985, p. 6) presents a parallelism between fixed capital and the consumption fund, and argues that a “consumption fund is formed out of commodities that function as aids rather than as direct inputs to consumption”. Harvey (1985, p. 6) defines built environment for production, built environment for consumption and built environment for both production and consumption. To produce these ‘built environments’, “[i]nvestment in the built environment therefore entails the creation of a whole physical landscape for purposes of production, circulation, exchange, and consumption” (Harvey, 1985, p. 6).

In this sense Harvey (1985, p. 6) argues that due to the *over-accumulation in the primary circuit*, “the capital flows into fixed asset and consumption fund formation” is the **secondary circuit of capital**. However, Harvey (1985, p. 7) points out that this flow from primary circuit to secondary circuit is implausible for individual capitalists since there are many barriers such as need for large scale and long lasting investments. The state and financial institutions play a critical role in this process of transferring capital into built environment: “Since the production of money and credit is a relatively autonomous process, we have to conceive of the financial and state institutions controlling the process as a kind of collective nerve center governing and mediating the relations between the primary and secondary circuits of capital” (Harvey, 1985, p. 7).

This is a critical statement considering the roles of public and private actors in providing the ways to direct capital into investment in the built environment. These institutions are not only enabling mechanisms, but also important instruments which can be effective in the ways of production of urban space.

Harvey (1985, pp. 7–8) defines a third circuit of capital, the **tertiary circuit of capital**, which “comprises, first, investment in science and technology ... and second, a wide range of social expenditures that relate primarily to the processes of reproduction of labor power”.<sup>7</sup> According to Harvey (1985, pp. 7–8), these investments also require institutional mediation to be applied since it is hard for individual capitalists to invest in such sectors as education or military power.

To conclude, Harvey proposes a framework for the flows of capital among the three circuits in relation with the built environment, which plays a crucial part in the production of space. However, this framework is criticised by other authors in terms of the causality of over-accumulation and capital flow from the first circuit into the second circuit. To illustrate, Feagin (1998) criticises the model through examples from US cities where over-accumulation is not the only reason for the flows between primary and secondary circuits, and even if there is no over-accumulation capital can flow from the primary circuit to secondary circuit (Sengul 2000). Sengul (2000) also argues that the determinant factor of capital flowing from primary circuit to secondary circuit is not over-accumulation, but in a situation where profit rates are high, capital flows to the secondary circuit (Sengul, 2000) without a presence of over-accumulation.

Although the over-accumulation argument is criticised and contrary situations can be exemplified, in Harvey’s triad there are crucial points for the understanding of the commodification of urban space. One of these points is the flow of capital to the built environment to overcome crisis. This argument is critical considering the use value-exchange value. By such a motive to invest in urban space, the use value is compromised by exchange value since the motive is capital accumulation or to prevent capital from devaluation. Another important point is the role of the state and other institutions in the flow of capital into urban space.

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<sup>7</sup> “The latter can usefully be divided into investments directed toward the qualitative improvement of-labor power from the standpoint of capital (investment in education and health by means of which the capacity of the laborers to engage in the work process will be enhanced) and investments in cooptation, integration, and repression of the labor force by ideological, military, and other means.” (Harvey 1985 p. 8)

### 2.3.3) *Commodification of Housing*

According to Forrest and Hirayama (2009), housing is at the forefront of neoliberal policy prescriptions in many countries. Drudy and Punch (2002) classify the characteristics of market and non-market tendencies in housing production (Figure 2.3). The main differentiation here is the economic base of market-based housing production. While market based production acts through motives of exchange value, non-market production acts through motives of use value. The authors warn readers about reductionist explanation of how production of housing works through this classification: “[it] should of course be noted that the market and non-market tendencies discussed here cannot be viewed completely in isolation; rather they represent opposite poles in a continuum of possible conjurations, which may characterise any housing model” (Drudy and Punch, 2002, p. 662).

In terms of contemporary commodification of housing, transformation of housing markets and housing finance is critical. Rolnik (2013) argues that through neoliberalization and globalisation, housing and urban policy agendas were transformed according to this new paradigm, which is based on “withdrawal of states from the housing sector and the implementation of policies designed to create stronger and larger market-based housing finance models” (Rolnik, 2013, p. 1058). According to Rolnik (2013, p. 1059), housing has been integrated into global financial markets. The World Bank Report published in 1993, *Housing: Enabling Markets to Work*, summarises these policies and argues the importance of the housing sector for the economy as well as providing guidelines for governments for these housing policies (Rolnik, 2013). Within these processes, the conceptualisation of housing as a right has been transformed to housing as a “means to distribute wealth” (Rolnik, 2013, p. 1059).

Rolnik (2013) classifies the two phases of global transformation of housing as *homeownership-privatisation* and *financing of homeownership*. As the first phase, supported by the discourse of home ownership, social/public housing was privatised in various formats. By promoting homeownership, the contemporary social/public housing stock has been commodified through introducing them into housing market. This practice produced social consent for privatisation while adding units into the housing market. The second phase was the financing of home ownership with

Market commodification	Non-market decommodification
Housing as a 'commodity' for sale	Housing as a 'right' for shelter
Housing as an economic good	Housing as 'merit' or social good
Driven by demand/ability to pay	Linked to needs
Construction and developer profits	Non-profit or construction profits only
Personal investment, profit-taking, wealth generator ( <i>exchange values</i> )	'Home', shelter, security, neighbourhood, community ( <i>use values</i> )
Speculative acquisition of land, hoarding, monopoly elements	Public acquisition of land for housing
Encourages segregation	Encourages integration

**Figure 2.3 Characteristics of market and non-market tendencies in housing production** (Drudy and Punch, 2002, p. 661)

mortgages and credit, which supports the commodification and financialisation of housing.

### **Commodification of Public/Social Housing**

The commodification of public/social housing is part of global neoliberal restructuring. There is a growing literature about the practice of privatisation of housing in such as China and the former Soviet countries (e.g. privatisation of housing after dissolution of the Soviet Block), as well as Western examples including UK council housing and US public housing (Ginsburg, 2005; Goetz, 2012; Gotham et al., 2001). This global practice of commodification of public/social housing is discussed through these four examples with their contingencies.

Firstly, housing in China, which was systematically de-commodified by the Cultural Revolution during the 1950s and 1960s (Wang and Murie, 1999), has been re-commodified with the country's transition to a neoliberal economy<sup>8</sup>. The emergence of real estate markets and property speculation is part of this restructuring that started in 1978 (Harvey, 2007). The National Housing Reform Plan was introduced at the end of

<sup>8</sup> "With a non-existent housing market and little government experience in this sector, housing reform was initiated in three gradual steps. More specifically, these three measures were: (1) improving the Chinese government and citizens' understanding of a housing market through various experiments in selected cities; (2) allowing individuals to purchase homes while increasing the rents of existing units; and finally (3) cutting housing subsidies while improving home finance options. Through each of these processes, China's urban housing sector slowly developed into the economic leviathan that now plays a significant role in China's financial markets." (Gibson, 2009, p. 177)

the 1980s. According to this plan, “state-owned enterprises were directed to sell their existing housing stock to their employees” while “individual buyers were also allowed to inherit and resell the unit (with restrictions) (Gibson, 2009, p. 178). The initiatives promoting the commodification of housing continued their practice in the 1990s (e.g. Urban Real Estate Administration Law) and the 2000s (Gibson, 2009). Along with the commodification of housing, mortgage market was introduced (Gibson, 2009). Through this restructuring, a commercial housing sector was created, and housing estates which were commercially built became a key aspect of the urban environment in big cities in China (Wang and Murie, 1999, p. 1479). To illustrate, by the end of 1996, in Beijing the number of these housing estates (completed and in construction) had reached around 200 (Wang and Murie, 1999, p. 1479).

Secondly, former Soviet Union cities and Central and Eastern European cities have undergone economic, social and cultural changes, which commodification of housing is a part of. Economic transformation, marketization of public enterprises, privatisation, transformation of land and housing policies are among the key forces transforming urban planning and policy and urban space. Key urban infrastructure was privatised, and replaced with private enterprise. During this restructuring, urban areas were expanded together with suburbanisation and decentralisation (Tsenkova and Nedovic-Budic, 2006). Recommodification of housing, which was decommodified in the Soviet period, is an important imperative within this restructuring. This resulted in polarization of social areas and the housing market, production of gentrified housing enclaves on one hand, and problematic housing estates on the other hand, as well as predominant owner occupation (Tsenkova, 2006, p. 47). To illustrate, Axenov et al. (2006) summarise the transformation of property in the post-Soviet period in St Petersburg. In the *transformation city* phase, changes in legislation, mass privatisation, and introduction of private property as a right in the constitution were realised, while in the *post-transformation city* phase, property legislation was stabilized, mass privatisation was ended and legislation for private property ownership was set (Axenov et al., 2006).

Thirdly, the US presents an example of deepening commodification of housing in a capitalist country. Gotham et al. (2001, p. 312) state that since the 1970s “retrenchment, privatization, and devolution of authority, responsibility, and funds” have been core elements of federal housing policy in the US. It is an ongoing process with contemporary urban regeneration processes, policies and programmes. To

illustrate, the HOPE IV programme “involves the demolition of large public housing estates, the displacement and dispersal of low-income residents, and the replacement of some of the lost units as part of mixed-income communities” (Goetz, 2012, p. 342).

Fourthly, the restructuring of social housing in the UK presents another example of deepening commodification of housing, but following a different path from the US. According to Fenton et al. (2013), the number of social housing units has declined in the UK since the 1980s, mostly by selling units to residents in addition to demolition of some units through regeneration projects. . The right-to-buy provisions implemented by the Thatcher government in the 1980s “gave council tenants the right to buy their home, after a period of tenancy, at a substantial discount from its open-market value” (Fenton et al., 2013, p. 343), and have continued to be implemented in the 2000s (Fenton et al., 2013, p. 343). In England, in 2010, the percentage of households living in social housing decreased to 19% from 31% in 1981 (Fenton et al., 2013, p. 343). Ginsburg (2005) warns that with this pace of decrease in the number of council housing, it will disappear in the near future. Fenton et al. (2013) highlight another side of this drive towards commodification of housing units in the UK: “increasing use of subsidised private renting” (Fenton et al., 2013, p. 373). According to the authors, “a large proportion of low-income households in London now rent from private landlords with the help of state subsidy, rather than living in public housing”, which they define as “the most significant extension of the commodification of housing in the past 10 years” (Fenton et al., 2013, p. 373). Another mechanism applied in commodification of housing in addition to right-to-buy and rent subsidies is “‘large scale voluntary transfers’ (LSVTs) of housing stock from local authorities to housing associations” (Ginsburg, 2005, p. 115). Ginsburg (2005) defines this transformation as replacement of direct supply of affordable rented housing by public authorities with quasi-private landlords.

#### **2.4) Housing Enclaves and Commodification of Urban Space**

Housing enclaves present a practice of commodification in the form of slices of urban tissue segregated from surrounding environments and with exclusive provision of key urban infrastructure within the enclaves. With parallels between the global expansion of housing enclaves and the increase in commodification of urban space through

neoliberal restructuring, housing enclaves are considered as one of Brenner and Theodore's (2002) spaces of neoliberalism.

Bodnar and Molnar (2010) argue that the private and public divide is not simple, but relational, and it is changing in the process. The authors also state that the “foundational moment [for gated communities] is the privatisation of ‘what would normally be public space’ (Blakely and Snyder, 1997) and the taking over of functions associated with the state, including service provisioning and planning” (Bodnar and Molnar, 2010, p. 809). In this sense, privatisation of key urban infrastructure is a part of the process of expansion of the commodity realm. Therefore, housing enclaves with their private provision of infrastructure play an important role in the commodification of urban space.

#### ***2.4.1) Global Rise of Housing Enclaves***

Housing enclaves have become a way of urban space production in many countries, with different versions and with different conceptualisations. For Blakely and Snyder (1997, p. 2), *gated communities* are “residential areas with restricted access in which normally public spaces are privatised”, while drawing a comprehensive picture of gated communities in the US. The authors define gated communities as “security developments with designated perimeters, usually walls or fences, and controlled entrances that are intended to prevent penetration by nonresidents” (Blakely and Snyder, 1997, p. 2). Gated communities are differentiated from condominium buildings in terms of restricted access to shared spaces and facilities. Gated communities’ “walls and fences preclude public access to streets, sidewalks, parks, beaches, rivers, trails, playground – all resources that without gates or walls would be open and shared by all citizens of a locality” (Blakely and Snyder, 1997, p. 2). In this definition, *restriction on the access to shared spaces and facilities by being gated* is the main criterion for a development to be considered as a *gated community*.

Glasze (2005, p. 221), on the other hand, presents the expansion of *private neighbourhoods* in the US: “according to the figures of the Community Association Institute (CAI), the number of private neighbourhoods grew rapidly from around 10 000 in 1970 to more than 200 000 in 1998”<sup>9</sup>. According to the figures of the Community

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<sup>9</sup> “As membership in the CAI is voluntary, that list probably even underestimates the number of private neighbourhoods.” (Glasze, 2005, p. 221)

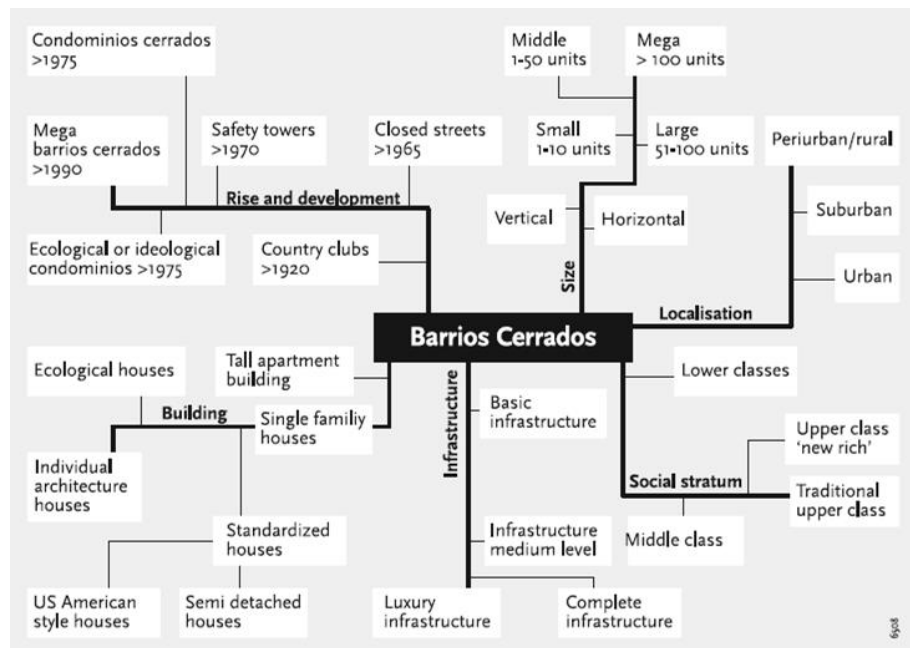


Association Institute, “[e]very fifth of these private neighbourhoods in the US is gated and guarded” (Glasze, 2005, p. 221). These figures demonstrate the scale of the expansion, which is not limited to the US (Glasze, 2005).

Borsdorf and Hidalgo (2010) point out the widespread development of, and boom in, gated communities – *barrios cerrados* – in Latin American countries. The concept of *barrios cerrados* (*closed neighbourhoods*), which is developed in the literature as an overarching concept for different types of housing enclaves, refers to “a dwelling complex that contains more than one unit, has a common infrastructure, and is separated from the public by gates and fences or walls” (Borsdorf and Hidalgo, 2010, pp. 26–27) with urban infrastructure and social facilities. According to the authors, *barrios cerrados* are being developed throughout Latin American countries, from the regions that are integrated with the global system and medium size towns in Brazil to the extreme southern regions of Chile. The *barrios cerrados* can be seen in different types of “fenced neighbourhoods” (Borsdorf and Hidalgo, 2010, p. 26) and are not limited to those for upper classes.

Another version of housing enclaves is the *condominium estates* in Singapore (Pow, 2009). Rather than being a product of the real estate market, according to Pow (2009), condominium estates are developed with state involvement. The *condominium estates* are also gated and have private security. According to Pow (2009) *condominium estates* are closely related to “the selling of a gracious lifestyle and the exclusive good life” (p.221), therefore the *gates* and *walls* are more related to prestige and exclusivity than security. Pow (2009) asserts that *upscale condominium estates* in Singapore are similar to *fortified enclaves* in Sao Paulo in terms of offering “a ‘total way of life’ that articulates common basic elements such as prestige, security, seclusion, social homogeneity, amenities and services” (p.221).

Bodnar and Molnar (2010) define another version of enclaves – *residential parks* – developed in Hungary. According to the authors, the *residential parks* have emerged as “a new genre of housing” (Bodnar and Molnar, 2010, p. 790) in Budapest, considering the emphasis on “upper-middle-class lifestyles, exclusive services, safety and seclusion”



**Figure 2.4 Types of *barrios cerrados* in Latin American countries**

(their rise and development, size, location, building type and social class) (Borsdorf and Hidalgo, 2010, p. 28)

(Bodnar and Molnar, 2010, p. 790) in marketing of these housing projects. The examples show that *housing enclaves* have become a global phenomenon that has developed since the 1970s and has been expanding geographically. They also show that the enclaves present many similarities as well as differences according to their contexts, development patterns and practices. As part of this global phenomenon, *branded housing projects* have developed in Turkey as a version of housing enclaves, since the early 2000s, following the deepening of neoliberal restructuring processes in that country.

## 2.5) Branded Spatial Development and Commodification of Urban Space

### 2.5.1) Brands and Branding

Brands are not novel to the contemporary or modern world. Some early brands go back to ancient civilisations such as the potter’s marks on pots found in the Mediterranean Region belonging to Greek and Roman civilisations (Clifton, 2009). Moor (2007) argues that brands “have operated as a force in the organization of production since the mid to late nineteenth century” (Moor, 2007, p. 3). According to Simoes and Dibb

(2001), a brand embodies a set of attributes (both physical and socio-psychological ones) associated with the product (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010, p. 4).

Compared to brands, *branding* as a term is relatively new, emerging during the 1990s (Moor, 2007). According to Moor (2007), during the 1990s practices like product and retail design, and marketing “became consolidated into an integrated approach to marketing and business strategy known as branding” (Moor, 2007, p. 3). Knox and Bickerton (2003) define branding as a process of selecting and associating attributes of a product which are believed to add value to that product (Ashworth and Kavaratzis, 2010, p. 4). Moor (2007), on the other hand, defines branding as an industry which is “a key mechanism in ensuring the smooth functioning of a global capitalist economy, and in public discourse it frequently serves as an index of both the increasing commodification or ‘marketization’ of everyday life, and of a particularly ruthless, Western-dominated form of globalization” (Moor, 2007, p. 1).

According to Moor (2007), by the 1990s, branding had started to be seen as more than just a tool for *differentiating products and reassuring consumers*, as it was seen at the beginning of the twentieth century. Moor (2007, p. 6) argues that the accounts of the 1990s “assumed instead that brands should embody ‘relationships’, ‘values’ and ‘feelings’, to be expressed through an expanded range of ‘executional elements’ and ‘visual indicators’”, which also brought critiques of branding, for example, seeing branding as “as encroaching upon more and more of public space”.

### ***2.5.2) Branded Spaces and Place Branding***

Contemporary branded space varies from brand shops to branded housing projects. Branded environments such as flagship stores in major cities and branded spaces for retail and leisure are common (Moor, 2007). These branded environments are spaces attached to particular brands and aim to promote, enforce or embody the brand.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> “The development of branding has in many cases led to the creation of new ‘branded environments’ (Moor 2003), perhaps most obviously in the sphere of retail, where powerful brands like Nike, Disney and Levi’s have created spectacular flagship stores in major cities, designed to build brand loyalty by creating positive customer ‘experiences’. High-end brands such as Prada and Helmut Lang hire avant-garde architects like Rem Koolhaas to create brand environments that ‘augment’ ordinary spatial experience and replicate the model of the cathedral or the museum (Manovich 2002), while chains like Starbucks create proprietary hybrids of retail and leisure and multiply these through strategies of ‘clustering’ (Klein 2000; Lury 2004).” (Moor, 2007, p. 65)

Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010, p. 4) argue that place branding attempts to transfer the issues of *brand* and *branding* “to the operational environment of place management”. According to the authors, the concept of place branding “centres around the conceptualisation of a specific place as a brand” (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, p. 4). Moilanen and Rainisto (2008, p. 3) argue that in the practice of place branding the branding models and procedures used for regular products are applied mainly; however, these are “not directly applicable when you are branding complex and multidimensional entities such as countries, cities or tourist resorts” (Moilanen and Rainisto, 2008, p. 3).

Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010) categorise approaches in the literature of place branding as *place of origin branding*, *nation branding*, *destination branding*, *culture/entertainment branding*, and *integrated place branding*, while acknowledging the growing literature on place branding. The *place of origin branding* is an approach using the place of origin of a product for branding the product. Therefore, it relates the product with its place of origin by using images, stereotypes, and qualities of that place. This approach is more about branding a product than a place (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, p. 4). *Nation branding* is an approach developed mostly by marketing consultants who are advisors for national governments. It aims to promote development of tourism and attraction of foreign investments by branding the nation (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, pp. 4–5). *Destination branding* is based on the role of branding a place for the marketing of tourism destinations. It is the most researched area of place branding as well as being the one which provides many theoretical inputs for the framework of place branding (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, p. 5). *Culture/entertainment branding* focuses on the “the examination of the effects of cultural and entertainment branding on the physical, economic and, sometimes, social environment of cities” (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, pp. 5–6). High profile buildings and landmarks are commonly used in promotion of the city under this approach (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, pp. 5–6). *Integrated place branding* is an approach discussing “the possibilities of using branding as an approach to integrate, guide and focus place management” (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, p. 6).

Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010, p. 6) point out that many works in the literature focus on “the implementation of branding within place management” with an assumption that people perceive cities in a similar way to perceiving commodities or corporations (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2010, p. 6). In this respect, there is a tendency in the

literature to transfer the ways of branding from marketing of products to place promotion. Although there are other approaches and works (e.g. Anttiroiko (2014)'s work on the political economy of city branding) in place branding literature as well as these operational approaches, this statement of Kavaratzis and Ashworth (2010) is important to give the essence of the place branding literature.

Pike (2009, p. 621), on the other hand, identifies a gap in geography literature about brands and branding regarding “the geographical entanglements of brands and branding”. This is an important point considering the difference between place-branding and the relationship of brands with urban space.

### **Place Branding and Themed Spaces**

The literature on theming and themed spaces provides critical discussions regarding the commodification of urban space and experience. Lukas (2007, p. 1) defines theming as “a motivated form of geographical representation in which meaningful connections are made among unifying ideas, symbols, or discourses”. According to Lukas (2007, p. 1) “[t]heming involves the use of an overarching theme, such as western, to create a holistic and integrated spatial organisation of a consumer venue”. Gottdiener (2001, p. 5) defines *themed environment* as “material product of two social processes”: “socially constructed, built environment – about large material forms that are designed to serve as containers for commodified human interaction (for example, malls)” (Gottdiener, 2001, p. 5) and “themed material forms that are products of a cultural process aimed at investing constructed spaces with symbolic meaning and at conveying that meaning to inhabitants and users through symbolic motifs” (Gottdiener, 2001, p. 5).

According to Lukas (2007) themed space is a common point in intellectual discussions and everyday life. It becomes a part of everyday life that the consequences of theming for daily life are either avoided or not understood by people. According to Gottdiener (2001, p. 3), the *themed milieu* is expanding in all areas of urban space:

“... the themed milieu, with its pervasive use of overarching symbolic motifs that define an entire built space, increasingly characterizes not only cities but also suburban areas, shopping places, airports, and recreational spaces such as baseball stadia, museums, restaurants, and amusement parks.

Progressively, then, our daily life occurs within a material environment that is dependent on and organized around overarching motifs.”

The pervasiveness of themed space in everyday life and its mundaneness in everyday spaces are relevant topics considering the representation of branded housing projects. Branding efforts for the projects usually use *themes* such as “a place like a holiday village” to attract future residents or buyers.

## **2.6) Conclusion**

This chapter presented a detailed review of neoliberalism including its historical development and contemporary practice. It also covered the theoretical approaches to the analysis of neoliberalization in the literature. As framing the perspective of the research for conceptualising neoliberalization is critical for further steps in the analysis of commodification of urban space, the research positions this critical case study within the framework of variegated neoliberalization, and contributes to this literature by presenting Turkey as an example of variegated neoliberalization.

A second set of related concepts for this investigation comprises commodity and commodification. As pointed out in this chapter, commodification is a topic of interest in various areas of the literature. The research follows Castree’s (2004) criticism of the ambiguity of the meaning of commodity and commodification. In order to eliminate any ambiguity in the use of these concepts, this chapter reviewed the different approaches to, and theories of, commodification as well as various areas of commodification (nature, culture, contested ones like babies or body parts).

The research positions this case study as aligned with Marx's theory of commodity and commodification by acknowledging the value of commodity as coagulated labour, while seeing commodity as having both use and exchange values. The research therefore proposes its theoretical framework (Chapter 3) in relation to this perspective.

The research also acknowledges the commodification of urban space in relation with the dynamics of production of space (Lefebvre, 1992) and capital accumulation through urban space (Harvey, 1985), and discusses this relationship further while proposing a theoretical framework that merges these theories with Gramsci’s theory of hegemony.

### **CHAPTER 3 - THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: COMMODIFICATION OF URBAN SPACE UNDER NEOLIBERAL URBANISATION**

This chapter sets out the theoretical framework for the research. While the discussion in this chapter particularly focuses on the theoretical framework for investigating the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation through the critical case study of branded housing projects in Istanbul, it builds on the discussion in the previous chapter.

As discussed in Chapter 2, neoliberalism “has become a common sense of the times” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p. 381) while providing “a kind of operating framework or ‘ideological software’ for competitive globalization, inspiring and imposing far-reaching programmes of state restructuring (such as austerity urbanism – see Peck (2012)) and rescaling across a wide range of national and local contexts.” (Peck and Tickell, 2002, p. 380).

As also discussed in Chapter 2, cities are not passive recipients of neoliberalization processes, but neoliberalization has been “actively constituted (and contested) across a planetary system of urban(izing) regions” (Peck et al., 2013, p. 1093). Therefore, “cities have become critical nodes, and points of tension, in the evolving scalar politics of neoliberalization” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 49). In addition, “urban regions provide an important reference point for understanding some of the limits, contradictions and mutations of the neoliberal project since the 1990s” (Peck et al., 2009, p. 49). Following this position, the research approaches urban space and its commodification as a part of a broader restructuring process while focusing on branded housing projects as a specific case to investigate these dynamics.

In order to explain the processes and patterns of neoliberal urbanisation, Peck et al. (2009, p. 49) propose a framework for neoliberal urbanisation with its *mechanisms*, *moments of destruction* and *moments of creation* (APPENDIX I). Whereas a *moment of destruction* is a moment where the previous system is dismantled, a moment of creation is a moment where new forms of practice are created. Therefore, the mechanisms of

neoliberal urbanisation are the mechanisms for these destruction and creation practices. This framework provides a classification for mechanisms of neoliberal urbanisation, moments of destruction and moments of creation of Western neoliberal urbanisation.

As discussed so far, while neoliberalism has become the “commonsense of the times”, there is not a one-and-only neoliberalism and neoliberalization process. In practice, there are various practices and processes of neoliberalization, although “the ideology of neoliberalism rests on a deference to a singular, ahistorical and uniquely efficient market” (Peck et al., 2009, pp. 51–52). In each locality *variegated* practices of neoliberalization are observed, together with their overarching similarities. Therefore, some of these moments and mechanisms are relevant for different contexts (including neoliberal urbanisation practices in Turkey), while some are not. However, this framework provides a valuable analysis tool to approach neoliberal urbanisation practices.

To illustrate, Peck et al. (2009) define the mechanism of “restructuring urban housing markets” in relation to moments of destruction of low rent accommodation opportunities (e.g. public housing), elimination of subsidies and rent control, creating opportunities for speculative real estate investment, creating transitional as well as emergency provision for the homeless, and creating new ways of providing low rent housing such as tenant-based vouchers and market rents (APPENDIX I). Each of these moments presents practices and processes of commodification of urban space. By dismantling public or social housing and replacing this provision with the forms provided by the real estate market, the commodity realm expands in the housing areas. By solving the problem with mechanisms fostering market dynamics (e.g. tenant-based vouchers), sections of housing provision that were outside of the market are now in the process of integration to the real estate markets.

As this research aims to investigate commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation, this framework provides valuable and critical insights to approach both the moments as practices of neoliberal urbanisation and mechanisms as the dynamics behind it. However, investigation of commodification of urban space requires connecting this restructuring with dynamics of production of urban space, and even requires interlinking these dynamics with socio-economic relations. Therefore, the research proposes a theoretical framework interlinking commodification theory, the



production of space and the theory of cultural hegemony in order to investigate the phenomenon of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation in depth, together with its underlying dynamics (in this chapter).

### **3.1) Commodification, the Production of Space (Lefebvre) and Hegemony (Gramsci)**

In Chapter 2, approaches to commodity and commodification and the dynamics of production of space were reviewed and discussed accordingly. As seen through the framework Peck et al. (2009) propose (discussed above, and presented at APPENDIX D), and through the discussion of neoliberal urbanisation in Chapter 2, investigation of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation requires a multifaceted approach to the dynamics of production of urban space. Kipfer (2002, p. 119) puts forward a possible theoretical opening for developing such an approach: “excavating an urban Marxism through Gramsci and Lefebvre may help develop an understanding of the reorganization of capitalism by extending recent middle-range analyses of ‘urban hegemony’ from state theory and urban political economy to everyday life”. According to Kipfer (2002, p. 126), Lefebvre and Gramsci’s approaches to hegemony are “different but complementary”. While Gramsci’s approach focuses on “particular historic-geographical constellations of state and civil society” (Kipfer, 2002, p. 126), Lefebvre’s approach focuses on “universalizing ... tendencies of commodification and moments of utopian possibility manifested within the contradictions of everyday life” (Kipfer, 2002, p. 126).

On the other hand, for both Gramsci and Lefebvre, hegemony is “the contingent process through which capitalist totality is constructed” (Kipfer, 2002, p. 126), which is produced through the “links between popular culture and ‘relations of force’ among socio-political forces (Gramsci) and the connections between everyday life, the state, capital and dominant knowledge (Lefebvre)” (Kipfer, 2002, pp. 126–127). Both authors focus on cultural phenomena, common sense and everyday life, and both of them accept power as a social relationship without reducing social relations “to disciplinary effects of micro-technologies of knowledge/power” (Kipfer, 2002, p. 127).

In order to investigate the dynamics of the production of space under neoliberal urbanisation, the research follows this approach of interlinking the two theories. In

addition, the research particularly focuses on their relationship with commodification of urban space and its mechanisms. Firstly, the research approaches commodification of urban space itself through discussing spatial practice (Lefebvre) with primitive accumulation/accumulation by dispossession strategies. Secondly, it investigates the enabling mechanisms of commodification of urban space through the multifaceted relationship among political society (Gramsci), civil society (Gramsci), representations of space (Lefebvre) and representational space (Lefebvre).

### **3.2) Commodification of Urban Space under Neoliberal Urbanisation (Spatial Practice)**

This research investigates the commodification of urban space through the relationship of the use value and the exchange value while acknowledging the *value* as coagulated labour (Marx). As discussed, Prudham defines commodification as “interlinked processes whereby: production for use is systematically displaced by production for exchange; social consumption and reproduction increasingly relies on purchased commodities; new classes of goods and services are made available in the commodity-form; and money plays an increasing role in mediating exchange as a common currency of value” (Prudham, 2009, p. 215).

Prudham (2009, p. 215) defines “moments of commodification” as *stretching*, which is “the development of relations of exchange spanning across greater distances of space and time (market expansion)” and *deepening*, which is “systemic provisioning of more and more types of things (goods and services) in the commodity-form”. In other words, while stretching refers to market expansion, deepening refers to the expansion of the commodity realm through provision of goods and services as commodities.

As discussed in the literature review, Lefebvre (1990) formulated that space plays a crucial role in the survival of capitalism through expanding commodity realm on space. In addition, every society (mode of production) produces its own space, which is critical for its survival (Lefebvre, 1990). Therefore, investigating the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation (as the latest version of capitalist relationships) requires a deep investigation of the dynamics of production of space and their intrinsic relationships with the commodity form and mechanisms of commodification. Following this perspective, the research discusses primitive accumulation/accumulation

by dispossession in relation to deepening of commodification of urban space, by adapting Prudham's argument of *deepening of commodification* on urban space together with Marx's concept of primitive accumulation (and Harvey's adaptation of accumulation by dispossession).

### ***3.2.1) Primitive Accumulation / Accumulation by Dispossession and Deepening of Commodification of Urban Space***

Primitive accumulation is defined by Marx as the starting accumulation for capitalist production. Marx (2000) defines primitive accumulation according to commodification of labour, capital accumulation from agricultural production, discovery of gold and silver in America and slavery in Africa. Primitive accumulation is a form of capital accumulation which is done by commodification of something which is not a commodity in the market initially.

“A closer look at Marx's description of primitive accumulation reveals a wide range of processes. These include the commodification and privatization of land and the forceful expulsion of peasant populations; the conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state, etc.) into exclusive private property rights; the suppression of rights to the commons; the commodification of labour power and the suppression of alternative (indigenous) forms of production and consumption; colonial, neo-colonial, and imperial processes of appropriation of assets (including natural resources); the monetization of exchange and taxation, particularly of land; the slave trade and usury, the national debt, and ultimately the credit system as radical means of primitive accumulation.” (Harvey, 2003, p. 145)

Harvey (2003) re-defines the concept of primitive accumulation as *accumulation by dispossession* by arguing that in Marx's conceptualisation it is the accumulation for the beginning of capitalism; however, in fact 'primitive accumulation' is a continuing process. Therefore, Harvey (2003) re-conceptualises the concept of 'primitive accumulation' around 'dispossession'. Harvey (2004) argues this re-conceptualisation as widening of primitive accumulation through contemporary practice of commodification. To illustrate, the author acknowledges processes of primitive accumulation, which Marx defined, such as “the commodification and privatization of

land and the forceful expulsion of peasant populations; ... colonial, neo-colonial and imperial processes of appropriation of assets, including natural resources; monetization of exchange and taxation, particularly of land; slave trade” (Harvey, 2004, p. 74), while expanding these processes with “wholly new mechanisms of accumulation by dispossession” such as intellectual property rights, patenting and licensing of genetic materials, and “the wholesale commodification of nature in all its forms” (Harvey, 2004, p. 75). In other words, primitive accumulation/accumulation by dispossession is realised through transforming something previously having only use value into a commodity having exchange value in the market. Referring back to the literature discussed in the previous chapter, many new ‘things’ which do not have any commodity character, such as living organisms, body parts or genome, are becoming commodities having an exchange value. This presents a deepening in commodification in the contemporary capitalist world, as it is argued in this research.

To be more specific, Harvey (2005) refers, through the concept of accumulation by dispossession, to accumulation practices such as “commodification and privatisation of land”, “conversion of various forms of property rights (common, collective, state, etc) into exclusive private property rights” and “suppression of rights to the commons” (Harvey, 2005, p. 32). In this context, Harvey (2005) identifies four elements of accumulation by dispossession/primitive accumulation: privatization, financialization, management and manipulation of crisis, and state redistributions.

The commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation presents a *deepening moment of commodification* (a.k.a “systemic provisioning of more and more types of things (goods and services) in the commodity-form” (Prudham, 2009)) with practices of primitive accumulation/accumulation by dispossession in urban space. Following the example of housing, the transformation of housing provision from social housing to private provision presents an example of a mechanism for primitive accumulation (Marx) / accumulation by dispossession (Harvey). Privatisation of social housing stock, as part of this transformation of housing provision, is a mechanism for *accumulation by dispossession*: While the public dispossessing housing, the housing units are transformed into market commodities. Therefore, this contributes into accumulation of capital.

In order to investigate this deepening of commodification, the research focuses on spatial practice and its relationship with the commodification of urban space, as is discussed next, and argues that the contemporary commodification of urban space is deepening through the spatial practice of production of urban space.

### **The Production of Space**

“... every society - and hence every mode of production with its subvariants (i.e. all those societies which exemplify the general concept) - produces a space, its own space. The city of the ancient world cannot be understood as a collection of people and things in space; nor can it be visualized solely on the basis of a number of texts and treatises on the subject of space, even though some of these, as for example Plato's *Critias* and *Timaeus* or Aristotle's *Metaphysics A*, may be irreplaceable sources of knowledge. For the ancient city had its own spatial practice: it forged its own - appropriated - space. Whence the need for a study of that space which is able to apprehend it as such, in its genesis and its form, with its own specific time or times (the rhythm of daily life), and its particular centres and polycentrism (agora, temple, stadium, etc. ).” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 31)

In Lefebvre's conceptual framework, “(Social) space is a (social) product” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 26). Lefebvre (1992) proposes a conceptual triad for production of space: spatial practices, representations of space and representational space. While spatial practice is “physical form, real space, space that is generated and used” (Elden, 2004, p. 190), representations of space are “state-bound interventions of policy, planning and dominant knowledge” (Kipfer, 2002, p. 138), and the representational space embodies “complex symbolisms, sometimes coded, sometimes not, linked to the clandestine or underground side of social life” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 33). (See APPENDIX II for details)

### **Spatial Practice**

“Not that the production of space is solely responsible for the survival of capitalism: it is in no sense independent of the extension of capitalism to pre-existing space. Rather, it is the overall situation - spatial practice in its

entirety - that has saved capitalism from extinction.” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 346)

Spatial practice is crucial for the survival of capitalist relationships. Spatial practice “embraces production and reproduction, and the particular locations and spatial sets characteristic of each social formation” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 33).

“Spatial practice of a society secretes that society's space; it propounds and presupposes it, in a dialectical interaction; it produces it slowly and surely as it masters and appropriates it. From the analytic standpoint, the spatial practice of a society is revealed through the deciphering of its space.” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 38)

Lefebvre, in his discussion of the production of space, applies his analytical framework to “Rome and the Roman spirit” to provide an example of spatial practice:

“Spatial practice, dual in character: the Roman road, whether civil or military, links the *urbs* to the countryside over which it exercises domination. The road allows the city, as people as Senate, to assert its political centrality at the core of the *orbis terrarum*. The gate, through which the imperial way proceeds from *urbs* to *orbis*, marks the sacrosanct enclosure off from its subject territories, and allows for entrance and exit. At the opposite pole - the pole of ‘private’ life, juridically established in the heart of ‘political’ society, and according to the same principles, those of property - we find the Roman house, a response to clearly defined needs.” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 245)

The example suggests that spatial practice covers physical space / built environment and organisation of everyday life:

“As for spatial practice, it is observed, described and analysed on a wide range of levels: in architecture, in city planning or ‘urbanism’ (a term borrowed from official pronouncements), in the actual design of routes and localities (‘town and country planning’), in the organization of everyday life, and, naturally, in urban reality.” (Lefebvre, 1992, pp. 413–414)

Therefore, the spatial practice consists of perceived elements of space as well as daily routine and practice. According to Lefebvre (1992), “spatial practice under neocapitalism” is “a close association between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 38).

“What is spatial practice under neocapitalism? It embodies **a close association, within perceived space, between daily reality (daily routine) and urban reality (the routes and networks which link up the places set aside for work, ‘private’ life and leisure).**” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 38) (Bold emphasis added)

The two, daily reality and urban reality, have relationships which are far from being dualistic, but intrinsic. As Petersen and Minnery (2013, p. 826) argue, spatial practice is the space which relates “the physical practices, the everyday routines and networks and the way social life is organised (Yacobi, 2004)”, therefore, these “practices and routines that constitute everyday life facilitate communication and social exchange (Hubbard & Sanders, 2003)”. Hence, spatial practice is a concept which can provide a theoretical tool to investigate the physical space (urban form, urban and architectural elements of urban space,) and its relationship with spatial experience (daily routine and practice).

Following this theoretical path, the research identifies two dimensions to investigate the deepening of commodification of urban space through spatial practice: spatial pattern and temporal dimension. Via these two dimensions, the research investigates firstly the practice of commodification through transforming the spatial pattern, and secondly the practice of commodification through expanding it into urban experience.

Pine and Gilmore (2011), in their work on *The Experience Economy*, explain the way of expanding *business* into *experience* through the example of Las Vegas.

“Virtually everything about Vegas is a designated experience, from the slot machines at the airport to the gambling casinos that line the Strip; from the themed hotels and restaurants to the singing, circus, and magic shows; and from the Forum Shops mall that recreates ancient Rome to the amusement parks, thrill rides, video arcades, and carnival-style games that attract the

twentysomethings and give older parents a reason to bring their kids in town.” (Pine and Gilmore, 2011, p. 12)

Lonsway (2007) highlights the work of Pine and Gilmore (2011) in terms of the ways of expansion of the entertainment industry’s market logic into everyday life and urban space:

“the value of spatial deployment; their analysis, in fact, rests on the spatial metaphors of the stage and screen, on the spatial apparatuses of stage sets, and on the notion of everyday life as public performance. While they refrain from explicitly stating the spatiality of their venture, this is a radical gesture. Through dramaturgical metaphors (which explicitly heighten the entertainment bias of their message), their book ultimately insists on the **fundamental importance of spatial experiences**. Where architects, urban designers, and planners have often failed - **in demonstrating a concrete value of improving spatial experience** - the authors of *The Experience Economy* have succeeded. With this demonstration comes the argument that the **themed experience is holy grail of the new spatially-driven economy**.” (Lonsway, 2007, p. 226) (bold emphasis added)

In other words, for Pine and Gilmore (2011) spatial experience is crucial in a “spatially-driven economy”, which is directly related to the commodification of spatial experience.

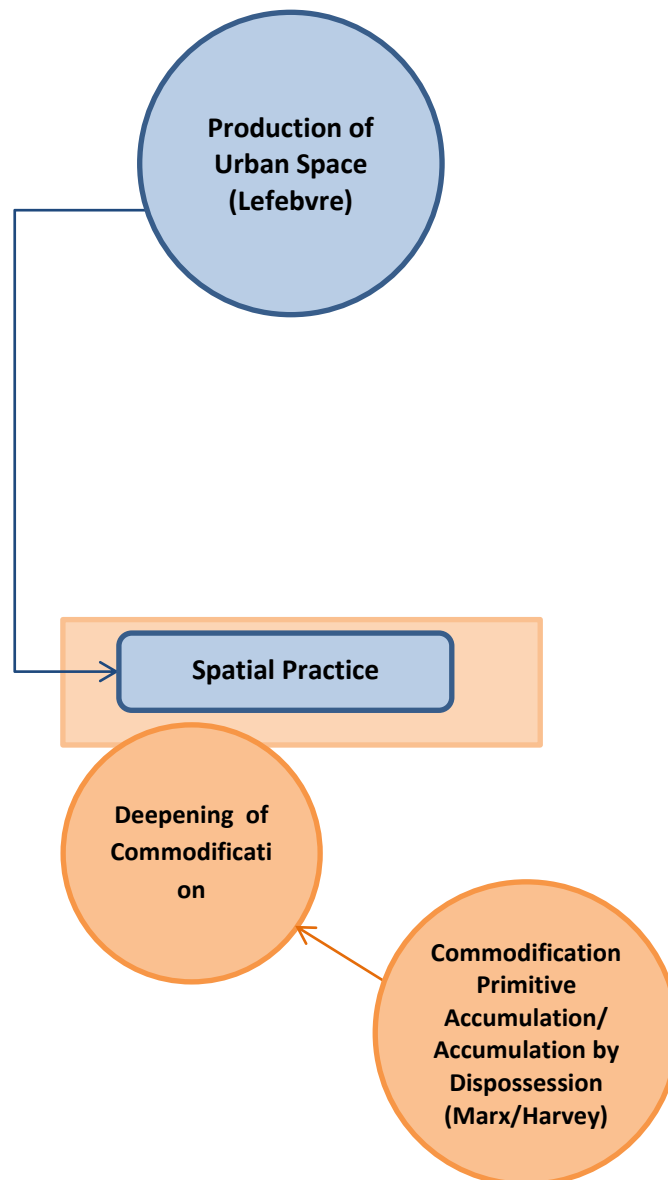
Lonsway (2007) argues there was a rise in “the narrative control of an individual's experience” of everyday life during the 1990s, which corresponds to the rise of neoliberalization practices:

“... no longer is the intensely narrated experience of space exclusive to the theme park; back-stores engineered to affect moods, organize movements, and compel engagement have moved first to the realm of retail design, then to urban development, and most recently to health and palliative care facilities. ... From the experience of shopping to the experience of dementia and the experience of death, **the narrative control of an individual's experience is arguably central to commercial success**. As a result **today's commercial design practices, from real estate development to urban**



**planning and from architecture to industrial design, have responded, borrowing design techniques and spatial planning logics from the former owners of the thematic experience design – the entertainment industry.” (Lonsway, 2007, p. 225) (bold emphasis added)**

Therefore, this emphasis on individuals’ everyday experience is a critical point in terms of commodification of urban space through commodifying the spatial experience, which deepens the commodification into the temporal dimension.



**Figure 3.1 Theoretical framework of the research – Spatial practice and primitive accumulation (Source: The author)**

### **3.3) Enabling Mechanisms for the Commodification of Urban Space (Development Processes and Discursive Formation)**

#### ***3.3.1) 'Regulatory Mechanisms' as Enabling Mechanisms for the Commodification of Urban Space (Regulatory Mechanisms and Capital Accumulation Processes)***

According to the neoliberalism literature reviewed in Chapter 2, neoliberalization aims to support capital accumulation and neoliberal urbanisation is critical for this accumulation through urban development. Peck et al. (2009, pp. 59–62) draw up a framework for the mechanisms for neoliberal urbanisation (APPENDIX I) including “recalibration of intergovernmental relations”, “retrenchment of public finance”, “restructuring the welfare state” or “restructuring urban housing markets”, as discussed previously. These are enabled by newly enacted or restructured laws and regulations. From a Gramscian perspective, these enabling mechanisms are part of political society.

Following this perspective, this research defines these enabling mechanisms operated by the political society as the *regulatory mechanism*. The regulatory mechanisms play a crucial role as an enabling mechanism for capital accumulation, and processes of commodification of urban space. In order to investigate the deepening of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation, the regulatory mechanisms are also required to be investigated together with its contemporary applications in urban development processes.

#### ***3.3.2) 'Social Consent' as Enabling Mechanisms for Commodification of Urban Space***

In the framework Peck et al. (2009, pp. 59–62) proposed, two mechanisms for neoliberal urbanisation are “reregulation of urban civil society” and “re-representing the city” (APPENDIX I). While in the former mechanism, the discourse of “‘liberal city’ in which all inhabitants are entitled to basic civil liberties, social services and political rights” (Peck et al., 2009, pp. 59–62) was weakened; in the latter one, “‘entrepreneurial’ discourses and representations focused on urban revitalization, reinvestment and rejuvenation” (Peck et al., 2009, pp. 59–62) were created. These two mechanisms underline the roles of civil society and representation of urban space in neoliberal urbanisation.

The investigation of civil society and the representation of urban space together with representational space (as dimensions of production of space) under neoliberal urbanisation provide clues for the dynamics of contemporary commodification of urban space.

### **Civil Society**

“...the one that can be called ‘civil society’, that is the ensemble of organisms commonly called ‘private’, and that of ‘political society’ or the state. These two levels correspond on the one hand to the function of ‘hegemony’ which the dominant group exercises throughout society and on the other hand to that of ‘direct domination’ or commands exercised through state and ‘juridical’ government.” (Gramsci, 2000, p.306)

Civil society is “the sum of social activities and institutions which are not directly part of the government, the judiciary or the representative bodies (police, armed forces)” (Forgacs, 2000, p. 420), while political society corresponds to “a sphere of ‘domination’, the organ or instrument of the oppression of one class by another” (Forgacs, 2000, p. 429). Civil society and political society are nested within each other, as Thomas (2011, pp. 180–181) explains: “Gramsci’s civil society has a dialectical, non-exclusionary and functional relationship to that other major superstructural ‘level’, or form, of ‘political society or State’”.

### **Hegemony, Social Consent and Common-sense**

Jones (2006, p.4) describes Gramsci’s approach to power as “something actively lived by the oppressed as a form of common sense”. According to Gramsci, “social power is not a simple matter of domination on the one hand and subordination or resistance on the other” (Jones, 2006, p. 3). Mosco (2009, p. 206) argues that Gramsci “sought to understand the specific contours of advanced capitalist societies by concentrating on their capacity to base control on *consent* more than on physical coercion” . As Jones (2006) states, this is different from domination.

“Gramsci used the term hegemony to denote the predominance of one social class over others (e.g. bourgeois hegemony). This represents not only

political and economic control, but also the ability of the dominant class **to project its own way of seeing the world so that those who are subordinated by it accept it as ‘common sense’ and ‘natural’**. Commentators stress that **this involves willing and active consent**. Common sense, suggests Geoffrey Nowell-Smith, is ‘the way a subordinate class lives its subordination’ (cited in Alvarado & Boyd-Barrett 1992: 51).” (Chandler, 2011) (emphasis added)

In other words, hegemony in Gramsci’s theory is not domination, but the result of a process whereby “ ‘dominant’ groups ... within democratic societies generally govern with a good degree of consent from the people they rule, and the maintenance of that consent is dependent upon an incessant repositioning of the relationship between rulers and ruled.” (Jones, 2006, p. 3). Therefore, building hegemony consists of producing social consent and creation of common sense among people, rather than domination of ruling classes over ‘subordinate groups/classes’.

As Thatcher once said, “[e]conomics are the method; the object is to change the heart and soul.” (Butt, 1981). According to the Gramscian theory of hegemony “[the ruling power] must be able to reach into the minds and lives of its subordinates” (Jones, 2006, p. 4) and transform their “interests and desires” (Jones, 2006, p. 4). The power of hegemonic groups is based on their ability to transform the “heart and soul” of subordinates and via this gaining their consent. However, this is not a one-way imposition process. While doing this, the ruling power has to “take on at least some of the values of those it attempts to lead, thereby reshaping its own ideals and imperatives” (Jones, 2006, p. 4).

Mosco (2009, p. 206) situates the concept of hegemony “between the concepts of ideology and values”.

“Ideology typically refers to the deliberate distortion or misrepresentation of social reality to advance specific interests and maintain hierarchies of power. On the other hand, values denote those shared social norms connecting the wide range of differently placed people and strata in society. Hegemony differs from these in that it is the ongoing formation of both image and information to produce a map of common sense which is

sufficiently persuasive to most people that it provides the social and cultural coordinates to define the “natural” attitude of social life.” (Mosco, 2009, p. 206)

Therefore, according to Mosco (2009) the concept of hegemony is “more valuable than the concept of ideology” (Mosco, 2009, p. 206), since it is “constituted organically out of the dynamic geometries of power embedded in social relations and social organizations throughout society” (Mosco, 2009, p. 206). Mosco (2009, p. 206) also finds the concept of hegemony “more useful than the concept of values because hegemony incorporates both power and common sense whereas values leaves little room for power”.

Chandler (2011) argues that hegemony “represents not only political and economic control, but also the ability of the dominant class to project its own way of seeing the world so that those who are subordinated by it accept it as ‘common sense’ and ‘natural’”. Therefore, in this respect, hegemony is superior to domination by transforming views of subordinates while producing their ‘common sense’. In a way, it defines the ‘normal’ and ‘normalised’ ways of life of people. This acceptance “involves willing and active consent” (Chandler, 2011), defined by Nowell-Smith as “the way a subordinate class lives its subordination” (Chandler, 2011).

While being an important part of building hegemony, the meaning of Gramscian ‘common sense’ is different from the practical daily use of the word, which is “sound and prudent judgment based on a simple perception of the situation or facts” (Merriam-Webster, 2016).

“[Common sense] is literally thought that is common – common to a social group, or common to society as a whole. Thus, although he is largely interested in the common sense of the popular classes, and how a hegemonic bloc can intervene in it and shape it to their ends, he acknowledges that every social stratum has its common sense which is ‘continually transforming itself, enriching itself with scientific ideas and with philosophical opinions which have entered ordinary life’ (ibid.: 326).” (Jones, 2006, p. 54)

Harvey (2005) points out the importance of Gramsci's approach to understanding the implications of abstract frameworks on the daily life of the people. Gramsci argues that common sense is "the conception of the world which is uncritically absorbed":

"The conception of the world which is uncritically absorbed by the various social and cultural environments in which the moral individuality of average man is developed. Common sense is not a single unique conception which, even in the brain of one individual, is fragmentary, incoherent and inconsequential, in conformity with the social and cultural position of those masses whose philosophy it is." (Harvey 2005, p. 64)

Harvey (2005) also relates the discussion of common sense with concealing factors in production relations:

"Given the fetishisms that attach to and the opacities that mask processes of capital circulation and accumulation, we cannot expect anything other than "common sense" conceptions of the world to regulate the conduct of daily life. The disjunctions and cognitive dissonances are important. There is no way we can expect the rule and laws of capital accumulation to enter into the social-ecological world in an unmediated way. But by the same token, this means that the activities of capital circulation and accumulation are refracted through actual discursive practices, understandings and behaviours (including the passivity and "common sense" that Gramsci identifies)." (Harvey, 2005, p. 65)

At the core of Gramsci's theory of hegemony is the dynamics behind production of social consent. However, it is worth noting that there are other approaches for understanding production dynamics of social consent and hegemony.

A current debate about contemporary neoliberal condition and production of consent is the growing literature on post-politics and post-democracy. An overarching argument of post-politics literature is that neoliberal practice has become hegemonic and depoliticized the social space (Wilson and Swyngedouw, 2014a). To illustrate this point, Swyngedouw (2009, p. 602) argues that "reduction of the political to the policing of environmental change, ... evacuates if not forecloses the properly political and becomes

part and parcel of the consolidation of a postpolitical and postdemocratic polity”. However, it is a heterogeneous literature that has emerged through the discussions of anti-democratic practices and their discontents (see Wilson and Swyngedouw (2014b) for varied approaches within post-politics). A seminal book by Laclau and Mouffe (2001), on the other hand, has sought to re-interpret the theory of hegemony of Gramsci from a post-Marxist perspective. For Mouffe, an important aspect of democracy is not consensus, but dissensus; and the main drive behind radical democracy is antagonism (Wilson and Swyngedouw, 2014a).

Another well-known theoretical opening for understanding dynamics of hegemony is governmentality. Governmentality as a concept is for some commentators a “key notion” (Allen 1991, p.431) of Foucault’s approach, which differentiates power and domination from each other (Lemke, 2012, p. 17). Its foci on discourse, biopolitics and self have led various scholars to work within this perspective to understand the dynamics of governing in the 1990s (see Lemke (2012) for an overview). In addition, there have been attempts to reconcile Foucaultian governmentality with Marxist approaches (Barnett, 2005) (e.g. Joseph (2014) and Larner (2003)).

Barnett (2005, p. 7) criticises these approaches since these two theories are different in various ways including “different models of the nature of explanatory concepts; different models of causality and determination; different models of social relations and agency; and different normative understandings of political power”. Following this criticism, while building the theoretical framework, this research follows Kipfer’s theoretical opening for linking Lefebvrian production of space and Gramscian theory of hegemony, which shares similar building blocks.

### **Social Consent, Representations of Space and Representational Space**

Habermas’ well-known theory of communicative action discusses the colonisation of lifeworld in relation to rationalisation and instrumental reason. Habermas (1987, p. 119) defines lifeworld as “a concept complementary to that of communicative action”

“Habermas draws a fundamental distinction in his work between what he refers to as the ‘system’ element of society and the ‘lifeworld’ element. ... Suffice it to say that the lifeworld is constituted by way of direct

communicative interactions between social agents, which are oriented towards mutual understanding, whilst the system is constituted by way of more impersonal and strategic exchanges of money and power, within the context of the economy and the modern administrative state and judiciary.” (Crossley, 2005, pp. 37–38)

According to Habermas, the colonisation of the lifeworld refers to “the imbalance between these two elements in which the system is increasingly impinging upon (‘colonizing’) and thereby eroding the lifeworld” (Crossley, 2005, p. 38). In this sense, the relationship between the lifeworld and the system is neither complementary nor productive, but colonising. Although Habermas’ framework has powerful arguments related to the *production of communicative action*, the dichotomy between *system* and *lifeworld* and the colonising relationship between the two separate entities, it does not provide answers for the intrinsic relationships of dimensions of production of space and their relationship of social consent.

On the other hand, Lefebvre’s (1992) approach puts emphasis on the unity of space. It is a unity of “the forces of production and their component elements (nature, labour, technology, knowledge); structures (property relations); superstructures (institutions and the state itself)” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 85). The concept of social space “sets a very specific dialectic in motion, which, while it does not abolish the production-consumption relationship as this applies to things (goods, commodities, objects of exchange), certainly does modify it by widening it” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 85). Therefore, regarding the *unity of space* together with production of *common sense* and *consent*, the relationship between the system and lifeworld is hegemonic, rather than colonising.

### **Representations of Space**

According to Lefebvre’s triad, representations of space are the space of the experts, which is “related to the way in which professionals such as scientists, mathematicians, planners and architects represent space” (Yacobi, 2004, p. 6). Lefebvre (1992, p. 42) points out that “[r]epresentations of space are certainly abstract, but they also play a part in social and political practice”. Yacobi (2004, p. 6) argues that representations of space are “the result of epistemological processes and developments that cannot be seen as autonomous from the socio-political context in which they are produced”. In other



words, this is the space which the experts interpret with their various *frames* and reproduce. Therefore, it is a product of *reframing* of the urban reality according to the lenses of actors engaging in the production processes. However, this production is not autonomous from the socio-political context.

That is to say, representations of space are produced in different media including architects, planners, writers, reporters, advertisers, PR departments; and these representations contribute to the production of space with interpretations of these actors. This dynamic of production of space is directly related to the production of social consent and common sense of the means of production of space and of contemporary urban spaces. In addition, representations of space are in relation with the forces of political society through representations in regulatory mechanisms, such as planning processes.

### **Representational Space**

Representational space is the space of the users and is associated with images and symbols. It is the lived and experienced space, and the space of meaning production. Representational space “embodies images, symbols and associative ideas of the ‘users’ that give meaning to space” (Yacobi, 2004, p. 6), while being also “dominated - and hence passively experienced - space which the imagination seeks to change and appropriate” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 39). Lefebvre defines representational spaces as:

“Representational space is alive: it speaks. It has an affective kernel or centre: Ego, bed, bedroom, dwelling, house; or: square, church, graveyard. It embraces the loci of passion, of action and of lived situations, and thus immediately implies time. Consequently it may be qualified in various ways: it may be directional, situational or relational, because it is essentially qualitative, fluid and dynamic.” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 42)

In this sense, representational space is the space of meaning production with historic formations, memories, signs, symbols, codes, experiences, and so on. To illustrate, Petersen and Minnery’s (2013, p. 823) research on social production of space in age-segregated residential complexes exemplifies the relationship of production of meaning and representational space. Their research presents how people produce the meaning of

home in a tailored living environment with their family photos, daily experiences, and memories.

Lefebvre (1992, p. 44) asks a critical question about the relationship between representations of space and representational space: “what intervenes, what occupies the interstices between representations of space and representational spaces”:

“A culture, perhaps? Certainly - but the word has less content than it seems to have. The work of artistic creation? No doubt - but that leaves unanswered the queries 'By whom?' and 'How?' Imagination? Perhaps – but why? and for whom?” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 44)

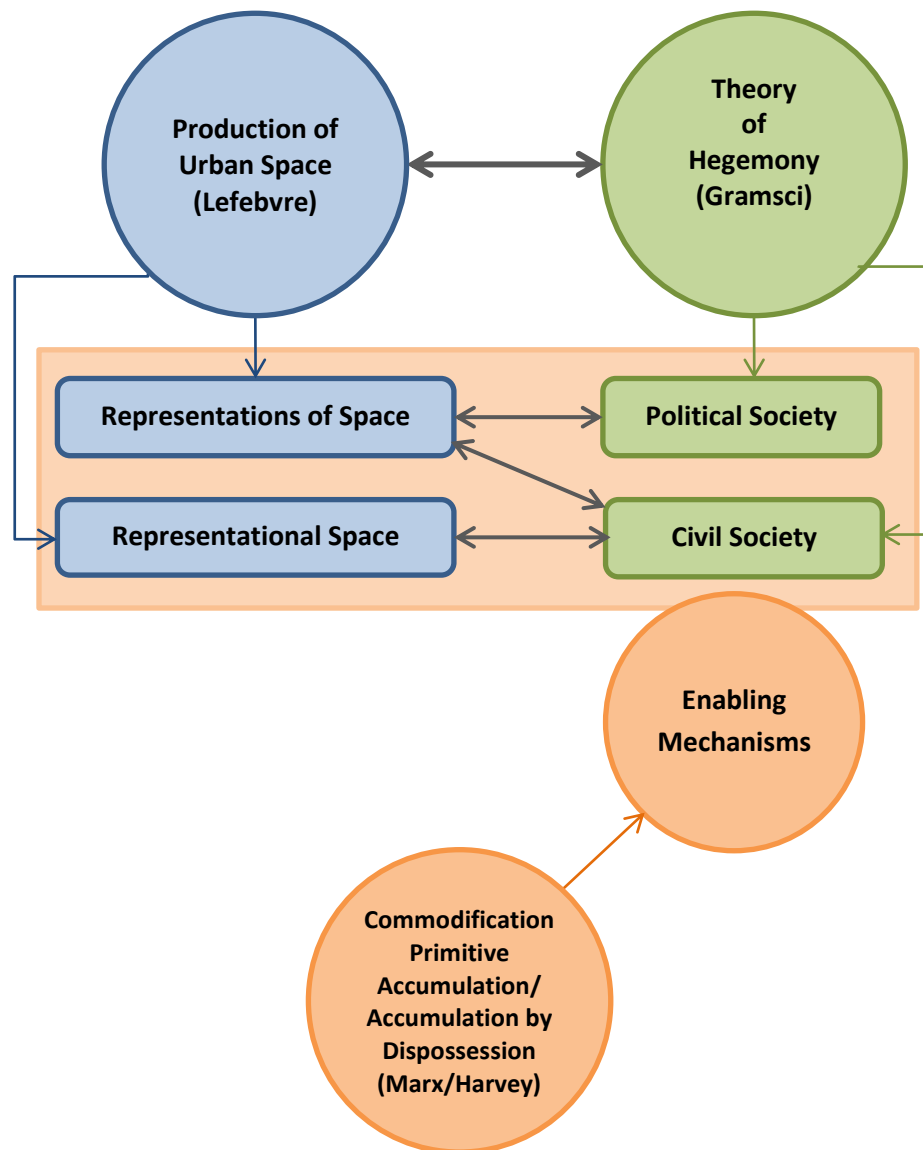
While the relationship with representations of space and representational space is multifaceted, Lefebvre (199) also points out manipulation:

“in the spatial practice of neocapitalism (complete with air transport), representations of space facilitate the manipulation of representational spaces (sun, sea, festival, waste, expense)” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 59)

An illustrative example for this relationship is Goetz’s (2012) work on public housing projects. Goetz (2012) exemplifies how effective discourse can be in shaping the urban environment. The author shows that while pro-regeneration discourse represents “public housing communities as deviant, dysfunctional, or obsolete”, residents of public housing produce a counter-narrative focusing on home and community. In other words, Goetz’s examples show that discourse works in two ways, to legitimise the public housing clearances on the one hand, and for resistance to these projects on the other hand. Therefore, Goetz (2012, p.347) argues, referring to Pfeiffer (2006), that public housing redevelopments are “discursive sites in which policy elites and residents struggle to frame the meaning of public housing communities”.

While the relationship with representations of space and representational space is multifaceted, Lefebvre (199) also points out manipulation: “in the spatial practice of neocapitalism (complete with air transport), representations of space facilitate the manipulation of representational spaces (sun, sea, festival, waste, expense)” (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 59). Through the dialectic relationship between the representational space and

representations of space, appropriation of representational space presents a critical position for production of common sense, and therefore, social consent. Through representations of space the ruling class draws the picture of the ‘normal’ or ‘normalised’ versions of urban spaces, and contributes to the representational space of people, and therefore to the production of common sense for ‘normal’ urban spaces. This is a process of appropriation of representational space. However, as discussed, this is a dynamic process rather than being colonising or dominating; therefore, this common sense also incorporates some values of subordinates as well.



**Figure 3.2 Theoretical framework of the research – Enabling mechanisms for commodification (Source: The author)**

The uncritical acceptance of *normalised* urban spaces is the key for investigating the dynamics of production of urban spaces, and the acceptance of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation. Therefore, the research investigates the dynamics of social consent production through appropriation of representational space by focusing on representations of space and common sense while questioning their role in deepening of commodification of urban space.

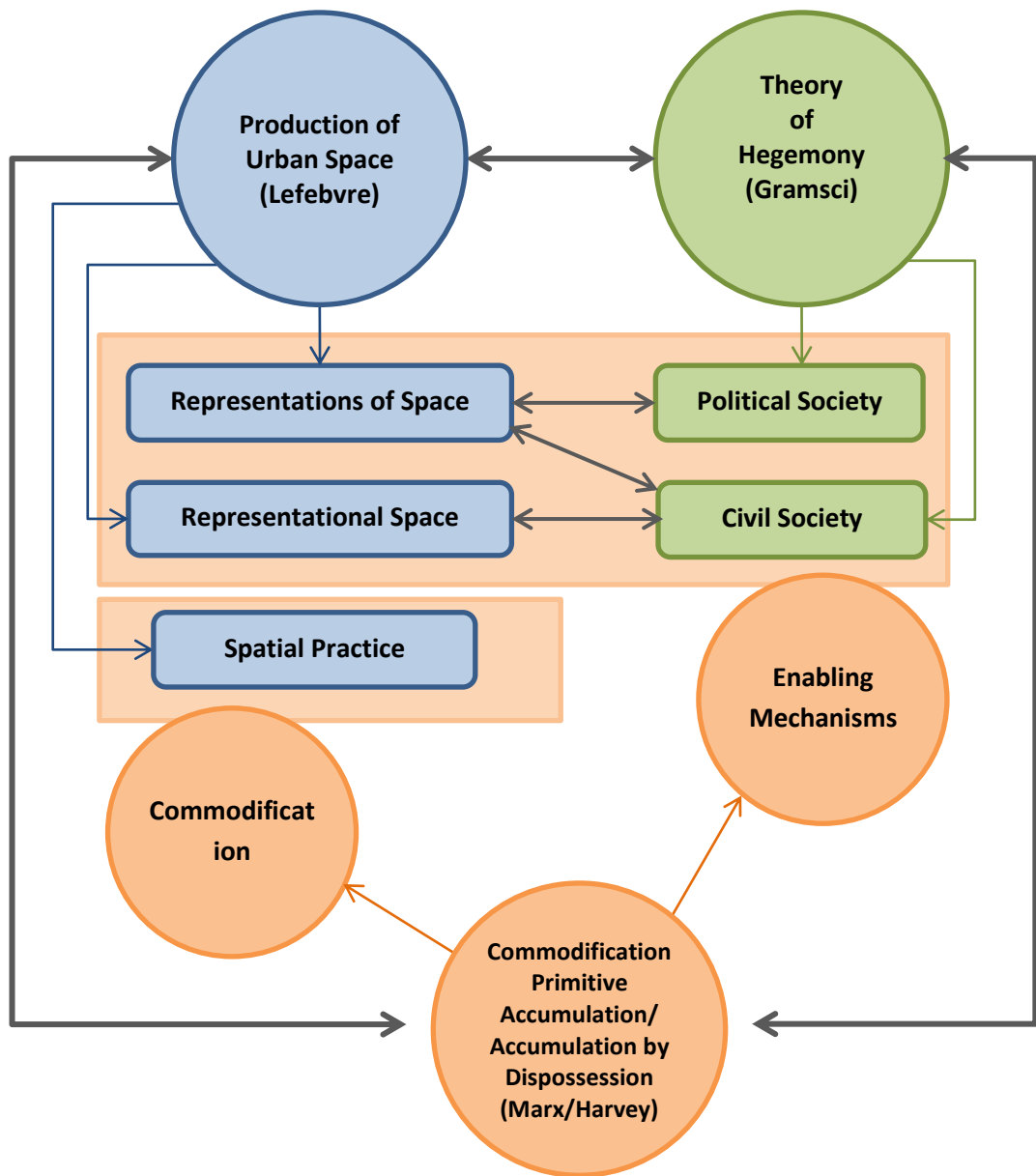
### **3.4) Conclusion**

To conclude, this research is based on *interlinking* Marxist commodification theory, Lefebvrian production of space and Gramsci's theory of hegemony. The three theories provide an analytical tool to critically investigate the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation. While Lefebvrian production of space enables to investigate the dynamics of production of urban space, Gramscian theory of hegemony enables the researcher to include dynamics of political and civil societies. As Kipfer argues, the two theories share a base of urban Marxism, which allows interlinking them epistemologically. The operational dimensions of the two theories provide a productive platform to discuss the relationship of the dynamics of production of space together with the role of political and civil societies in this production. It also allows the researcher to interlink the two theories (the production of space and the theory of hegemony) with the commodification of urban space, and investigate the dynamics of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation, which is the meta-aim of this research.

The following chapter, Chapter 4, sets the research methodology for this investigation through a critical case study of branded housing projects, while Chapter 5 presents the context for this case study and Chapters 6, 7 and 8 present the findings for development processes, spatial practice and discursive formation of the projects in relation with the deepening of commodification of urban space and its enabling mechanisms.

Chapter 9 discusses the results of the analyses (Chapter 6, 7, and 8) and grounds the argument of the research that commodification of urban space is deepening under neoliberal urbanisation while producing its enabling mechanisms through these results. The chapter conceptualises the dynamics of contemporary commodification of urban space as *hyper-commodification of urban space* and introduces the concept as a

theoretical contribution of the research. The chapter also excavates the traces of the concept of hyper-commodification in existing literature.



**Figure 3.3 Theoretical framework of the research (Source: The author)**

## CHAPTER 4 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the position of the research, research strategy, the critical case study method, the scope of this case study, data collection methods and field work, data analysis processes and methods, limitations of the methodology and ethical issues.

This research investigates the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation from a critical perspective. Harvey (2011), following the original lead by Marx, defines critical social research in relation with the attempts to dig beneath the surface. By following a critical perspective, the research digs beneath the contemporary patterns of production of urban spaces, rather than accepting the existing ones as taken for granted. The research follows a critical realist approach while merging Gramscian theory of hegemony with Lefebvrian production of space. Bryman (2012, p. 29) defines critical realism “as a specific form of realism whose manifesto is to recognize the reality of the natural order and the events and discourses of the social world and holds that ‘we will only be able to understand - and so change - the social world if we identify the structures at work that generate those events and discourses’ (Bhaskar 1989, p. 2)”. Critical realism “accepts neither a constructionist nor an objectivist ontology and instead takes the view that the ‘social world is reproduced and transformed in daily life’ (Bhaskar 1989: 4)” (Bryman, 2012, p. 616). By following the critical realist approach, the research aims to investigate the dynamics of the commodification of urban space in relation with the dynamics of neoliberal urbanisation by merging Gramscian theory of hegemony with Lefebvrian production of space. Through this approach, the research aims to explore the practice of commodification of urban space in everyday life.

Selection of an appropriate research strategy is an important aspect of research design. Bryman (2012) defines three research strategies as qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods, while defining five research designs as experimental, cross sectional, longitudinal, case study and comparative. In order to investigate the aforementioned multifaceted phenomenon, the research applied a mixed-method strategy through qualitative and quantitative analyses of development processes, discursive formation and spatial practice of the branded housing projects as a critical case study.

Undertaking a mixed method strategy originates from various reasons. Bryman (2012, p. 633) identifies that qualitative and quantitative research are combined for the purposes of triangulation, offsetting, completeness, describing both process, answering different research questions, explanation, understanding unexpected results, instrument development, sampling, credibility, context, illustration, utility, confirming and discovering, diversity of views, and enhancement (See Bryman, 2012 for details). This research applied a mixed method strategy in aiming for *completeness*, considering “that a more complete answer to a research question or set of research questions can be achieved by including both quantitative and qualitative methods” (Bryman, 2012, p. 637).

The following sections of this chapter elaborate on the research design and the application of critical case study method on branded housing projects in Istanbul in relation with research, data collection and analysis methods.

#### **4.1) Critical Case Study Method – Branded Housing Projects in Istanbul**

In critical case study method, the research proposes a theory and grounds it through a case study (Bryman, 2012, p. 70). This research proposes that with neoliberal urbanisation commodification of urban space is *deepening*; and, via extensive multi-layered analyses of this phenomenon in terms of its development processes, spatial patterns and discursive formation, grounds this proposal in a case study of branded housing projects in Istanbul, Turkey<sup>11</sup>. In this case study, development processes, discursive formation and spatial patterns of branded housing projects form analytical framework categories, and different features of the projects were investigated through focusing on these categories.

Different subsets of the 43 projects (scope) were focused on according to those features. **The first layer of analysis is the analysis of development processes of branded housing projects.** This analysis was conducted in order to investigate the *processes behind the commodification of urban space as enabling mechanisms for commodification*. The development processes of branded housing projects were investigated in relation with neoliberal restructuring in Turkey and through

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<sup>11</sup> Although the research addresses the location for the case as Istanbul, its focus is on the particular phenomenon of branded housing projects that emerged in that particular geographical area-Istanbul.

development processes of four selected branded housing projects. **The second layer of analysis is the analysis of *spatial practice of branded housing projects*.** The spatial practice in selected branded housing projects was investigated in terms of their spatial pattern through application of responsive environments (Bentley et al., 1985) as an analytical framework (explained further in following sections in this chapter) and the urban experience they offer through resident interviews. **The third layer of analysis is the analysis of discursive formation of branded housing projects.** This analysis was conducted in order to investigate the dynamics of production of social consent for commodification of urban space as *enabling mechanisms for commodification of urban space*. The discursive formation of branded housing projects was investigated through the analyses of representations of the branded housing projects and representational space in relation with these projects. While the representations of branded housing projects in the news and promotional materials were investigated through adoption of Kumar's dominance-resistance model (news articles) multi-modal discourse analysis (news articles, project advertisement and catalogues), the representational space produced through branded housing projects was analysed via interviews with project residents and non-residents.

#### **4.2) The Scope of the Research, Data Sources and Collection Methods**

Firstly, in order to investigate the development of the phenomenon of branded housing projects in Turkey, the research analyses: (1) the deepening of the neoliberal restructuring process in Turkey since the 2001 economic crisis, with a focus on neoliberal urbanisation practices through reviewing the relevant literature; (2) the restructuring of public partners of the projects (which are TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO in this case) by reviewing the relevant literature, institutional reports, and publications of TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO; and (3) the development processes of selected branded housing projects in detail through reviewing TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO reports, publications of TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO, master plans collected from the municipalities and TOKI and reports about planning processes collected from the Chamber of City Planners and Chamber of Architects, and interviews conducted with public officials in both institutions (sampling of the projects is explained in the following sections).



<b>Research objectives, questions and methods</b>					
<b>Research Objective: To investigate enabling mechanisms of contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation</b>					
<b>Research Questions: What are the new rules, regulations, laws, and legislations fostering contemporary commodification of urban space, implemented since the 2000s in Turkey? What are the key development processes/models, partnerships, actors of branded housing projects?</b>					
<b>Research Method</b>	<b>Research Materials</b>	<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Sampling</b>	<b>Collected Data</b>	<b>Data Analysis</b>
Analysis of the role of state in neoliberalization and the neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey					
<i>Documentation</i>	- New laws, regulations, legislations - Related articles from literature	- Official Gazette of Turkey - Secondary sources (articles from literature)	- Laws and regulations about urbanisation and urban development enacted since 2003	- New laws and regulations related to urban development enacted since 2003	<i>Document analysis</i>
Analysis of restructuring of state developers in Turkey					
<i>Documentation</i>	- The laws and regulations for restructuring of TOKI and Emlak GYO - Project development models of TOKI and Emlak GYO - Practice of TOKI and Emlak GYO - Related articles from literature	- Headquarters of TOKI (main public partner) - Headquarters of EmlakGYO (main public partner) - Online databases of Sayıstay - Online databases of TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO - Secondary sources (articles from literature)	- Laws and regulations about restructuring of TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO - Authorities of the TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO - Revenue-sharing model as the project development models	- Data regarding the restructuring process of TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO - Data regarding transformation of authority of TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO	<i>Document analysis</i>
Analysis of the development processes of 4 projects					
<i>Documentation</i>	- Reports, documents, datasheets, master plans, court case reports containing info regarding the development processes of the projects	- Headquarters of TOKI (main public partner) - Headquarters of Emlak Konut GYO (main public partner) - Project websites - Project catalogues - Online databases of charters	- Selected 4 projects	- Data regarding the development processes of the four projects	<i>Document analysis</i>

**Table 4.1: Research objectives, questions and methods (1)**

<b>Research objectives, questions and methods</b>					
<b>Research Objective: To investigate the dimensions of the contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation</b>					
<b>Research Questions : What are the key spatial characteristics of branded housing projects? What are the key urban experiences branded housing projects provide in their confines</b>					
<b>Research Method</b>	<b>Research Materials</b>	<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Sampling</b>	<b>Collected Data</b>	<b>Data Analysis</b>
Analysis of spatial organisations and spatial elements of branded housing projects:					
<i>Documentation</i>	- Master plans of the districts - Location plans of the projects - Aerial photos	- Istanbul Greater Municipality - TOKI - Istanbul City Guide (Online) - Google Earth Pro	Selected 4 projects (intersection catalogues, interviews, districts)	Layouts Design schemas Boundary elements (gates, walls) Spatial elements of the projects	<i>Spatial analysis</i>  (Responsive Environments)
<i>Photography</i>	- Photographs of current situation - Previous photographs	- Researcher's personal photo archive - IFEA photo archive - Online public photo databases	Selected 4 projects (intersection catalogues, interviews, districts)	- Volumetric elements of the projects and their spatial relationships	<i>Photography</i>
Analysis of services and facilities included within the confines of the projects:					
<i>Documentation</i>	- Project catalogues - Info pages - The researcher's observations - Interviews (Residents and public officials)	-Websites of the projects -Project sale offices -Projects' websites -The researcher -Interviewees	Selected 4 projects (intersection catalogues, interviews, districts)	Provided services and facilities within the project areas	<i>Spatial analysis</i>  (Responsive Environments)
Analysis of the experience of projects areas:					
<i>Interviews</i>	- Project resident interviews	- Fieldwork (June – August 2014)	Random sampling of 20 interviewees from 11 projects among 43 BHPs - Personal connections - Snowball sampling	Daily life experience of the residents, and their use of services and facilities located within the confines of the projects	<i>Interview analysis and Documentation</i>

**Table 4.2: Research objectives, questions and methods (2)**

Secondly, in order to investigate the spatial practice of branded housing projects in Turkey, the research analyses: (1) spatial patterns of selected projects through analysing their site maps and land-use maps which are produced through aerial photos, project

documents, photos and observations of the researcher; and (2) urban experience in the projects through resident interviews.

Thirdly, in order to investigate the discursive formation of the phenomenon of branded housing projects in Turkey, the research analyses: (1) discourse produced in the mass media through analysing the news articles collected from online archives of newspapers and news clipping archive at Istanbul Observatory of French Institute of Anatolian Studies (IFEA), the print projects advertisements collected from the archive at Istanbul Observatory of (IFEA) and from the newspapers by the researcher, and the project catalogues collected from the archive at Istanbul Observatory of (IFEA), from project sales offices by the researcher and from websites of the projects (representations of space), while (2) analysing the representational space through qualitative interviews with residents and non-residents (see APPENDIX III for the interview questions).

<b>Research objectives, questions and methods</b>					
<b>Research Objective: To investigate enabling mechanisms of contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation</b>					
<b>Research Questions: What are the dynamics of social consent production for the branded housing projects?</b>					
<b>Research Method</b>	<b>Research Materials</b>	<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Sampling</b>	<b>Collected Data</b>	<b>Data Analysis</b>
Analysis of the representations of branded housing projects in mass media					
<i>Documentation</i>	-News articles about the projects	- French Institute of Anatolian Studies (IFEA) newspaper clippings archive - Online archives of the newspapers	- Newspaper clippings from IFEA archive related to selected 43 Emlak Konut GYO branded housing projects published between 2003 -May 2014 - News articles related to selected 6 Emlak Konut GYO branded housing projects (purposive sampling) published between 2003 -May 2014	- Newspaper articles (textual and visual content)	<i>Kumar's dominance-resistance model</i>  <i>Multi-modal discourse analysis</i>
	- Print advertisements of projects	- French Institute of Anatolian Studies (IFEA) archive	- All available print advertisements of selected 43 Emlak Konut GYO branded housing projects published between 2003 –October 2015 from IFEA archive	- Print advertisements (textual and visual content) from newspapers and magazines	<i>Multi-modal discourse analysis</i>

	- Project catalogues	- French Institute of Anatolian Studies (IFEA) archive - Project sale offices - Project websites	- All available project catalogues of selected 43 Emlak Konut GYO branded housing projects published between 2003 –August 2014 from IFEA archive and the researcher ‘s archive	- Projects catalogues (textual and visual content)	<i>Multi-modal discourse analysis</i>
<b>Analysis of representational space regarding branded housing projects</b>					
<i>Interviews</i>	- Project resident interviews	- Fieldwork (June – August 2014)	Random sampling of 20 interviewees from 11 projects among 43 BHPs - Personal connections - Snowball sampling	Image of branded housing projects and the ideal living environment in residents’ minds	<i>Interview analysis and Documentation</i>
<i>Interviews</i>	- Non-residents interviews	- Fieldwork (June – August 2014) – The interviewees were recruited at bus stops.	Random sampling of 19 interviewees from bus stops at main transportation nodes	Image of branded housing projects and the ideal living environment in residents’ minds	<i>Interview analysis and Documentation</i>

**Table 4.3: Research objectives, questions and methods (3)**

***4.2.1) Sampling the Branded Housing Projects and Data Sources in Relation with the Projects (Interviewees, News Articles, Project Catalogues and Print Advertisements)***

As briefly introduced in Chapter 1, the research focuses on branded housing projects developed by Emlak Konut GYO between 2003 and 2014 in Istanbul. According to Emlak Konut GYO’s report (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014), by May 2014 the institution had developed 43 branded housing projects in İstanbul, since its transformation into a real estate partnership in 2003<sup>12</sup>. This sample covers 5% of the total number of branded housing projects (which is 852) in Istanbul based on the numbers provided in the report of EVA Real Estate. The sample is also representative in terms of discourses and spatial patterns, since Emlak Konut GYO projects present similar spatial patterns and follow similar discourses to non-Emlak Konut GYO projects according to prior observations. This sampling additionally allows an investigation of the state’s role in the production of space with its direct involvement in development processes of these projects. Moreover, Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of the projects in Istanbul. As

<sup>12</sup> The research focuses on these 43 projects as its scope based on the latest data released before the start of the first fieldwork (June - August 2014).



different companies in order to produce a representative sample of the projects. The research drew on the list of 43 projects to recruit the interviewees and used personal connections, and then applied snowball sampling<sup>13</sup>. As a result, the interviewees were selected from 11 branded housing projects.

The researcher also interviewed non-residents in order to investigate the discursive formation of the branded housing project as a scoping study. The aim was to interview a small number of people living in Istanbul randomly. The main challenge for this scoping study was selecting interviewees from a general population of 13 million people while avoiding geographical clustering effects (e.g. recruiting interviewees living in particular locations of the city such as the city centre, peripheries or new development areas). In order to avoid these clustering effects, a systematic sampling of interviewee recruitment points was combined with a random sampling of interviewees.

In order to recruit people in public areas, the researcher recruited interviewees from people waiting at bus queues. Two criteria were applied for systematic sampling of the bus stops: (1) selection of bus stops from different regions of İstanbul (to avoid clustering effects) and (2) selection of transfer points (to reach people living in various districts of the city). According to these criteria, bus stops in the centre of Kadikoy (Asian side) and Bakırköy (European side) were selected in addition to the bus service queue in Taksim, which is the core and main transfer point in İstanbul.

**The second one is the subset of the projects about which news articles were published and the selection of sample news articles.** The news articles were collected through two sources: online databases of the selected newspapers and IFEA news archive. Firstly, for the online archive review, four newspapers were selected according to the newspaper circulation numbers in Turkey and the time range covered in this research. First, according to the circulation numbers, there is a threshold between the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> highest circulated newspapers, (see Table 4.4). According to published figures, the circulation of the 5<sup>th</sup> highest circulated newspaper is nearly twice as high as that of the 6<sup>th</sup> highest. This limits the scope of the study to newspapers with circulation numbers of above 300 000. Although these figures are drawn from the last week of May 2014 and change according to sales every week, the top 5 newspapers remained

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<sup>13</sup> In snowball sampling, “the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others” (Bryman, 2012, p. 202).

the same for the weeks of May-September 2014 with some changes in rank within this group. Second, among these 5 newspapers, Sozcu was founded in 2007, which does not align fully with the time range of the research (2003-2014). Therefore, Sozcu was excluded from the analysis. As a result of this systematic selection process, the online databases of the four newspapers, Zaman, Posta, Hurriyet and Sabah, were reviewed.

<b>Newspaper</b>	<b>Circulation Number</b>
Zaman	1.035.305
Posta	389.691
Hürriyet	375.876
Sözcü	337.390
Sabah	326.138
Habertürk	176.771
Türkiye	165.447
Milliyet	162.093
Bugün	142.461
Star	115.544

**Table 4.4 Figures on newspapers' circulation for the week of 26 May - 01 June 2014 (medyatava, 2014)**

Due to the time limitations of this research, it was not possible to include the news articles about all 43 projects published in these newspapers. Therefore, a subset of projects was systematically selected according to the following criteria:

- (1) The projects should be among the ones whose residents were interviewed.
- (2) The projects should be among the ones whose catalogues were reviewed.
- (3) The selected projects should have different brands and developers.

As a result, 6 projects (Agaoglu My World Atasehir, Avrupa Konutlari Atakent 3, Bizim Evler 4, Ispartakule Project, Kent Plus Atasehir, Soyak Evostar) were selected for the online review of the archives. In the end, the number of news articles from online databases was limited to 164.

Secondly, newspaper articles were collected from the IFEA Istanbul Urban Observatory thematic news archive and added to this database. In this selection, the criterion was including the news articles about the 43 Emlak GYO branded housing projects

published between 2003 - May 2014. The aim in applying this criterion was to include news from newspapers other than the top 4. In the end, 17 news articles from IFEA archive were added to the database.

**The third subset is the projects for which advertisements were collected.** The main collection method of the print advertisements was archival work at IFEA. The researcher used the list of 43 projects and the list of their developers to create a sample of print advertisements. Therefore, no specific subset was created for this part of the research. As a result of this archive work, 8 print advertisements (3 magazine advertisements, 5 newspaper advertisements) were collected and analysed qualitatively.

**The fourth subset is the projects for which catalogues were analysed.** The criteria set in order to avoid clustering effects on particular developers, brands, time periods, format of the catalogues (print or online) and sources of the catalogues (provided by online or by sales offices) were as follows:

- (1) There should be a balanced distribution of developers and brands among the sample project catalogues.
- (2) There should be a balanced distribution of completed and continuing projects among the sample project catalogues (time periods).
- (3) There should be a balanced distribution between print and online sample catalogues.

As a result, a sample of 28 project catalogues was created: These 28 projects were developed by 22 *companies* (in partnership with Emlak Konut GYO) and produced with 22 different *brands*. While 15 of these projects are continuing, 13 of them were completed. (See APPENDIX IV)

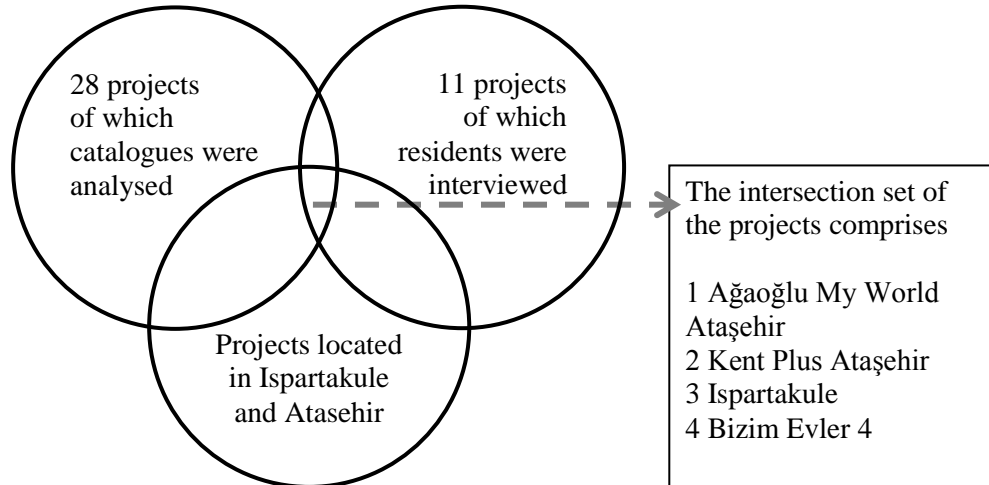
**The fifth subset is the projects for which development processes and spatial patterns were analysed in detail.** In order to investigate spatial practice and development processes, in addition to interviews, the research also analysed sample projects. Due to the time limitations, it was not likely to analyse all 43 projects, so the research applied the criteria below to narrow the sample down:

- (1) Projects should be among those whose catalogues were analysed for discursive formation.



(2) Projects should be among those where residents were interviewed.

Moreover, Emlak Konut GYO projects clustered at Ispartakule and Ataşehir Districts as a result of the projects being developed on a large area of public land. Deeper analysis of development processes and spatial pattern of the projects required this fact to be taken into account. Therefore another criterion was added, that the projects should be located in the Ataşehir and Ispartakule Districts.



**Figure 4.2: Venn diagram of intersections of subsets of the research subjects**  
(Source: The author)

As a result, four projects - Ağaoğlu My World Ataşehir (Ataşehir District), Kent Plus Ataşehir (Ataşehir District), Ispartakule Project (Ispartakule District) and Bizim Evler 4 (Ispartakule District) - were selected as the intersection set of these three criteria (See Figure 4.2). These four projects present an illustrative sample for project brands, since each was produced by a different private partner developer of Emlak Konut GYO.

### **4.3) Data Collection and Field Work**

The researcher undertook two field trips to Istanbul and Ankara (20 June - 28 August 2014 and 1 July – 15 August 2015). In this section, these field trips and data collection processes are discussed in detail.

**Firstly, the researcher collected data from various institutions and had face-to-face meetings with public officials.** From Emlak Konut GYO, data about the projects in

which the institution is the main partner was collected, including the complete list of projects, their construction status, and the revenue the projects produced. From TOKI, data about the revenue-sharing model and projects in which TOKI is a partner was collected. From Istanbul Greater Municipality and TOKI, data about Atasehir and Ispartakule districts was collected, including master plans and application plans. During these data collection visits, the researcher also had meetings with officials in TOKI, Emlak Konut GYO and Istanbul Greater Municipality. In addition, the researcher had two meetings with public officials in the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism about forthcoming plans for the New Istanbul Project, which is located in the north of the Ispartakule region, and about the Istanbul (New) Finance Centre Project, which is located in Atasehir District.

**Secondly, the researcher undertook archival and library work during the field work.** The researcher reviewed the print and digital archives in the Urban Observatory of Istanbul of the French Institute for Anatolian Studies (IFEA-Institut Francais d'Etudes Anatoliennes) for news articles about the projects, print advertisements of the projects and project catalogues. The researcher also conducted library work at IFEA Library, SALT Research Centre Library and Middle East Technical University Library to review the neoliberal restructuring in Turkey, urbanisation in Turkey and development processes of branded housing projects in Turkey.

**Thirdly, the researcher visited project sites and the sales offices of the projects.** Due to the time limitations, site visits were limited to 28 projects (among the 43 sample projects). The researcher also undertook site visits to the district and made in situ observations while documenting the current situation of the districts and projects by photography. In addition, the researcher undertook covert interviews with six sales agents (one phone interview and five in-person interviews), presenting herself as a buyer who was interested in buying a 3 bedroom house.

**Fourthly, the researcher conducted interviews with residents and non-residents of the projects.** The researcher conducted in-depth interviews with project residents. The length of the in-depth interviews was between 30 and 75 minutes (See APPENDIX III for the interview questions). The researcher held two pilot interviews with two branded housing project residents in order to elaborate the interview questions, and interview questions were updated according to these pilot interviews in terms of the order in

which the questions were asked and details of the questions. To illustrate, questions regarding the services and facilities were detailed in the actual interview and each service and facility group was asked about separately in order to reach more detailed and in- depth information. The research also applied short qualitative interviews with non-residents. These interviews were aimed to be short as interview locations were bus stops. The questions asked during these interviews were very open ended to avoid any interference from the researcher (see APPENDIX III for a copy of the interview questions).

#### **4.4) Data Analysis (Data Analysis Process and the Methods)**

##### ***4.4.1) Documentation***

The researcher reviewed the collected documents and initially produced a database for the research. The documents in this database were categorised according to the analysis units of the research as: (1) articles and books for the literature review; (2) documents (articles, reports, master plans data form institutions – TOKI, Emlak Konut GYO, Charters, Istanbul Greater Municipality) collected related to development processes of the projects; (3) news articles related to selected branded housing projects; (4) promotional material (see example pages from a project catalogue in the APPENDIX VIII) of the branded housing projects; (5) spatial data about the selected branded housing projects; and (6) interviews sheets, recordings, and transcriptions (resident and non-resident interviews). For development processes of the projects, the literature and the documents such as articles, reports, master plans from various institutions (TOKI, Emlak Konut GYO, the Charter of City Planners, the Charter of Architects, and Istanbul Greater Municipality) were reviewed as secondary sources, and the appropriate data was retrieved according to the research objectives and the research questions.

##### ***4.4.2) Critical Discourse Analysis***

This research undertook a critical discourse analysis by applying multi-modal discourse analysis (quantitative and qualitative content analysis of news articles, project advertisements and project catalogues). According to Machin and Mayr (2012, p. 5), critical discourse analysis exposes “strategies that appear normal or neutral on the surface but which may in fact be ideological and seek to shape the representation of

events and persons for particular ends”. Therefore, according to the authors, being ‘critical’ here means “‘denaturalising’ the language to reveal the kinds of ideas, absences and taken-for-granted assumptions in texts” (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 5).

Fairclough (1995) argues that discourse plays “a major role in sociocultural reproduction and change” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2) in modern and contemporary society, and defines critical discourse analysis as “analysis of the dialectical relationships between semiosis (including language) and other elements of social practices” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 123) - the practices of production which are “the arenas within which social life is produced, be it economic, political, cultural, or everyday life” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 122). The author’s approach to discourse analysis is critical realist involving “analysing not just the discourse per se but also its relationship to non-discursive elements” (Bryman, 2012, p. 537). According to Wodok (2001, p. 8), “[r]ecognition of the contribution of all the aspects of the communicative context to text meaning, as well as a growing awareness in media studies generally of the importance of non-verbal aspects of texts, has turned attention to semiotic devices in discourse rather than the linguistic ones”. Leeuwen (2008, p. viii) argues that “discourses can be realized, not only linguistically, but also by means of other semiotic modes”. According to Fairclough (2001, p. 122), semiosis “includes all forms of meaning making - visual images, body language, as well as language” while arguing that every social practice, either economic or political or cultural, “has a semiotic element”.

Fairclough (1995) proposes a three-fold analysis framework combining “a Bakhtinian theory of genre (in analysis of discourse practice) and a Gramscian theory of hegemony (in analysis of sociocultural practice)” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2): “analysis of (spoken or written) language texts, analysis of discourse practice (processes of text production, distribution and consumption) and analysis of discursive events as instances of sociocultural practice” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2). *Intertextuality* is central to Fairclough’s model (Richardson, 2007, p. 100), as the author argues that “[i]ntertextual analysis links the text and discourse practice dimensions of the framework, and shows where a text is located with respect to the social network of orders of discourse – how a text actualizes and extends the potential within orders of discourse” (Fairclough, 1995, p. 10). According to Phillips and Jorgensen (2002, p.70), this model “is based on, and promotes, the principle that texts can never be understood or analysed in isolation - they

can only be understood in relation to webs of other texts and in relation to the social context” (Richardson, 2007, p. 100).

Fairclough (2001, p. 125) proposes an operational analytical framework for critical discourse analysis, which is based on Bhaskar's concept of explanatory critique:

- “1 Focus upon a social problem which has a semiotic aspect.
- 2 Identify obstacles to it being tackled, through analysis of
  - a the network of practices it is located within
  - b the relationship of semiosis to other elements within the particular practice(s) concerned
  - c the discourse (the semiosis itself)
    - structural analysis: the order of discourse
    - interactional analysis
      - interdiscursive analysis
      - linguistic and semiotic analysis.
- 3 Consider whether the social order (network of practices) in a sense ‘needs’ the problem.
- 4 Identify possible ways past the obstacles.
- 5 Reflect critically on the analysis (1-4).” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 125)

Fairclough (2001, p. 124) asserts that the “political concept of ‘hegemony’ can be usefully employed in analysing orders of discourse (Fairclough, 1992; Forgacs, 1988; Laclau and Mouffe, 1985) - a particular social structuring of semiotic difference may become hegemonic, become part of the legitimising common sense which sustains relations of domination”, which supports the aim of this research.

While in critical discourse analysis, usually only a small number of texts are focused on (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 207), this research aims to cover a representative sample of research materials. Machin and Mayr (2012, p. 216) highlight recent attempts at combining critical discourse analysis and corpus linguistics to accommodate a larger sample size.

“For example, Baker and McEnery (2005) have used a corpus of newspaper texts, as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website, to examine concordances and collocations of the terms

refugee(s) and asylum seeker(s), which revealed discourses of such people being framed 'as packages, invaders, pests or water'. Baker et al. (2008) and Gabrielatos and Baker (2008) went on to analyse the discursive construction of refugees and asylum seekers in a corpus of 140 million words of UK press articles between 1996 and 2005 (the RASIM corpus of refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants and migrants). The combined use of CDA and CL, and the use of techniques such as keyword searches, concordance and collocational analyses using specialist corpus software, has been described as a 'useful methodological synergy' by Baker et al. (2008).” (Machin and Mayr, 2012, p. 216)

The research applied critical discourse analysis by starting with a social problem and analysing it through its discursive formation in addition to the context and other social practices, as Fairclough suggests. While following Fairclough’s analysis framework, the discourse analysis in this research excludes syntactic analysis of the sample materials and focuses on linguistic and semiotic modes. This is due to the scope of the research, which adapts a critical discourse analysis approach to a large scope. In addition, this research is not limited to critical discourse analysis of communication studies, but extends to other critical analyses including detailed spatial analysis and analysis of everyday life in branded housing projects.

The research applied multi-modal discourse analysis on the textual and visual content of the news articles, print advertisement and project catalogues. The application of discourse analysis has some variances according to the research material. Firstly, for the analysis of news articles, the text was analysed qualitatively and quantitatively while the visuals were analysed quantitatively. Secondly, for the analysis of print advertisements, the text and visuals were analysed qualitatively. Thirdly, for the analysis of project catalogues, the text was analysed qualitatively while the visuals were analysed quantitatively.

### **Inductive Quantitative and Qualitative Content Analysis for Discourse Analysis**

Krippendorff (2003, p. xvii) argues that “content analysis is an empirically grounded method, exploratory in process, and predictive or inferential in intent”. Holsti (1969, p.14) defines content analysis as “any technique for making inferences by

objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages”(Stemler, 2001). Another early definition of content analysis is that of Berelson (1952, p.18) as “a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Krippendorff, 2003, p. 19). While Krippendorff (2003, p. 19) agrees with Berelson (1952) that content analysis is objective and systematic, he disagrees that content analysis is only quantitative. Krippendorff (2003, p. 19) gives some examples of qualitative content analysis:

“Although quantification is important in many scientific endeavours, qualitative methods have proven successful as well, particularly in political analyses of foreign propaganda, in psychotherapeutic assessments, in ethnographic research, in discourse analysis, and, oddly enough, in computer text analysis.” (Krippendorff, 2003, p. 19)

In this research, in order to analyse the discourse, quantitative and qualitative inductive content analyses were applied on textual and visual content of newspaper articles, print advertisements of the projects and the project catalogues. In addition to applying these content analyses methods, the research analysed power relations behind the production of mass media content by adapting the dominance/resistance model proposed by Kumar. This analysis is complementary for this multi-modal discourse analysis by investigating the power relations behind the production of discourse.

#### ***4.4.3) Adaptation of the Dominance-Resistance Model***

“If the spectacle – understood in the limited sense of those “mass media” that are its most stultifying superficial manifestation – seems at times to be invading society in the shape of a mere apparatus, it should be remembered that this apparatus has nothing neutral about it, and that it answers precisely to the needs of the spectacle's internal dynamics.” (Debord, 1994)<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> The book -The Society of Spectacle- has a specific form of presentation and does not include any page numbers.

According to Mosco (2009, p. 6), “communication is more than the transmission of data or information; it is the *social production of meaning that constitutes a relationship.*” (2009, p. 6). Regarding communication as a way of *social production of meaning* is important to exploring the content of this production of meaning through mass media. Discussing theories of mass communication, mass media and advertisements provides insights into how discourse on branded housing projects is produced via mass media, which normalise expansion of these areas.

It is also important to take the discussion of the sender-recipient dichotomy one step further and to avoid building a deterministic approach. In this sense, building a relational analysis of discourse formation in the media is critical as communication is relational by definition. Therefore, rather than theories of message-sender-recipient, critical communication theories discussing power relations behind how media works and how the media content is shaped may provide openings to build such a relational approach. Therefore three approaches - Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model, Castells’ communication power, Kumar’s dominance/resistance model - are critically discussed, and Kumar’s model is selected as the analysis tool for this part of the research.

### **Herman and Chomsky’s Propaganda Model**

Herman and Chomsky (2002, p. 2) define the propaganda model as focusing on “inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass-media interests and choices”. The model was developed in 1988 based on media content in the US. The model’s “basic proposition is that news media coverage is systematically shaped in favour of elite state and corporate interests by the operation of five structural ‘filters’” (Thompson, 2009, p. 73). The model gives clues about how the mass media works. Herman (1996) states the scope of the model that “[i]t is a model of media behavior and performance, not media effects”. Therefore, the propaganda model does not cover the effects of these media discourses on audiences. However, it provides a substantial approach to understand why some topics, approaches or events are emphasised by the mass media, and some are excluded.



The authors proposed the model in 1988 and re-visited it within a 20 year period in the 1990s and 2000s. The five filters, they initially stated, were “ownership, advertising, sourcing, flak, and anticommunist ideology” (Herman, 1996):

- (1) the size, concentrated ownership, owner wealth, and profit orientation of the dominant mass-media firms;
  - (2) advertising as the primary income source of the mass media;
  - (3) the reliance of the media on information provided by government, business, and "experts" funded and approved by these primary sources and agents of power;
  - (4) "flak" as a means of disciplining the media; and
  - (5) "anticommunism" as a national religion and control mechanism.
- (Herman and Chomsky, 2002, p. 2)

According to the model, via these filters, the contents of mass media are shaped. The authors also note that these elements interact and reinforce each other, and are not separate entities (Herman and Chomsky, 2002, p. 2). The filters are neither set by one actor, nor imposed by force. According to Herman (1996), “the filters work mainly by the independent action of many individuals and organizations; these frequently, but not always, share a common view of issues and similar interests”.

Herman (1996) revisits their propaganda model in the 1990s and argues the relevance of the filters in the changing environment of mass communication. According to the author, the changes in economy, communication and politics enhance, rather than weaken, the applicability of their model. According to Herman (1996), during the 1990s, the first two filters, ownership and advertising, gained more importance than in the 1980s through the rise of private broadcasting, while the third and fourth filters, sourcing and flak, gained more importance than in the 1980s through the rise of PR industry and their sourcing of the news. The fifth filter, anti-communist ideology, Herman (1996) argues that, was weakened in the 1990s and replaced by the “miracle of the market” discourse caused by the effects of collapse of Soviet Union. In Mullen’s interview in 2009, Chomsky and Herman examine the changes in the 20 years after their proposal of the propaganda model and comment on its relevance in today’s media (Mullen, 2009). According to the authors, the first four filters are as relevant as in the 1980s. They argue that there have been changes in the fifth filter as “[s]ince 1989, this

staple has morphed into an array of substitutes” and “the provision of an Enemy or the Face of Evil, remains as relevant as ever” (Mullen, 2009, p. 14). Herman and Chomsky stated that if they were to devise a propaganda model today, they would propose “the ‘free market’ as a principal ideological underpinning along with ‘anti-terrorism’ and the ‘war on terror’ that have provided the needed Enemy or Face of Evil, with anticommunism pushed into a back-up and reminder/ideological role” (Mullen, 2009, p. 15). They would also place “more emphasis on globalization and dependence on government for favours and service; on aggressive government news management; on the rise or strengthening of right- wing mass media institutions . . . , talk shows and blogs; and on the real but thus far weaker growth of other alternative media” (Mullen, 2009, p. 15). In this respect, Thompson (2009, p. 73) calls the fifth filter “ideological conformity (originally anti-communism, but subsequent revisions include pro-neoliberalism and anti-terrorism)”. Klahn (2009, p. 45) broadens the fifth filter to cases of power and powerlessness, and ideology and social class.

An example of applications of this model is Alford’s (2009) Hollywood propaganda model based on Herman and Chomsky’s model. Alford (2009, p. 144) applies the model to the content of movies “to explain the ideological output of mainstream Hollywood”. Alford (2009, p. 144) adapts the filters as “concentrated ownership; the importance of merchandising; dependence on establishment sources; the disproportionate ability of the powerful to create flak; and a dominant ideology of ‘Us’ versus the ‘Other’”. In this application, Alford argues that “the filters are important overarching concerns in determining the ‘bounds of the expressible’” (Alford, 2009, p. 144) while acknowledging the limits of the model.

The propaganda model provides insights about why some urban transformation projects are “worthy” of mention in the news, while others are not. It provides some insights about the selection of the sources of the news such as news sourced from municipalities, real estate companies or public officials instead of grassroots movement representatives, community groups or NGOs. It also gives some clues about the importance of advertising, as one of the filters, and its power over the formation of the mainstream news discourse. The fifth filter can be re-interpreted as the ideological orientation or use of hegemon/mainstream discourse. According to this interpretation, in the case of the research, the model provides some clues about the neoliberal mainstream discourse in

media, the presentation of urban transformation projects as requirements and project-based residential environments as the ideal places to live.

### **Castells' Communication Power**

Castells' book, *Communication Power*, aims to discuss "the role of communication networks in power-making, with an emphasis on political power-making" (Castells, 2007, p. 426) and, unlike the propaganda model, does not aim to produce a framework. The book provides some important insights for discourse formation and the role of media on this. According to Castells (2007, p. 238), a "fundamental battle being fought in society is the battle over the minds of the people", and "communication, and particularly socialized communication, the one that exists in the public realm, provides the support for the social production of meaning, the battle of the human mind is largely played out in the processes of communication". Castells (2007, p. 157) argues that "the media constitute the main source of socialized communication" which he defines as "communication with the potential to reach society at large" and "the framing of the public mind is largely performed through processes that take place in the media".

Fuchs (2009) summarises Castells' approach to media and shaping the public mind as:

"Castells argues that media make power and have the capacity to shape human minds by image making. Media politics involves for him four processes: securing access of powerful actors to the media, the production of images that serve the interests of powerful actors, the delivery of these messages in diverse formats and through diverse technologies combined with the measurement of its effectiveness, and the financing of these activities. Castells describes the tendency in media politics that the media exert communication power with the help of sensationalism, theatrical politics, personalization, dramatization, the fragmentation of information, negative stereotyping, attack politics, and scandalization. These are politics that focus on human emotions." (Fuchs, 2009, p. 98)

Castells (2007) defines *agenda-setting*, *priming* and *framing* according to communication literature as "three major processes involved in the relationship between media and people in the sending and receiving of the news through which citizens

perceive their selves in relation to the world” (p.157), and *indexing* as one of the “specific operations that diminish the autonomy of the audience interpreting the message” (p.158).

“*Agenda-setting* refers to the assignment of special relevance to one particular issue or set of information by the source of the message (e.g. a specific media organization) with expectation that the audience will correspond with heightened attention to the content and format of the message. Agenda-setting research assumes that, even if the media may not be able to tell people how to think, they have a major role in influencing what they think about (Cohen, 1963). ... Furthermore, media agenda-setting is particularly salient when it relates to the viewer's everyday life (Erbring et al., 1980) Thus, the political views of both elites and people in general seem to be largely shaped by the information made available by the mass media or by the other sources capable of wide diffusion, such as the Internet (McCombs et al, 1997; Gross and Aday, 2003; Soroka, 2003).” (Castells, 2011, p. 157)

“*Priming occurs*: ‘when news content suggests to news audiences that they ought to use specific issues as benchmarks for evaluating the performance of leaders and governments. It is often understood as an extension of agenda setting ... By making some issues more salient in people's mind (agenda setting), mass media can also shape the considerations that people take into account when making judgements about political candidates or issues (priming).’ (Scheufele and Tewksbury, 2007:11)

.... [The priming hypothesis] proposes that stories on particular issues that affect one memory node can spread to influence opinions and attitudes on other issues. Thus the more frequently an issue is covered, the more likely people are to draw on information presented in the coverage to make their political evaluation.” (Castells, 2011, pp. 157–158)

“*Framing* is the process of “selecting and highlighting some facets of events and issues, and making connections among them so as to promote a particular interpretation, evaluation and/or solution” (Entman, 2004:5). Framing is a fundamental mechanism in the activation of the directly links

the structure of a narrative conveyed by the media to the brain's neural networks. ... Framing as a chosen action by the sender of the message is sometimes deliberate, sometimes accidental, sometimes intuitive. .... The critical issue is that frames are not external to the mind. Only those frames that are able to connect the message to the pre-existing frames in the mind become activators of conduct. Entman (2004) argues that frame that employ the most culturally resonant terms have the greatest potential for influence: words and images that are noticeable, understandable, memorable, and emotionally charged. ... Frames are organized in paradigms: networks of habitual schemas that provide the application of analogies from previous stories to new developments.” (Castells, 2011, p. 158)

“*Indexing* Publishers and editors tend to index the salience of news and viewpoints according to the perceived importance of a specific issue among elites and in public opinion. More specifically, media professionals tend to rank the importance of a given issue according to government statements. ... it means that the government is the primary source of information on major issues, and the body responsible for actually implementing a proposed policy or plan of action. Therefore, it is understandable, albeit regrettable, that the material provided by government policy or statements from government officials receive special attention in the indexing process.” (Castells, 2011, pp. 158–159)

Fuchs (2009) compares Castells’ approach in relation to Herman and Chomsky’s propaganda model:

“[Castells] sees direct government control as well as corporate ownership and leadership as two important filters in media politics. The second aspect corresponds to the first two filters that Herman and Chomsky (1988) have stressed in their propaganda model: size, ownership, and profit orientation of the mass media; and advertising-orientation. Castells also discusses the role of political think tanks in informational politics, a lobbying that Herman and Chomsky (1988) have termed flak and that they characterize as the fourth filter of media manipulation.” (Fuchs, 2009, p. 98)

The indexing operation that Castells points out is parallel to Chomsky and Herman (1988)'s filter of *sourcing*, which Fuchs (2009) also highlights.

“The first three are concrete strategies employed by the media for trying to manipulate their audiences, so to speak, whereas indexing is connected to what Herman and Chomsky (1988) have termed the third filter in media manipulation: the tendency of mass media to rely on information that is provided by powerful actors (such as governments and corporations).” (Fuchs, 2009, pp. 97–98)

In addition, parallel to Herman and Chomsky (1988), Castells (2007) points out that when disagreement among the elite occurs, the media acts in a different way by presenting more diverse content.

“The capacity of the media to decide on indexing depends on the level of agreement or disagreement on an issue among the elites and opinion-leaders. ... On the other hand, the more there is division and ambiguity in elite responses to a crisis ..., the more the media exercise their own diverse judgement in the indexing of an event.” (Castells, 2011, pp. 158–159)

Castells (2007) also argues for the idea of counter-framing. According to him, “the communication structures that are used by powerful actors can also be used for counter-power strategies” (Fuchs, 2009, pp. 98–99). However, Fuchs (2009) criticises Castells for being unclear about how this power counter-power dialectic is built by questioning negative mechanisms of power building such as stereotyping, attack politics and scandalization in counter-power building.

### **Kumar's Dominance-Resistance Model**

Kumar's dominance-resistance model “examines both the ways in which the status quo upheld (mechanisms of dominance) and how critical views might enter the media (mechanisms of resistance)” (Kumar, 2007, p. 38). Kumar argues that

“the news media are contradictory institutions that most often uphold the status quo by an over-reliance on official sources, and by unreflectively

reproducing a professional ideology congruent with values and beliefs of the country's power structures.” (Daley, 2009, p. 169)

Kumar criticises Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model “for its overemphasis on the engineering of consent” (Daley, 2009, p. 169) and she also criticises postmodernist cultural studies for appreciating textual reading as resistance (Daley, 2009, p. 169).

Kumar's model is based on Gramsci's theory of hegemony. As Kumar noted, according to Gramsci “[t]he supremacy of a social group manifests itself in two ways, as “domination” and “intellectual and moral leadership.” (in Kumar 2007, p.38) While instruments of domination such as the police and the military are defined as part of the state, consent manufacturing institutions such as religious institutions, schools and media are defined as part of civil society (Kumar, 2007, p. 48). Gramsci argues, in relation to the need for continuous re-production of this domination, that “this intellectual domination of the class in power is *neither absolute nor complete* but rather a process that must continuously propagate itself.” (Kumar, 2007, p. 48).

Kumar's dominance-resistance model is important by presenting the dual characteristic of construction of discourse, which is the dialectic of mechanisms of dominance and resistance. According to Kumar, mechanisms of dominance include:

- “- *economic power* wielded by media owners-corporate parents and advertisers who have the ability to censor media content and create an atmosphere of self-censorship.
- *practical constraints* that flow how news-gathering practices are organised in a for-profit media system. To maximize profits the media industry has laid off reporters, slashed budgets for investigative reporting, and thus become more dependent on free or cheap sources of information. These include the standard news services, corporate PR departments, government sources, and corporate-sponsored think tanks, which together have enormous power to determine the content of the news.
- *ideological limitations* of professional journalism and its reliance on official news sources, event-oriented reporting, and taken-for-granted storytelling mechanisms, which reinforce the status quo.” (Kumar, 2007, pp. 38–39)

There is also a parallelism between the *economic power, practical constraints and ideological limitations* of Kumar's model, and Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model. While the economic power that Kumar identifies includes ownership and advertising filters, practical constraints and ideological limitations include sourcing filter. On the other hand, Kumar's model also has a resistance side in which the author discusses the mechanisms of resistance such as collective struggle, which possibly affect the content of mass media. Daley (2009, p. 170) argues that the value of Kumar's work is on the resistance side by showing "how the public sphere can be enlivened by the active agency of workers raising legitimate questions of social and economic justice".

Mass communication is an area of discussion in which domination, manipulation, propaganda, discourse formation, and power relations are highlighted parts as well as counter-power and resistance to mainstream discourses. However, production of consent cannot be reduced only into propaganda and domination. The dominance-resistance model "tries to capture the dialectic of mass media" (Kumar, 2007, p. 56). Kumar's model reminds us that although the advertisements and the news have strong influences on the formation of 'common sense', there is also resistance to this discourse. In this respect, this model provides important inputs for the theoretical framework of this research by providing a theoretical base for considering discourse formation in a dialectical way, rather than falling into the trap of the power of propaganda. However, this also does not mean to underestimate the power of propaganda. As Herman and Chomsky's model shows, the mechanism of propaganda is powerful enough to make audiences see grey as either white or black.

Kumar's model provides a valuable practical approach that suggests domination is not as simple as propaganda. To investigate the production of social consent for branded housing projects, although Herman and Chomsky's model provides valuable points to be taken into account, by only emphasising the dynamics of domination in discourse formation in the media it does not answer the question of the relationship of this discourse with representational space. In addition, while Castells' (2007) communication power provides a comprehensive discussion for 'power in network society', the jargon Castells built is heavily based on the terminology of programming such as switches, programmers, programs. Application of such a conceptual framework to social issues is one of the criticisms this model receives (Fuch's aforementioned



critique). Kumar's dominance-resistance model, by being based on Gramsci's theory of hegemony, emphasises the dynamics of consent production and the battle for hegemony.

Jones (2006) points out the strength of Gramscian analysis for different media and texts by emphasising its ability to connect the contents of media and text with agencies of cultural production:

“Gramscian analysis directs us away from a preoccupation with the text alone and towards an understanding that texts are bound up with the agencies involved in cultural production, some of which act in concert with one another, while others act in competition. A full account of a film, for example, would include some address to the film studio that produced it, and to the roles of censorship, film criticism and popular taste in the period. Consideration of a newspaper article would reflect on the patterns of ownership at that moment, the composition of the reading public, the role of government in licensing the press and the activities of industry watchdogs.”  
(2006, p. 5)

In this sense, such an analysis can provide a basis to discuss the discourse produced via the text and images together with the dynamics which produce these texts and images, as well as the effect of these discourse on people, as in this research. As a result, Kumar's dominance-resistance model was applied to investigate whose views are disseminated through the news content. In the research, the model is used by focusing on the mechanisms of dominance according to research questions.

### **Adapting the Dominance Resistance Model:**

Adaptation of the dominance-resistance model to the research was based on two features of the model: practical constraints and ideological limitations of professional journalism. Analysis of economic power is excluded due to the scope of the research. By applying the practical constraints and the ideological limitations of professional journalism, the news content was analysed according to news-gathering practices, which according to Kumar reinforce status quo. Therefore, two aspects of the news were analysed: the news source and the news collection methods. Firstly, the main reference persons of the news (news reference/source) were identified to unfold whose views are

represented in the news content. Secondly, the ways of news collection were reviewed including the collection method (e.g. event attendance, interviewing the references), the location or event of the news collected (e.g. launch event of the project), and the collection agent of the news (e.g. news agency, reporter). By reviewing these two, how the news content related to branded housing projects is produced was revealed in terms of building a hegemonic image of the projects.

Firstly, identification of the main reference persons of the news articles (news reference/source) is crucial for the research that aims to investigate the relationship of production of common sense and discursive formation of the branded housing projects including through the news content. Secondly, reviewing the ways of news collection including the collection method (e.g. event attendance, interviewing the references), the location or event of the news collected (e.g. launch event of the project), and the collection agent of the news (e.g. news agency, reporter) is crucial in terms of investigating the power relations behind the news articles. By reviewing these two, the dynamics behind production of the news content (related to branded housing projects) was revealed.

#### ***4.4.4) Quantitative Content Analysis***

Quantitative content analysis was applied on the textual and visual content of news articles and project catalogues. Firstly, the quantitative content analysis based on the word frequency was applied on the textual content of the news articles. In this analysis, the textual content of the news was reviewed by NVivo software according to the most frequent words. The review content was limited to 0.1 of weighted percentage of word frequency. According to this review, 73 words, which correspond to 0.1 % of lexical density, were identified as the most frequent words in the news content.<sup>15</sup>

Secondly, inductive quantitative content analysis was applied on the visuals accompanying the articles. While reviewing the news articles for textual content, frequent content in the accompanying visuals was also identified. Based on this initial review, visual codes were produced, and the content was analysed according to these

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<sup>15</sup> A list of most frequent words was produced by an automated function of NVivo, and then the top 0.1% were focused on as the most frequent words in the news articles.

codes. The visuals were reviewed in terms of their presentation in addition to their content.

Thirdly, inductive quantitative content analysis was applied on the visuals in the catalogues to investigate how the projects and life in the projects are represented in the catalogues. Initially all the project catalogues were reviewed to identify frequent content used in the catalogue visuals. Based on this initial review, visual codes were produced, and the content was analysed according to these codes.

#### ***4.4.5) Qualitative Content Analysis***

There are both inductive and deductive approaches to qualitative content analysis. Elo et al. (2014) defined three phases for qualitative content analysis: preparation, organisation, and reporting of results. Whereas the preparation phase is the phase of data collection, evaluation of data and selection of analysis objects for both deductive and inductive analysis, the organisation phase differs in the two approaches. Whilst in inductive analysis it includes open coding, production of categories, and abstraction, in deductive analysis it includes matrix development for the codes. In the third phase, the results are reported for both inductive and deductive qualitative content analysis.

#### **News Articles**

Inductive qualitative content analysis was applied for the qualitative content analysis of the text content of the news articles. Although sub-sampling is a method used to create inductive codes (see Boyatzis, 1998) for application to the analysis of all analysis units, in this research, inductive codes were created by reviewing all the news articles. Since each article was required to be reviewed in detail in order to apply the dominance-resistance model on the news article, during this review, the researcher outlined the concepts emphasised within the content of the news. Then, the researcher used this to create inductive codes for coding the content in order to investigate the framing of branded housing projects in the news content. Additionally, queries were run for the key concepts by using NVivo software, which the researcher identified during the review, such as the brand (*marka* in Turkish) or the concept (*konsept* in Turkish). The frequent word list, which was produced for quantitative content analysis, was also used

to identify concurrent themes. These words were used for queries by using NVivo software and related phrases were identified. To illustrate, in the word frequency query, ‘*yasam*’ (which is ‘*life*’ in Turkish) is among the most frequent words. The researcher took this as a starting point and reviewed the texts and identified the phrases used together with ‘*life*’, such as *living area, life club, life centre, life/living architect, life/living standard, and lifestyle*.

As a result, together with identified codes during the review and these queries, thematic codes were created and the news articles were reviewed according to these codes.

### **Project Catalogues**

Inductive qualitative content analyses were conducted on the textual content of the project catalogues to analyse how the projects themselves and the *life* in the projects are represented in the catalogues as part of the consent-production processes. Initially, in order to produce the codes, 28 project catalogues were reviewed to identify the frequent content used in the textual content of the catalogues; then, the content was analysed according to these codes.

### **Print Advertisements**

The print advertisements were analysed qualitatively through their textual and visual content. For this analysis, a selection of 8 advertisements were taken into account one by one and analysed interpretively in terms of their framing of the projects.

#### ***4.4.6) Spatial Analysis – Responsive Environments***

The research applied a comprehensive spatial analysis of the four selected projects by applying the *responsive environments* framework proposed by Bentley et al. (1985) as an analytical framework. Bentley et al. (1985) propose a set of criteria for designing responsive environments as permeability, variety, legibility, robustness, visual appropriateness, richness, and personalisation: The approach of the authors emphasises that there is a need for “more democratic, enriching environments, which maximise the degree of choice available to users” (Carmona et al., 2010). Through this emphasis along with its comprehensive content, this framework provides a valuable tool for the analysis of spatial practice in the branded housing projects.

- “1. *Permeability*: designing the overall layout of routes and development blocks.
2. *Variety*: locating uses on the site.
3. *Legibility*: designing the massing of the buildings, and the enclosure of public space.
4. *Robustness*: designing the spatial and constructional arrangement of individual buildings and outdoor places.
5. *Visual appropriateness*: designing the external image.
6. *Richness*: developing the design for sensory choice.
7. *Personalisation*: making the design encourage people to put their own mark on the places where they live and work.” (Bentley et al., 1985, p. 11) (italic emphasis in the original)

Firstly, Bentley (1985, p. 10) defines the quality of permeability as “the number of alternative ways through an environment”. The authors relate permeability with “the overall layout of routes and development blocks” (Bentley et al., 1985, p. 11). Mertens and Moughtin (2003, p. 219) define permeability “as the choice of movement the environment presents to the user”. Secondly, Bentley et al. (1985, p. 27) stress the importance of variety of experience for a responsive place and define *variety of uses* as the key for sustaining this variety in a place. According to the authors, “variety of use unlocks the other levels of variety” (Bentley et al., 1985, p. 27) including variety in forms, building types, variety of users, variety of times people use the place, variety of reasons to use the place, variety of meaning of place. Thirdly, Bentley et al. (1985, p. 27) define legibility as a quality of space for people to understand the space easily, while Mertens and Moughtin (2003, p. 219) define it as “the ways in which people perceive, understand and react to the urban environment”. Lynch (1960, p. 2) defines legibility as “the apparent clarity ... of the cityscape”. A legible space is defined as a space “whose districts or landmarks or pathways are easily identifiable and are easily grouped into an over-all pattern” (Lynch, 1960, p. 3). Lynch proposes a five-fold-analysis-criteria for analysing imageability of urban spaces as paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks. Fourthly, Bentley et al. (1985, p. 9) define robustness as the quality of space which allows users to “use a given place for different purposes”. Fifthly, Bentley et al (1985) define visual appropriateness in relation with the external image of the buildings, and argue that visual appropriateness contributes to the legibility of urban space by presenting the user a defined and familiar image of the building.

Sixthly, Bentley et al. (1985, p. 11) define the quality of richness in relation with sensory choices and a place's offer of various sensory choices. Seventhly, Bentley et al. (1985, p. 11) define the quality of personalisation as encouraging "people to put their own mark on the places where they live and work".

Although this is a set of normative criteria for designing environments, it also provides an analytical framework for analysing the urban spaces. This set of criteria was applied to the four selected branded housing projects: Firstly, the projects were analysed according to permeability by considering the boundary treatments, segregation from surrounding environments and their spatial accessibility from the surrounding environments. This analysis is important to explore the spatial segregation level. Secondly, the projects were analysed according to variety by analysing the land uses provided within the confines of the projects. Thirdly, the projects were analysed according to legibility by mapping and figure-ground analysis. Fourthly, the projects' robustness was analysed by examining their multi-functionality and adaptability to different uses. Fifthly, the projects were analysed according to visual appropriateness by expanding the analysis to the vertical dimension. Sixthly, the projects' richness was analysed by examining visual richness (since it was not possible to experience other sensory elements due to the exclusionary nature of the projects). Lastly, the projects were analysed according to personalisation by analysing their level of flexibility to allow residents to alter the environment they live in.

#### ***4.4.7) Interview Analysis***

From a Gramscian perspective, social consent is not a self-generating social phenomenon. It is a part of construction of hegemony. Therefore, common sense as part of the social consent, regarding the branded housing projects, is neither a solely product of discursive formation nor a neutral social emergence. Hence, the research analysed the data on people's representational space related to branded housing projects and living environments. This data was gathered from two main subjects: project residents and a sample from the general population.

Analyses of interviews provided findings to discuss the produced common sense for 'branded housing projects' and to unfold the factors contributing to production of social consent that allows the expansion of such commodified urban spaces.

In addition, the interviews also provided information regarding spatial experience of residents in the projects areas as part of spatial practice. The resident and non-resident interviews were analysed qualitatively according to the research questions. The materials used for this analysis were interview sheets (researcher's notes), recordings and transcriptions. The researcher firstly transcribed the recordings and then categorised the findings from the answers according to research questions. The researcher did the same for the interview sheets.

#### **4.4) Limitations of Methodology and Ethical Issues**

There are two main methodological limitations: recruiting the interviewees and collection of the project catalogues. Firstly, while recruiting the interviewees, the main limitation was the segregation level of the projects. The project areas are segregated, gated and controlled by security, and entering the areas is only possible by visiting particular residents. Therefore, recruiting interviewees by entering directly into these 43 project areas and talking with the residents in the common areas of the projects was not possible. The research overcame this by initially circulating the list of 43 projects through personal connections of the researcher, and recruiting initial interviewees through this circulation, and then applying snowball sampling with initial interviewees. While recruiting interviewees by using personal connections, in order to avoid conflict of interest and to put some distance between the researcher and the interviewees, the researcher applied another criterion: that the researcher would not interview any project residents known personally prior to interview. Therefore, although the researcher used personal connections while forming the sample of the project residents, none of the interviewees was a person the researcher knew before the interviews.

Secondly, the initial aim of the research was to analyse catalogues from all 43 projects. However, this was not possible since some projects had been completed and their sales offices were closed or their promotional materials had been removed from their websites. This limitation was partially overcome by conducting archival work at IFEA and collecting 6 project catalogues from the archive. In the end, although only 28 catalogues were accessed and analysed, the sample was consistent with the criteria set for a representative sample of the catalogues (by avoiding clustering effects such as development period of the project or branding strategies of particular developers).

In terms of ethical issues, the groups interviewed for the research are not among vulnerable groups in society. Firstly, the interviewees, who are project residents, non-residents, and the informants, who are project sales agents and public officials, are not in positions to be affected by the research or by being informants. Secondly, the interviewees and public officials were adults from upper middle income groups and were informed about the research throughout before the overt interviews. The researcher stated her position clearly to the interviewees as well. However, interviews with sales agents were covert interviews, in which the researcher introduced herself as a customer. The aim of this introduction was critical to investigate how the projects are framed by the sales offices. It was not likely that such information would have been retrieved if the researcher revealed herself as a researcher and did an overt interview with sales agents. This approach has been taken by other authoritative researchers in the field of real estate and built environment, e.g. Perlman (2016). This covert position of the researcher has been considered thoroughly in terms of ethical issues. However, given that the research has no connection with vulnerable groups in society, and it was unlikely that this information could be retrieved by an overt interview, this method of interviewing was selected.

#### **4.5) Conclusion**

As elaborated in previous chapters, the research aims to investigate the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation by applying a theoretical framework combining Marxist analysis of commodification, Lefebvrian production of space and Gramscian theory of hegemony. The research aims to bridge socio-political analysis, discourse analysis and spatial analysis to investigate the commodification of urban space through the aforementioned levels of analysis (as development processes, discursive formation and spatial practice). Through this research strategy, the research aims to uncover the dynamics of the deepening commodification of urban space through spatial practice under neoliberal urbanisation, and the dynamics of enabling mechanisms for this commodification through development processes and discursive formation of the sample project under neoliberal urbanisation.

The next chapters (Chapter 5, 6, 7, and 8) set out the context of development of branded housing projects in Turkey, and the findings of this critical case study in terms of deepening commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey.



## **CHAPTER 5 - BRANDED HOUSING PROJECTS IN ISTANBUL IN THE CONTEXT OF NEOLIBERAL URBANISATION IN TURKEY**

This chapter discusses the development of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey and development of branded housing projects briefly within this context. Firstly, the development of neoliberal urbanisation is discussed by focusing on the initial period for this development, 1980-2001. Secondly, housing production in Turkey is reviewed to present the context of housing in Turkey, together with its unique characteristics and processes. Thirdly, the phenomenon of branded housing projects in Turkey is briefly introduced in relation with the global increase in the development of enclaves.

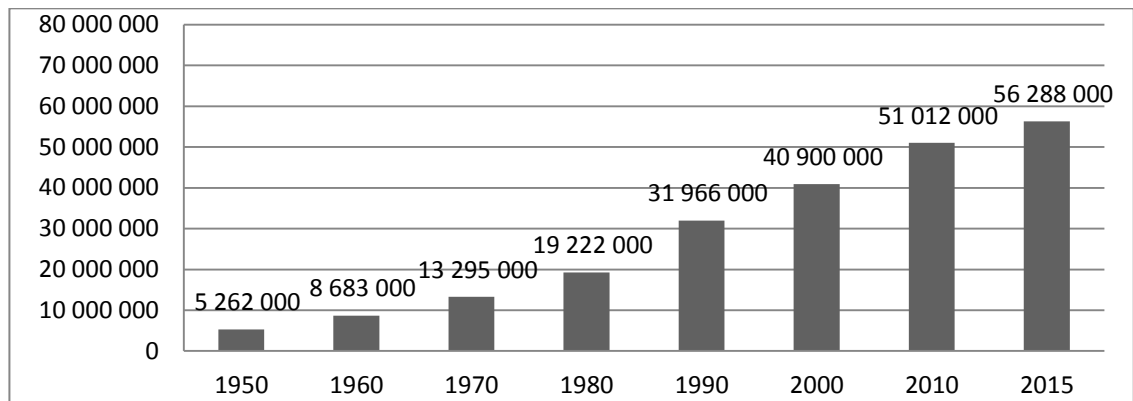
This chapter is critical for situating the research into its context and to introduce the dynamics of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey. As stated in Chapter 1, the research acknowledges that there is not one neoliberalism, but different versions of neoliberalism in the world, and aims to present the Turkey case as one of the variegated neoliberalisms following this perspective. While various approaches to neoliberalization were presented in Chapter 2, this chapter establishes part of the contribution of this research to the neoliberalism literature as presenting a comprehensive picture of development of neoliberal restructuring and urbanization in Turkey. The chapter therefore addresses research questions 2.1 and 2.2 (see Table 1.1).

### **5.1) Development of Neoliberal Urbanisation in Turkey (1980 – 2001)**

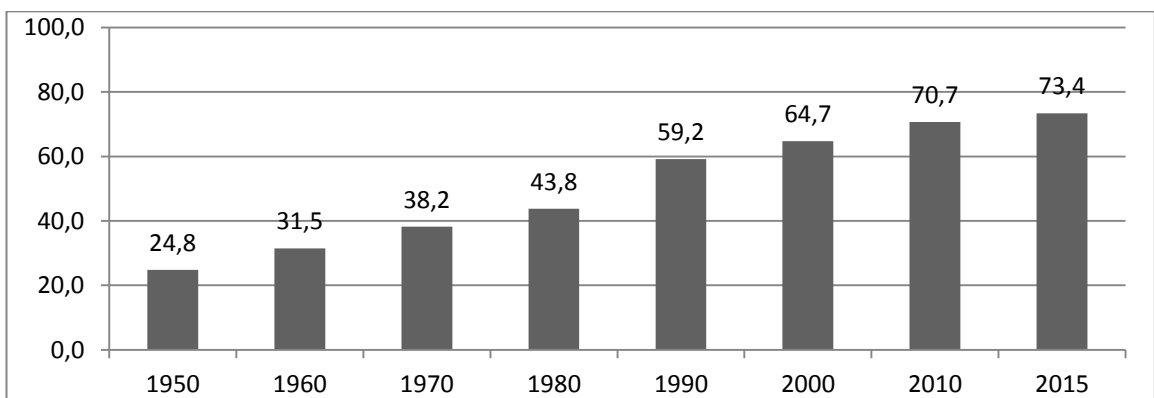
Urbanisation in Turkey is best discussed under four periods as pre-1950, 1950-1980, 1980-2000, and post-2000. While the 1950s present a breaking point parallel with post-WWII global transformations (1950-80), the 1980s present a breaking point parallel with the global neoliberal restructuring. The third breaking point in urbanisation in Turkey is the 2001 economic crash, which affected the urbanisation processes by contributing to the deepening of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey.

In the **first** period (1923 – 1950), which starts with the foundation of the Republic after WWI and ends with the inner migration wave following WWII, housing was not a

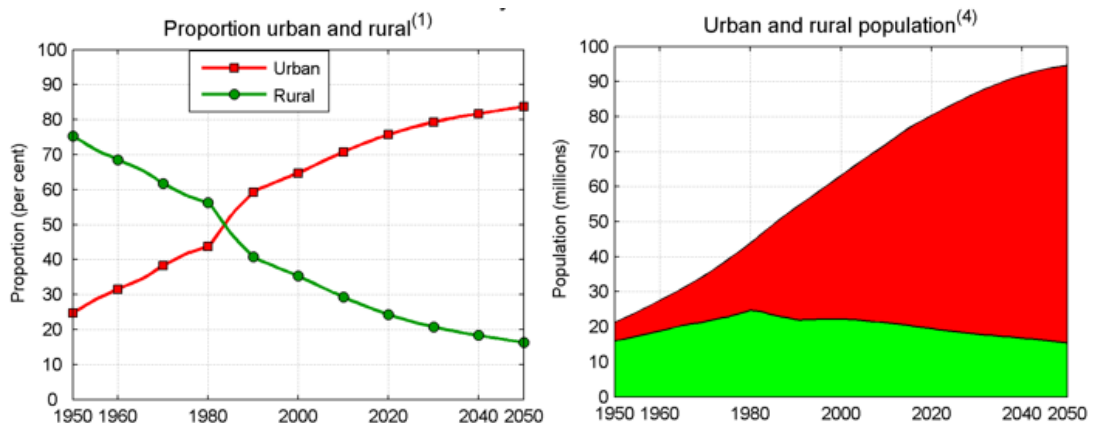
priority sector for the state; the main concern of the state was the foundation of the institutions of newly-founded Republic and industrial development (Danielson and Keleş, 1985).



**Figure 5.1 Annual urban population in Turkey (1950-2015)** (United Nations, 2015a)



**Figure 5.2 Percentage of population residing in urban areas in Turkey (1950-2015)**  
(United Nations, 2015a)



**Figure 5.3 Change in urban and rural populations in Turkey** (United Nations, 2015b, fig. Country Profile)

The **second** period (1950 – 1980) starts with the post-WWII restructuring of the global system and transformations of developing countries. In this period, the urbanisation rate in Turkey was unprecedented: With a 5.7% annual increase rate of urban population in this period, Turkey was among the most rapidly urbanizing countries (Danielson and Keleş, 1985, p. 27). The ratio of urban population to total population had tripled by 1980 (45.4%) in comparison with 1950 (16.4%) (Danielson and Keleş, 1985). The distribution of urban population among cities was also uneven. Whereas in 1950 there were 5 cities with populations of more than 100 000 in Turkey, this number had reached 21 by 1980 (Danielson and Keleş, 1985).

The main reason behind uneven distribution of the population among urban and rural areas and agglomeration in the cities is largely attributed to migration from rural areas to larger cities (Danielson and Keleş, 1985, p. 29). In 1948, Turkey was included in the Marshall Plan for military and economic purposes (Pamuk, n.d., p. 281). In the scope of the plan, various sectors (including agriculture, irrigation, energy, mining, transportation, defence) were funded (Toren, 2006, p. 85), which has had irreversible effects on the settlement pattern in Turkey, especially by mechanisation of the country's agriculture. One of the objectives of the aid was to decrease the cost of the labour force in agricultural production via mechanisation (Toren, 2006, p. 86). As a result, while the number of tractors in Turkey was 1750 in 1948, it had reached 44144 in 1957 (Kiray, 1972, p. 69), which means a 25 times rise in 9 years. By the mechanisation of agriculture, the labour force that was previously needed for agriculture became obsolete and this was the main drive behind the mass migration from rural areas to cities. According to research done in 1957 by the Turkish Labour Agency (Is ve Isçi Bulma Kurumu), the number of villagers seeking jobs outside of their own village had reached 7.4 million (Kiray, 1972, p. 68), which corresponds to nearly 40 % of rural population and 30 % of total population in that time (calculated according to the date provided in (Kiray, 1972, p. 68))

In the first part of this period (1950-1960), a period of rapid urbanisation, the country experienced expansion of informal housing, land speculation and foreign aid (Adam et al., 1981, p. 269). In 1960, Turkey faced its first military coup. In the post-coup period, industrialization became the development policy of the state infrastructure (Danielson and Keleş, 1985, p. 38) and planning became an intervention strategy of the state for a controlled economic model (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 283). Import-substitution

industrialization became the model of industrialisation during this period (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 283). State enterprises were created and public investments were concentrated in industry and in supporting infrastructure (Danielson and Keleş, 1985, p. 38). The change in economic policies also changed the share of agriculture GDP of Turkey, which was halved by 1980 compared to 1950 (Pamuk, n.d., p. 281). However, industrialisation “has not been able to keep pace with urbanisation” (Danielson and Keleş, 1985, p. 38), which created urban problems including deficiency in housing provision and informal employment.

Existing housing stock in urban areas was sufficient neither in terms of quantity nor affordability for the housing need of newcomers (Danielson and Keleş, 1985). The phenomenon of *gecekondu*, which is a type of informal housing, has been socially produced as a ‘solution’ to this problem. Gecekondu (meaning *built-overnight* in Turkish (Danielson and Keleş, 1985, p. 41)) were built on public or (mostly occupied) private land illegally by disregarding building regulations and planning permissions. The number of gecekondu increased more than 10 times in 30 years in this period (from 100 000 in 1950 to 1.25 million in 1983) (Danielson and Keleş, 1985). It was also the period of land speculation. According to Karpat (1976, 57), between 1949 and 1965, “some lots around Ankara and İstanbul that sold for 50 liras in 1949 went up to 50 000 liras in 1965 and permitted a rapidly growing class of urban entrepreneurs to accumulate capital”.

In the 1970s, urban growth slowed down due to the economic crisis and the violence in major cities (Danielson and Keleş, 1985). Danielson and Keles (1985, p. 46) define the situation bluntly by saying “by 1977 Turkey was virtually bankrupt...”, which played part in the rolling out of neoliberal policies in Turkey.

The **third** period (1980 – 2000) starts with the adoption of the neoliberalization programme (January 24 Stabilization Decisions 1980) and the military coup in 1980 while ending with the 2001 economic crash. Therefore, the political-economic transformation of the country, which is also called Turkey’s integration with global markets, has started in the 1980s and been continuing in the post 2001 period (Güngen, 2006, p. 332). Balaban (2013, p. 57) argues that the post-1980 period is a breaking point in terms of accumulation of capital and the distribution policies. In this period, neoliberal restructuring policies were implemented in order to integrate the economy of

Turkey with the global economy. In addition, there were radical attempts to transform the production of built environment into a tool for implementing neoliberal policies and to an extension of politics (Balaban, 2013, p. 57).

Turkey went through a severe economic crisis in the late 1970s, which, as Yılmaz (2006) argues, produced the conditions for the following radical restructuring of capitalist production relations in Turkey. The country was affected by the global oil crisis in the early 1970s (Tekeli, 2010a), and by the mid-70s, was faced with a triple-digit-inflation rate, around 15 percent unemployment and foreign exchange shortages (Kus, 2013, p. 260). The reasons behind the crisis were extensively discussed in the literature, including explanations defining the crisis either as operational or systemic (for a detailed review see Yılmaz (2006)). Following the crisis, the economy, politics and also culture in Turkey were transformed and radically changed, which were “felt in almost every sphere of life” (Keyman and Gumuscu, 2014, p. 22). This transformation has challenged the developmentalist approach and the regulatory role of state in the country’s economy (Keyman and Gumuscu, 2014, p. 23).

Responding to the economic crisis in the late 1970s, the January 24 Stabilization Decisions (1980) declared the neoliberal restructuring in Turkey. This programme proposed a structural change from an import-substitution industrialization economic model to an export-oriented market economy (Pamuk, n.d., p. 286).

“The aims of the new policies were to improve the balance of payments and reduce the rate of inflation in the short term, and to create a market-based, export-oriented economy in the longer term. The policy package included a major devaluation followed by continued depreciation of the currency in line with the rate of inflation, greater liberalisation of trade and payments regimes, elimination of price controls, freeing of interest rates, elimination of many government subsidies, substantial price increases for the products of the state economic enterprises, subsidies and other support measures for exports and promotion of foreign capital. Reducing real wages and the incomes of agricultural producers were important parts of the new policies.” (Pamuk, n.d., p. 286)

The Stabilization Decisions Programme is “the start of the integration of Turkey’s economic system with the neoliberal world economic order” (Cosar, 2012, p. 74) and the first programme of Turkey’s neoliberal phase (Cosar, 2012, p. 78). The programme was “anchored in the requisites for the stand-by agreement signed with the IMF (June 1980) and the World Bank’s Structural Adjustment Loans” (Cosar, 2012, p. 74). This is the period in which Turkey received the first Structural Adjustment Loan from the World Bank in 1981 (Zabci, 2012, p. 256). In other words, the programme was led by the IMF and World Bank. In this respect, Turkey’s restructuring through a neoliberal system, including the following coup d’état, is very much like the global south examples.

This roll-back neoliberal restructuring programme (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 288) was followed by a military coup on 12th September 1980. Bayirbag (2010, p. 288) argues that the January 24 Programme was unlikely to be implemented due to the political conditions in Turkey in that period (considering the rise of leftist grass-root movements); therefore, the military coup was not a surprising act. Turgut Ozal, who was one of the high ranking officials who formulated the Stabilization Decisions, Minister of Economy of the technocratic government assigned by the military coup, and the first prime minister elected after the coup in 1983 (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 288), explicitly defined this mutual relationship of the coup with the restructuring: “Without 12 September [referring the military coup], we cannot reach the results of this economic programme” (in Ercan, 2006, p. 379). In this context, the Stabilization Decisions and the military coup were mutually inclusive. While the former proposed a change in the system, the latter played the role of adopting the programme in an oppressive, anti-democratic environment. The technocratic government founded by the military coup adopted this roll-back neoliberal programme straight away (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 288).

The coup had irreversible effects on socio-economic structure in Turkey. Bugra and Savaskan (2014) define the 1980 coup as “the most ruthless in the history of Republic” (p 49). According to the authors, the coup had “the most enduring impact on Turkish society” (p 49). A new constitution was enacted by the coup in 1982 and all existing political parties were closed down, while their leaders were banned from active politics (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014). In addition, the labour movement was crushed, the trade unions confederation, DISK, was closed down, and its leaders were imprisoned (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014). After the military coup, the first elected government in 1983

followed the same path and continued the neoliberal restructuring (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 289). In this period, **privatisation** was an important part of the policy agenda. The state enterprises, especially those producing consumer goods, were privatised (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 51). Privatisation continued in post-2001 period at an accelerated pace (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 51).

The policies implemented in this period fostered **accumulation of power** in the centre both in public administration and local governments (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 289). In this period, as part of this centralisation, new central institutions like TOKI were founded. In addition, the greater municipalities were founded, with the aim of taking control of urban areas while providing urban infrastructure (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 289). On the other hand, planning command is decentralised, taken from central government and responsibility and command was given to local governments (Balaban, 2013, p. 65).

### **Urbanisation (1980-2001)**

In the post-1980 period, in contrast to pre-1980 period, the cities and urbanisation were two central areas for accumulation of capital (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 290). In this period, while manufacturing investments decreased, both public and private sectors invested in energy, communication, housing and construction, which started the *urbanisation of the capital* in Turkey (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 290). The public sector invested in big infrastructure projects (communication, electricity, transportation) in the 1980s (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 51). In the post-1980 period, over many years, more houses started to be built than the number of households (Türel, 2004). The foundation of TOKI is among the state incentives that encouraged investment in housing and urban land. Big/mega projects like mass-housing projects or big infrastructure projects came to the stage of urban development (Kaygalak, 2009).

In this period, exchange value of the urban land exceeded the use value (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 291). While big capital received direct support and incentives from the public sector, working classes were integrated in this restructuring by receiving their share though urban rent created by increased development rights (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 291): In this period, occupied public land was sold to squatter owners, which actually equated to privatisation of public land (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 291). This strategy transformed the occupied public land to private property. While squatter owners became property

owners, they now became attached to the neoliberal restructuring of the urban land, which Sengul (2001) defines as bribing of the squatter owners (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 291).

As a result of the implementation of neo-liberal urban policies, political instability and crises, socio-economic polarisation and spatial inequality have deepened, followed by chronic urban poverty (Bayirbag, 2010, p. 292). In addition, in the 1990s, cities in Turkey also faced a second wave of migration in relation to military operations in the East and South-East of Turkey, which affected the urbanisation processes in this period (Kaygalak, 2009).

## **5.2) Brief Review of Housing Production in Turkey**

### ***5.2.1) Self-Built Housing***

Self-built housing production was the main mode of production in the pre-1950 period. In this period urbanisation rates were low and land prices respectively affordable. Although use value exceeds the exchange value by producing one's own house and, therefore, the alienation level is low, the construction process in this mode is time consuming and expensive. Given the rapid urbanization that Turkey has experienced, this mode of production has not been able to meet the housing need. With rising land prices and land speculation, self-building the house turns out to be a mode of production for high-income classes. On the other hand, single houses are not the only building type produced via this mode, apartments are also built and the additional housing units rented out or used for accommodation of other family members (Tekeli, 2010a).

The phenomenon of *gecekond* requires to be mentioned in relation with self-built housing. Since *gecekond*s are produced by migrants for the dwellers themselves in the first place, it is a mode of informal self-built housing production in which even future dwellers directly participate in the process of constructing the house. It can be claimed that it is the ultimate form of self-built, with engagement of the dweller directly in the production process. While a self-builder is the one who can afford to build a house within the confines of legal boundaries and responsibilities, a *gecekond* builder who cannot even afford to rent or buy a house in the city builds his/her house outside the confines of legal boundaries, with the associated risks.



In addition to the mode of *gecekondu*, with the rise of land and building costs, other modes of productions have emerged: housing cooperatives, build-and-sell and mass housing modes.

### 5.2.2) *Private Housing Production*

#### **Build-and-Sell - *Yapsatçılık***

Another mode of production of housing in Turkey developed in these periods is *built-and-sell* (*yapsatçılık* in Turkish). As it has been mentioned, in the period of 1950-1980 urban land was considered as an investment area for small capital. *Yapsatçı*, the developer of build-and-sell, has only a small amount of capital and engages in build-and-sell as a way of building housing despite this lack of capital. This new mode is applied by application of a new model: *kat karşılığı inşaat*, which means “building service for storeys”(Esen, 2005). In this model, *yapsatçı* makes an agreement with the owner of the plot in return for housing units that will be built on that plot. Via this agreement, *yapsatçı*, the developer, appropriates the land for free and gives some housing units to the owner of the land at the end of the construction (Esen, 2005). Therefore, *yapsatçı* makes an agreement with the owner of a house with a garden, tears the house down, builds a multi-storey building on the plot, gives some of the housing units to the owner of the demolished house according to their agreement, and sells the rest of the units on the market. Since *yapsatçı* is a small capital investor, sometimes housing units are sold during the construction period for the building costs. This is a solution to fund the construction where necessary. Considering the period during which this model is developed, when inflation rates are very high, in fact, *yapsatçı* would prefer to sell the units after the construction is completed (Tekeli, 2010a).

In this respect, *yapsatçılık*, is a model which contributed heavily to small capital accumulation. With a very limited investment, by gaining the land for free in exchange for housing units, *yapsatçı* appropriates the created rent and accumulates capital. Tekeli (2010b) mentions the profit-orientedness of this mode of production by stating the fact that *yapsatçı* often enters this market to accumulate some capital. After accomplishing such accumulation of capital, according to Tekeli, often *yapsatçı* moves to invest in a sector other than construction.

This model works, in general, in already built up areas of cities with high building rights in a master plan. It also creates pressure on local authorities constantly to increase the building rights constantly in already built up areas. The model also creates an over-construction problem: Buildings in historical parts of the cities and buildings which have not yet completed their life span are demolished due to the pressure of new rents created by this model (Tekeli, 2010a).

“As a societal type he used his very limited resources and his know-how, without any provision of outside capital, to increase the building density of an entire city, thereby helping the middle class to maintain and consolidate its economic standing at these times of massive urbanisation. From another point of view, he exterminated İstanbul's entire heritage of civil architecture within the space of one generation. He transformed the city beyond recognition.” (Esen, 2005, p. 3)

Although this model of construction still continues to be used, the main dynamics of transformation has largely changed in favour of involvement of big capital investments in urban development.

### ***5.2.3) Gecekondu – A Specific Type of Informal Housing***

Gecekondu is a type of informal housing with path dependent characteristics that has developed in Turkey in the post-WWII period, although there are other similar examples from developing countries (Karpaz, 1976). These path dependent characteristics are directly related to socio-economic conditions in Turkey.

Gecekondu Law (No: 775), enacted in 1966, defined gecekondu as “dwellings erected, on the land and lots which do not belong to the builder, without the consent of the owner, and without observing the laws and regulations concerning construction and building.” (Karpaz, 1976, p. 16). Gecekondu builders avoided many costs including land costs, permission costs and prices for technical services by building gecekondu rather than formal housing units (Tekeli, 2010a).

The first gecekondu were built in the mid-40s in Ankara and İstanbul. The very first gecekondu was built in the Zeytinburnu area of İstanbul in 1947, and within six years

Years	Number of gecekondus in Ankara	Population living in gecekondus	Percent of urban population living in gecekondus
1950	12 000	62 400	21.8
1960	70 000	364 000	56.0
1970	144 000	748 000	60.6
1980	275 000	1 450 000	72.4

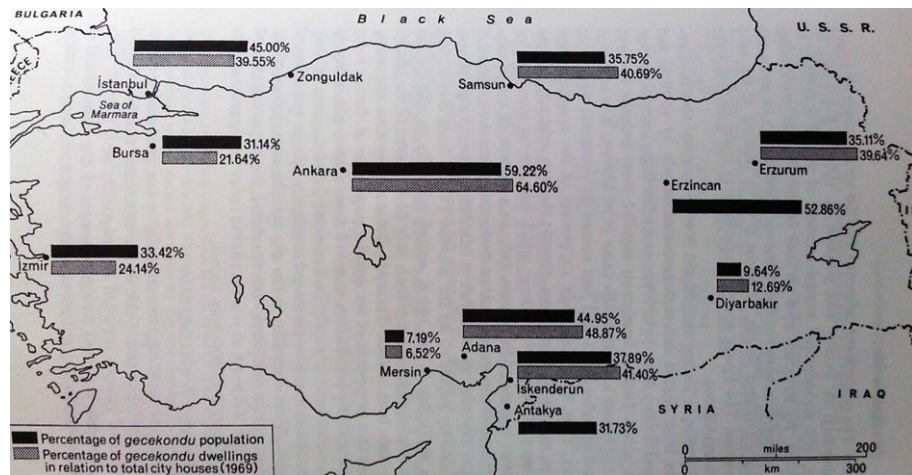
**Table 5.1 Gecekondu areas in Ankara 1950-1980 (Produced based on data of KENT-KOOP in (Danielson and Keleş, 1985, p. 166) )**

the area became a settlement accommodating nearly 50 000 people. In 1980, 21% of the housing stock was gecekondu and more than 23% of urban population were living in these areas. The are even more striking in big cities (see Table 5.1) (Danielson and Keleş, 1985).

The main dynamics behind gecekondu production were *the mass migration* in 1950s and *insufficient housing stock in terms of both in numbers and in affordability* in cities of Turkey in that period. In this respect, gecekondu was produced as a prompt solution (Danielson and Keleş, 1985). Although most of the gecekondu dwellers were migrants, there were also low paid government or municipal officials, who could not afford cooperative housing, living in these areas (Karpas, 1976).

Gecekondus were built and occupied as quickly as possible. One reason behind this, in addition to the need for shelter, was that according to the law, demolishing a building which was not vacant required a court order. In other words, demolishing a house with residents in situ required obtaining a court order, which would involve a time-consuming bureaucratic process (Danielson and Keleş, 1985).

In the initial stage, gecekondu builders self-built their gecekondus by appropriating the land themselves. However, in later stages, gecekondu produced its own market, landlords, craftsmen-contractors (kalfa), and material suppliers (Danielson and Keleş, 1985). Therefore, it was not exempt from the dynamics of market economy, but created its own market. According to Kiray (1970, p. 25), it has been identified that 45% of the gecekondu owners had bought their houses, while the rest built them for themselves.



**Figure 5.4 Cities with major gecekondu areas in Turkey, early 1960s (Karpaz, 1976, p. 62)**

In addition, building quality had changed. The first gecekondu were built by using the cheapest materials due to the risk of demolition and very limited construction time. However, as a result of gaining some level of legitimisation, gecekondu started to be built with more durable materials. With its brick construction, gecekondu in Turkey are more substantial in comparison with squatter houses in many Asian or Latin American cities (Danielson and Keleş, 1985).

The locations of the gecekondu areas shared some common characteristics. First of all, the gecekondu areas were located on the outskirts of cities, so as to be close to working areas (Karpaz, 1976). Secondly, the areas on which gecekondu were built were not appropriate areas for conventional housing production (e.g. steep hills, areas with topographical constraints). By choosing steep hills and not easily accessible areas, the builders tried to avoid demolition of their houses by the municipalities. Thirdly, close proximity to people from the same village or community was another criterion when choosing a place to build a gecekondu (Tekeli, 2010b).

Due to the budget constraints, gecekondu were built with modest sizes and extended by additions, both horizontally and vertically, over time (Tekeli, 2010a). While in the first stage the use value of the building exceeded its exchange value, later on additional parts or second gecekondu started to be built for rental (Tekeli, 2010a). This led to the building's transformation from something with use value (built to meet the need for shelter) into something with exchange value (a commodity built for renting), while also



**Figure 5.5** The first gecekondu in Altındağ, one of the gecekondu areas of Ankara (ensonhaber, 2013)



**Figure 5.6** Altındağ, Ankara before the urban redevelopment project (Resim Rehberi, n.d.)



**Figure 5.7** Altındağ, Ankara after the urban redevelopment project (Altındağ Belediye Başkanlığı, 2013a)

creating multi-storey apartments rather than flexible one storey units expandable by adding rooms (Ekin-Erkan, 2009). Together with rising housing need, land speculation reached extreme levels. As Karpat (1976) mentions, in just sixteen years, between the years of 1949 and 1965, in Ankara and İstanbul some lots multiplied in price by 1000 times.

In the first stage, most of the gecekondus were built on public land. However, later on gecekondu builders were required to pay for the land from the people who have control over the land. These areas were public lands that were appropriated by some people by force or where gecekondu builders built their houses on land bought through a shared title deed. They were built on big areas of land which were outside the confines of master plans (Tekeli, 2010a).

The first reaction of municipalities and governments was to demolish these illegal houses. However, in the absence of an alternative to gecekondu, these areas continued to extend around cities. In the First Five Year Plan, 1963, gecekondu areas were considered as areas for improvement not demolition. Priority was given to solving the problem of land ownership. In 1966, a gecekondu law was enacted that empowered municipalities to give title deeds to gecekondus that met minimum standards. In addition to obtaining deeds, gecekondus were able to receive public services (Danielson and Keleş, 1985).

Ekin-Erkan (2009, p. 225) defines two regeneration movements regarding gecekondu areas in Turkey: Post-1980 period gecekondu laws (1983-1988), and the post-2000 regeneration movement. According to Ekin-Erkan (2009, p. 225), both movements correspond to the year that a “liberal push” (p. 226) was taking place in Turkey. While the former marks the beginning of the opening up to markets abroad, the latter corresponds to competitions to integrate with global networks.

#### ***5.2.4) Mass Housing Production***

Mass Housing was identified as a solution for housing production in Turkey in the Second Five Year Plan in 1967 (Tekeli, 2010c, p. 225). Mass Housing as a mode of production in Turkey has been developed by cooperatives, private developers and TOKI (Tekeli, 2010d, p. 251). According to Tekeli (2010d, p. 251), within the period of 1980-2000, while cooperatives and TOKI produced housing for middle classes, private developers produced mass housing for upper classes.

The first initiatives to produce mass housing were implemented by the private sector and local governments (Tekeli, 2010c, p. 225). Examples of these early initiatives include Yenilikçi Yerleşmeler, İzmit, 1978 (local government initiative) (Tekeli, 2010d,

p. 249), Batikent, Ankara (local government initiative) (Tekeli, 2010d, p. 249), ORAN (private sector initiative) (Adam et al., 1981), and MESA (private sector initiative) (Adam et al., 1981).

The programme of the 1977-78 government stated that mass housing and private sector mass housing production initiatives would be supported (Adam et al., 1981, p. 277). According to Adam, Altaban, Ates Keskinok (1981, p. 277), successive governments have continued to include objectives regarding mass housing production in their programmes.

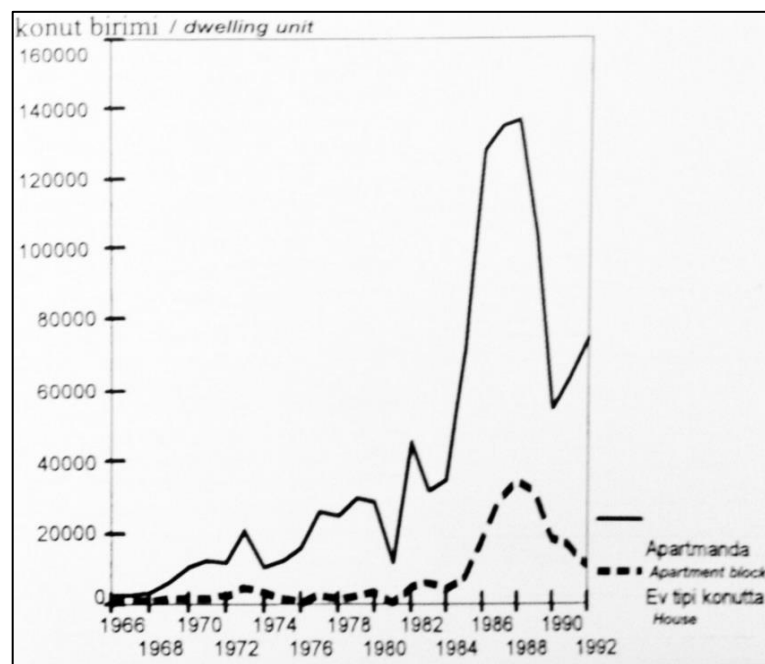
In 1980, the National Housing Policy was announced by the coalition government (the last government before the coup) (Adam et al., 1981, p. 278). Some of the objectives of this policy were to make low and middle income groups home owners, to provide cheap and vast land for housing, to prioritise mass housing and industrial construction techniques (Adam et al., 1981, p. 278). In the programme, production of mass housing is aimed together with mobilization of private sector into housing production with its financial, technical and organisational power as well as engagement of all banks into system by the housing-saving banking (Adam et al., 1981, p. 279). Adam et al. (1981, p. 280) summarise certain conditions which caused housing to become an important asset for the market: In this period, due to the economic crisis, consumption rates fell. While the state had nationalised 3000ha for housing development and plans had been made for some of these areas, some big capital groups had kept hold of lands that had been designated for development since the 1970s. There was also the availability of foreign credit sources such as the European Housing Fund and World Bank funding.

In this context, the Mass Housing Law was enacted in 1980, with wide support from capitalist groups (Adam et al., 1981, p. 279). In the following legislation, payment plans for the mass housing projects revealed that the houses would be only affordable for higher and higher-middle income groups (Adam et al., 1981, p. 282).

Building cooperatives as a mode of housing production have developed in three stages parallel to the development of urbanisation of Turkey: pre-1950, 1950 - 1980 and post-1980. The first building cooperatives were founded in the 1930s to overcome rising rents (Tekeli, 2010a). The very first building cooperative was *Bahçelievler Yapı Kooperatifi*, founded in Ankara in 1934 by bureaucrats (Tekeli, 2010a). After the Bahçelievler experience, up to the year of 1944, 50 cooperatives were founded in

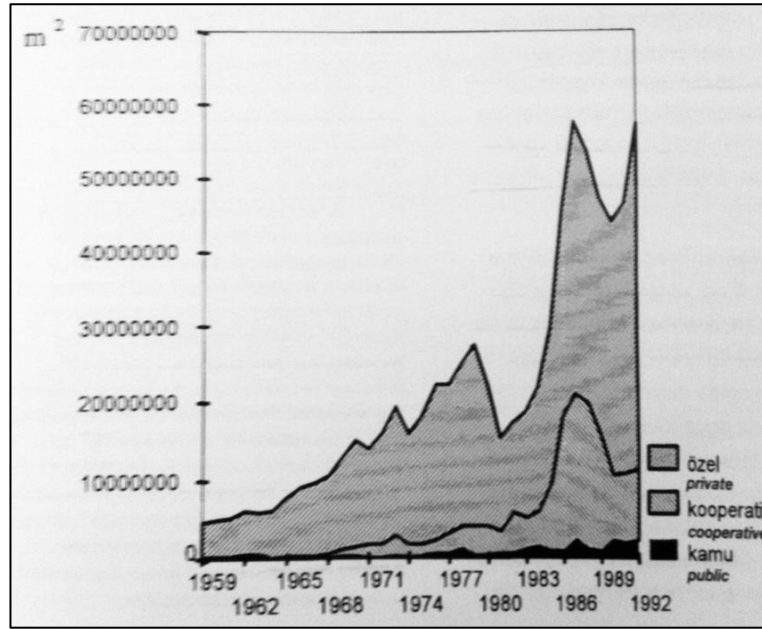
Turkey (Özüekren, 1996). Although only 23374 housing units were built by cooperatives up to 1960, the model is important for urban development (Özüekren, 1996).

Whether a garden house or an apartment, cooperatives produce privately owned housing units rather than rentals or social housing (Özüekren, 1996). In this sense, cooperatives act like instruments to accomplish the construction of the buildings and individualise the property (Özüekren, 1996). In addition, unlike Western examples of cooperative housing, cooperative housing schemes in Turkey either do not provide any communal facilities or do so on a very limited basis (Özüekren, 1996). Cooperatives produced single family houses until the 1950s (Özüekren, 1996). At the time, the smallest unit for individual ownership was the plot (Özüekren, 1996). After changes in Title Deed law in 1954 and Condominium Law at 1966, which allowed shared flat property ownership, apartment buildings had started to be produced by cooperatives widely (Özüekren, 1996). Three years later, in 1969, the Condominium Law and Cooperatives Law were enacted. The figure demonstrates the change in ratio of apartments to single houses in the total number of buildings produced by cooperatives. As shown in Figure 5.9, the number of apartment buildings in cooperative housing schemes is very high in comparison to that of single houses.



**Figure 5.8 Change in ratio of apartments and single houses in total number of buildings produced by cooperatives (Özüekren, 1996)**





**Figure 5.9 Change in ratio of cooperative housing to total number of buildings**  
(Özüekren, 1996)

In the late 1970s, the first cooperative mass housing project, Batkent, was built at Ankara under the leadership of Ankara Municipality (Özüekren, 1996). Mass housing cooperatives in this period (post-1980) started to use the term “urban cooperative” (kent kooperatifçiliği) to differentiate themselves from small scale housing cooperatives (Tekeli, 2010c, p. 226).

The Mass Housing Law (year 1984) accorded cooperatives the core role in mass housing production, giving them priority in the granting of credit from the Mass Housing Fund. The enactment of this law led to the founding of many new cooperatives and cooperative associations (Özüekren, 1996). Figure 5.9 demonstrates the change in the ratio of cooperative housing to total number of buildings. As shown in the figure, after enactment of the Mass Housing Law, there was a striking increase in production of cooperative housing as well as the total number of housing units.

In 1961, an amendment in Social Security Law allowed the Social Security Institution to provide credit for housing cooperatives founded by workers (Tekeli, 2010a, p. 248). Although the cooperatives were funded by the Social Security Housing Fund (Tekeli, 2010a, p. 184), cooperative housing did not create a solution to the housing affordability problem among low income working classes, but only catered for the middle classes

and higher income working classes (Tekeli, 2010a, p. 184). However, since the 1990s, the ratio of cooperative housing to total housing units started to diminish due to the effect of transfer of the Mass Housing Fund to the General Budget in 1993 (Türel and Koc, 2009, p. 251). Due to the transfer of the Fund from TOKI to the General Budget, subsidies to cooperatives from TOKI were at first substantially cut, and then completely ended (Türel and Koc, 2009, p. 251).

### **Private Developer Companies**

Development of housing areas by private developer companies goes back to the end of the 1960s in Turkey (Adam et al., 1981, p. 273). While traditionally the housing production market in Turkey was dominated by small capital companies, the number of big capital developer companies has been rising, and this increase has contributed to the increase in the production of housing supply (Türel, 2004). The role of big capital and private developer companies has increasingly been paralleled by an increase in the number of large-scale projects in the last 20 years, together with the deepening of neoliberal urbanization.

## **5.3) Introducing the Phenomenon-Branded Housing Projects**

### ***5.3.1) Global Rise of Housing Enclaves***

As discussed in Chapter 2, housing enclaves have become a way of urban space production in many countries, with different versions and different conceptualisations, from the US to Singapore. The examples in Chapter 2 also show that the enclaves present many similarities as well as differences according to their contexts, development patterns and practices. Their conceptualisations present also differences as well as similarities, which results in various terms and concepts regarding this issue in the literature (e.g. gated communities (Blakely and Snyder, 1997), barrios cerrados (Borsdorf and Hidalgo, 2010)). Bodnar and Molnar (2010) criticise the concept of *gated community* in terms of putting “an emphasis on gating, which shifts attention unduly from social to physical exclusion and exaggerates the novelty of this type”, and overstressing “the private nature of gated communities” (Bodnar and Molnar, 2010, p. 790). Alternatively, the authors discuss the housing enclaves in Budapest by using the emerging term together with the phenomenon itself, the *residential parks*.

As part of this global phenomenon, *branded housing projects* have developed in Turkey as a version of housing enclaves since the early 2000s, following the deepening of neoliberal restructuring processes in that country. Similarly, these housing enclaves are discussed in this research by using the emergent term *branded housing projects*, and this chapter will elaborate further on the production of this phenomenon.

### ***5.3.2) Housing Enclaves and Branded Housing Projects in the Context of Turkey***

#### **Housing Enclaves in Turkey**

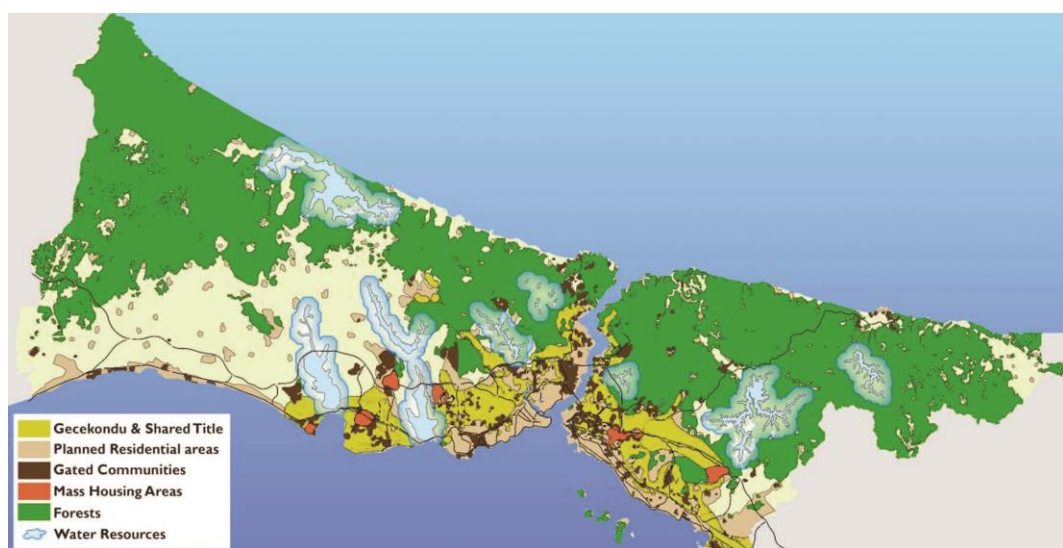
In the literature on urbanisation in Turkey, there is neither consensus on the terminology nor a legal definition of housing enclaves. As a result, various terms are used interchangeably, including private town (Candan and Kolluoglu, 2008), gated community (Baycan-Levent and Gulumser, 2004), gated residential compound (Candan and Kolluoglu, 2008), closed residential complexes (Perouse, 2005), gated schemes (Aydın, 2012; Genis, 2012; Perouse, 2011). In the literature, branded housing projects are not differentiated as a particular version, but discussed as any other housing enclave.

While mainly starting in the 1980s, housing enclaves were expanded in the 1990s in Istanbul (Kurtulus, 2005, p. 165) and continued to be built in the 2000s (Candan and Kolluoglu, 2008, p. 5) as part of the neoliberal restructuring process in Turkey (Altun, 2012, p. 41). Genis (2007, p. 773) argues that “the emergence and spread of gated communities has been facilitated by the neo-liberal policies of the state” in Turkey in addition to major developers which promote “gated communities as a ‘modern’ solution to a city’s housing problem and disorderly development while supporting extensive commoditisation, privatisation and transnationalisation of housing provision” (Geniş, 2007, p. 773).

Ozkan and Kozaman (2006) argue that 20% of the formal housing stock in Istanbul are gated communities (Firidin-Ozgur, 2006, p. 86). Perouse (2005) identifies 730 housing enclaves in Istanbul in 2006. Perouse (2011, p. 148) defines four criteria for this research: gated-ness and surveillance, provided facilities, private management and housing. The number of housing enclaves is based on the researcher’s records based on these criteria, and therefore not a complete number or list of the enclaves. Another research done by Istanbul Metropolitan Planning Unit identifies nearly 1000 private

housing projects and the land the projects occupy is identified as accounting for 20% of planned development in Istanbul (Ozkan-Tore and Kozaman-Som, 2009, p. 123). Akgun and Baycan (2012) point out the difficulty of working on housing enclaves in Istanbul given the lack of statistics or records, or a legal definition for housing enclaves in Turkey or Istanbul. Genis (2012, p. 7) argues that by the extensive production of gated communities by private developers and with the state promotion, they became the mainstream housing supply mode for higher and middle classes in Turkey. According to Kurtulus (2005, p. 165), in the 2000s, development of gated communities in Turkey reached such a high level that they determine the macroform of metropolitan areas and have contributed to spatial restructuring of social relationships.

Kurtulus (2005, pp. 169–170) proposes a typology for gated communities in Istanbul. The first type in this typology is the gated communities which are suburban developments with large areas located in modern suburban peripheries where the new middle classes live. In these gated communities the security is not tight and social facilities are partially open to non-residents as well. The second type of gated communities are luxury housing schemes which meet the demands of the ‘new rich’ by being secure investment tool and by being a tool for acquiring cultural capital via conspicuous consumption. These gated communities are smaller than the first type and do not provide social facilities. Security is not very tight in this type as well. The third



**Figure 5.11 Agglomeration of housing development types in Istanbul (Enlil, 2011, p. 19)**

type is the gated communities where security is extremely tight, which are segregated from their surroundings, and whose residents build a spatial attachment. Kurtulus (2005) associates this third type with prestige. Akgun and Baycan (2012, p. 95) also propose a spatial typology for gated communities in Istanbul: vertical gated developments-gated towers, horizontal gated developments-gated villa towns, horizontal gated developments-gated apartment blocks and mixed-type gated developments-gated towns.

### **Branded Housing Projects in Turkey**

As discussed in this Chapter, in the post-2001 period, there has been a rise in the number of building units via expansion of the area of built environment as well as tearing down of existing built up areas to replace them with higher density buildings. It is a period of rising commodification of urban space both by expansion of built up areas onto previously vacant land (mainly public lands as vacant lots within the city), natural protection zones (by mega projects with direct state involvement promoting construction in natural areas, e.g. the İstanbul Third Bridge and İstanbul Third Airport projects which pose risk of urban sprawl into Northern Forest Areas of İstanbul) and by regeneration projects which let property transfer from vulnerable groups to capital owners (e.g. Sulukule Regeneration Project, İstanbul; Tarlabası Project, İstanbul).

Within this context, ‘branded housing projects’ as a term has developed in daily language and media coverage. The term refers to housing enclaves which provide various amenities (e.g. social facilities, open green spaces, sport facilities) within the confines of the project and exclusively for project residents. These projects have been produced as commodities for the market by private developers or public-private partnerships under particular *brands*. While some of the brands are named by using directly development company names (e.g. Agaoglu, Sinpas), other brands are created just for the particular series of housing projects (e.g. Bizim Evler - a brand for housing projects of Ihlas Holding operating in different areas of the market).

The living environments that these projects produce can be discussed as *gated communities*. However, this conceptualisation presents certain limitations including overemphasis of the situation of being gated or segregated from the surrounding environment. Bodnar and Molgar (2010) point out these limitations in their work on

‘residential parks’, a form of ‘planned housing development’ which emerged in Budapest. According to the authors, the way gated communities are discussed in the literature:

“(1) suggests an emphasis on gating, which shifts attention unduly from social to physical exclusion and exaggerates the novelty of this type;  
(2) tends to overstress the private nature of gated communities, seeing them as automatically contributing to the privatisation of urban space.” (Bodnar and Molnar, 2010, p. 790)

This critique of the literature is important to re-consider the concept of *gated communities* in terms of its relevance for defining these newly emerged housing areas. The first issue Bodnar and Molgar (2010) point out is crucial to put a distance to the concept of ‘gated communities’ in defining *branded housing projects*. Putting emphasis on *being gated* may conceal the production dynamics of these areas and reduce their segregated nature to having gates and walls.

In addition, the branded housing projects present some differences from the housing enclaves produced in the 1990s in Turkey and discussed as gated communities in the literature. Firstly, the conceptual emergence of branded housing per se has been part of the discursive formation of this version of housing enclaves. The ‘branded housing’ concept has developed through its usage in news articles and project advertisements, and it has become a part of daily language as mentioned. This conceptual emergence is related to the production processes and marketing strategies of the projects. The projects are produced as urban spatial commodities, and various types of advertising are as extensively used like as for any other commodity in the market, including *TV commercials, print media, outdoor advertisements and internet advertising*. Although gated communities in the 1990s were extensively marketed, a change in marketing strategies has occurred that can be related to the changing role of the internet in marketing, changes in technology. In addition, the main reason behind the change in marketing strategies is the change in the *target groups (classes)*. While gated communities in the 1990s targeted mostly the upper classes (for example, Kemer Country (Perouse and Danis, 2005)), the branded housing projects target the upper-middle and middle classes. According to Aydın (2012), while in the 1990s gated communities were places for urban elites to live, the target group was expanded to

include “large segments of the middle class, especially, following the 2008 economic crisis” (Aydın, 2012, p. 96). Secondly, the public sector plays a crucial role in development of *branded housing projects* in Turkey, while gated communities in the 1990s were mostly developed by private development companies. Thirdly, Perouse (2012, p. 85) emphasised the role of the architectural type of gated tower residences in changing the relationship of housing enclaves with the city centre. Although the author does not conclude this as a return of higher income classes to the city centre from peripheral housing enclaves, according to Perouse (2012, p. 93), this type of development shows a clear example of an ongoing trend. According to the author, this development type is an extreme indication of commodification of housing (Perouse, 2012, p. 93).

Genis (2012) points out this difference and the importance of this change in urban development as follows: “Gated communities, which at first preferred outskirts of the city (like suburbs) and horizontal settlement patterns, have been transforming the city centre irreversibly by the production of ‘branded’ skyscraper residences targeting elites and schemas with ‘social facilities’ which target middle class” (Genis, 2012, p. 6)

As a result, this research uses the term ‘branded housing projects’, which is already in use in the media and in daily language, as a version of housing enclaves in order to discuss specifics of these projects.

### **Actors of Branded Housing Projects and the Role of the State**

The public sector’s direct involvement in the construction sector via public developers such as TOKI, Emlak Konut GYO and public companies such as Kiptas-Istanbul Greater Municipality, and the foundation of such actors, are critical turning points to understand the recent urbanization patterns, construction boom and new spatial formations such as branded housing in Turkey. According to Balaban (2012, p. 26), the “government undertook significant steps to encourage public agencies and private developers to initiate large-scale urban (re) development projects”. Within this process, new actors and public-private partnerships have been founded (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010), such as public development institutions, which have been restructured and become actors in this process, and project-based public private partnerships. As discussed in detail in the following chapters, the Housing Administration of Turkey

(TOKI) and Emlak Real Estate Partnership (Emlak Konut GYO) have been restructured and empowered in order to act as public developers for profit-oriented housing projects. For example, after its transformation into a real estate partnership in 2003 until 2014, Emlak Konut GYO took part in development of 48 branded housing projects in İstanbul (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014), which constitute the scope of this research, and continues to develop more branded housing projects throughout different cities of Turkey. As a result, the public sector plays a crucial role in the development of branded housing projects in Turkey.

### **Spatial Features of the Branded Housing Projects**

The projects present similar spatial patterns in terms of their design schemes and spatial segregation from the surrounding environment, which are discussed in detail in **Chapter 7**. Firstly, many branded housing projects have been designed as introverted cluster-like spatial formations. The buildings are located on the perimeters of the project area, which forms a spatial boundary, an *edge* in terms of Lynch's (1960) terminology. Within the project area, the facilities which provide services exclusively for the residents are located inside this spatially segregated *district* (Lynch, 1960). To illustrate, Figure 4.13 shows a typical example of an introverted design and segregation pattern of such a project. In some cases, publicly accessible facilities, such as supermarkets or shops, are located within the project areas. In these cases, access to these facilities is designed to allow non-residents access to them without entering into the confines of the projects.

Secondly, the project areas are also segregated by using physical boundary treatments such as gates and walls. The boundary elements vary from concrete walls to razor wires. To illustrate, Figure 4.14 and Figure 4.15 show examples of physical segregation elements – gates and walls. In addition to their function of controlling access, attaching the name of the brand to the gates of the project presents a spectacle by combining the physical entrance with a representational one. This spatial segregation enables packaging of the urban space within tangible borders as an urban spatial commodity that can be bought and sold. In other words, this spatial pattern fosters commodification through segregating *a slice of urban tissue* spatially.



## Land Use Pattern of the Branded Housing Projects

The branded housing projects present a similar land use pattern, which is discussed in detail in **Chapter 7**. The projects provide both open space facilities and indoor facilities. While open space facilities are parks, playgrounds, recreation areas; indoor facilities are restaurants, cafes, social rooms, and health and education facilities. Sport facilities (in the form of sport centres or sport areas) and carparks are provided as both indoor and open space facilities in the project areas.

Access rights to these facilities and services are usually gained by being residents of the projects. In this sense, buying or renting a house in the project grants residents the access rights to these facilities and services. The residents are responsible for paying monthly payments to private management companies of the projects in return for receiving services and for management of the facilities, with project residents responding that they are willing to make these payments in return for service provision. To illustrate, the projects provide residents' playgrounds and parks that are *only* accessible to project residents, and are in the charge of the management of these parks (garbage collection, landscaping, manicuring of green areas, etc). In other words, the project provides municipal services privately. Therefore, within this practice, the access rights to services and facilities are *being commodified* by making residents pay for these urban services.

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**Figure 5.12 Istanbul Project, Ispartakule District (Personal Archive, August 2015)**



**Figure 5.13 Gates, Ispartakule District (Personal Archive, August 2015)**



**Figure 5.14 Boundary elements, Atasehir District (Personal Archive, August 2015)**

However, there are also some exceptions. In some cases, access rights to facilities can be bought by non-residents as well. An example of this is buying membership of a sports centre that is located in a project area. Although the services and facilities in the projects are in general for exclusive use of the project residents (and members as mentioned above), some publicly accessible facilities (e.g. supermarkets with separate

entrances) and limited access facilities (e.g. sport centres of which membership is not bound with being a resident of the project) can be found in the project areas. In such conditions, residents usually receive discounts in membership fees of such facilities. Although there are such differences in practice, it is a practice of private provision of municipal services through these projects by private management companies.

#### **5.4) Conclusion**

Firstly, this chapter briefly discussed development of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey as part of a wider neoliberal restructuring. As discussed, Turkey follows a similar path to global neoliberal restructuring while having its unique characteristics. This chapter presents an example of variegated neoliberalization, as discussed in Chapter 2. An important point to make here is the role of the military coup in this neoliberalization process. Although the restructuring started with the January 24 Decisions (1977), neoliberal policies were applied by force through the military coup, with oppression of opposition in various sections of the society (e.g. unions, student movements, political parties).

The chapter, secondly, focuses on types of housing production in Turkey and locates mass housing production within a wider context. As discussed, mass housing production and its promotion by the state is closely related to the operations of big capital in urban space and capital accumulation strategies. From this perspective, the expansion of mass housing projects in Turkey through the encouragement of housing cooperatives in the 1980s and public provision of funding for mass housing in this period present an example of the facilitation of big capital investment in urban space. This promotion of mass housing was part of neoliberal restructuring in the country.

Thirdly, ‘branded housing projects’ as a phenomenon and concept is introduced as a contemporary version of housing enclaves. The development of branded housing projects as a phenomenon and as a concept is part of the aforementioned dynamics. While it presents similarities with other versions of housing enclaves developed in other countries, it also reflects specific characteristics. The conceptual development of branded housing per se is an important part of these specific characteristics due to its embedded emergence in everyday life and media coverage in Turkey.

The following chapter, Chapter 6, presents findings from the analysis of development processes of branded housing projects in Turkey. As discussed in Chapter 3, the research investigates the dynamics of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation through a theoretical framework combining Marxist commodification theory, Lefebvrian production of space and Gramscian theory of hegemony. In this framework, the research argues that under neoliberal urbanisation there is a deepening in commodification of urban space along with producing its enabling mechanisms. Hence, Chapter 6 discusses the development processes of branded housing projects from this perspective as part of the enabling mechanisms of commodification of urban space.

## **CHAPTER 6 - ANALYSIS OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES OF BRANDED HOUSING PROJECTS**

This chapter critically discusses the development processes of branded housing projects. This is achieved by firstly discussing the deepening of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey at the post-2001 period as part of the restructuring which contributed to development of the phenomenon of branded housing projects. Secondly, the chapter focuses on the restructuring of public institutions, TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO, as the public partners of the projects, and elaborates the development model (revenue-sharing model) of the projects. Thirdly, the chapter presents a deeper critical analysis of development processes of four selected branded housing projects to elaborate the dynamics of these processes. The chapter therefore addresses research questions 2.2, 2.3 and 2.4 (see Table 1.1).

### **6.1) The Deepening of Neoliberal Urbanisation in Turkey (post-2001)**

Kuyucu and Uysal (2010, p. 1484) define the 2001 crash as a “major accumulation crisis” and a breaking point for establishing a “fully neo-liberal system”. Demirtas (2012, p. 213) defines the crisis as “the worst financial crisis in its [Turkey’s] history”.

The second half of the neoliberal restructuring process (see Chapter 5 for discussion of the first half) started with the 1998 and 1999 IMF agreements (Ataay, 2006, p. 18), and was formulated in 2001 as a structural adjustment programme called the Programme of Transition to a Powerful Economy (*Türkiye'nin Güçlü Ekonomiye Gecis Programı* in Turkish) (Balaban, 2013, p. 59). This economic restructuring programme, enacted by the ruling coalition government as a response to the 2001 crisis, was formulated by Kemal Derviş – a World Bank economist (Keyman and Gumuscu, 2014, p. 38) who was later appointed as the state minister with responsibility for the economy (Zabci, 2012, p. 258). Balaban (2013, p. 59) argues that rather than creating solutions to Turkey’s long-lasting economic problems, the programme was based on a massive privatisation initiative aiming to shrink the state and privatise the public assets to create income. According to Yeldan (2001), the main urge behind the programme was to privatise

public assets in order to open new investment markets to international capital (Balaban, 2013, p. 59).

Successor governments have continued to follow the same path in the post-2001 period (Özdemir, 2012). Successor governments (founded in 2002, 2007 and 2011) implemented neoliberal policies which “have been realised in accordance with the directives coming from the IMF and the World Bank” (Zabci, 2012, p. 252). The Urgent Action Plan ( *Acil Eylem Plani* in Turkish) was implemented in 2002 as part of this restructuring process (Ataay, 2006, p. 18). Although the implementation of structural reforms has been accelerated in the post-2002 period, the pace decreased during the last government (2011) due to the completion of the reforms (Zabci, 2012, pp. 254–255).

Bayırbağ (2010, p. 291) describes the second neoliberalization programme applied in post 2001 as the roll-out neoliberalization phase. Implementation of this programme has been continued by means of “aggressive expansion in Turkish export markets, foreign direct investment, and privatisation” (Keyman and Gumuscu, 2014, p. 38). Mechanisms such as privatisation or control over real wages (for decreasing inflation rates) have continued to be implemented in the post-2001 period (Güngen, 2006, p. 332). In the 10 years following 2002, 34 billion US dollars worth of privatisation was realised (Keyman and Gumuscu, 2014, p. 38).

### **Accumulation and Decentralisation of Power**

The state and local governments have been transformed as part of this restructuring (Ataay, 2006, p. 19). A devolution strategy has been applied to transfer public service provision from the central state to local governments (Ataay, 2006). However, this is an asymmetrical transfer in terms of transferring public service provision and resources (Ataay, 2006). In other words, while responsibilities are being transferred to local authorities, required resources to provide those services are not, which means that local governments are “dependent on the central government for a large proportion of their revenues”(Kayasü and Yetiskul, 2014, p. 215). This has fostered the commodification of public services as a result of the shortage of public local resources in this period.

While, on the surface, attempts at decentralisation of power have been observed in neoliberal restructuring in Turkey, they go hand-in-hand with accumulation of power in

the centre. The accumulation of power in the centre, which was a part of the neoliberal restructuring that started with the military coup, has deepened in the post-2001 period. Two relevant examples of this are the expansion of the jurisdictions of greater municipalities (TBMM, 2012) and the empowering of state institutions such as TOKI by giving them new authority. In this period, as part of the accumulation of power, planning authority has been partially centralised by giving planning and development remits to investor institutions including TOKI and some ministries (Balaban, 2013, p. 65), while some planning powers have been transferred to greater municipalities from local municipalities (Balaban, 2013, p. 65).

### **Focusing on Neoliberal Urbanisation**

Peck et al.'s (2009, pp. 59–62) framework for mechanisms of neoliberal urbanisation (see APPENDIX I) together with moments of destruction and creation are used as an analytical framework to discuss further the deepening of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey since the 2001 crash. This framework is adapted to the Turkey case and relevant mechanisms and moments relevant in Turkey case are discussed according to the existing literature on neoliberalization in Turkey.

Firstly, the local public sector and collective infrastructures have been restructured and privatised as a mechanism of neoliberal urbanisation (see APPENDIX I). In this period, the provision of public services has been transformed into both public and private sector provision of services. Ataay (2006, p. 21) classifies mechanisms of public service provision in Turkey under four categories: both public provision and funding of services, public provision of services in return for individual payments, private provision of services in return for individual payments, and private provision but public funding of services (outsourcing). According to Ataay (2006, p. 19), public service provision in Turkey has been commodified in the post-2001 period. Ataay (2006) defines two mechanisms for this commodification: transforming the public services into market commodities, and the private provision of public services (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). While in the former the service loses its public service character and becomes a market commodity, in the latter the service still is considered as a public service but its provision is changed to a private one. Ataay (2006) argues that regarding the practice in Turkey the latter is the most common mechanism for the commodification of public services. As part of this commodification process,

outsourcing municipal services to sub-contractors has become mainstream practice in the provision of municipal services. The provision of urban infrastructure (including municipal services and facilities) by private management companies in branded housing projects corresponds to, on the other hand, the private provision of services as market commodities.

Secondly, urban housing markets have been restructured as a mechanism of neoliberal urbanisation (see APPENDIX I). As part of the deepening of neoliberal urbanisation, subsidies for cooperative housing were eliminated (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). By means of the 1984 Mass Housing Law, building cooperatives were subsidised and given priority in accessing credit from the Mass Housing Fund, as they were accorded the main role in mass housing provision (Özüekren, 1996). In 1988 the income of the Mass Housing Fund was transferred into the national budget and in 1995 the fund was transferred into the national budget completely (Tekeli, 2010c).

In this period, new opportunities have been created for speculative investments in cities (see APPENDIX I). The public sector and the state have played a core role in the creation of these opportunities. By restructuring TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO as public developers, the state entered the housing market as a profit-collecting-actor. The main mechanism for profit collection that these institutions use is the revenue sharing model, whereby the state opens public land to private housing development and appropriates the profits with partner private developers. By this practice, public land has been privatised and opportunities for speculative investment have been created in nearby urban areas. In addition, through urban transformation projects, the public sector (state and municipalities) creates such opportunities by declaring brown field areas as ‘urban transformation zones’.

Thirdly, the built environment and urban form have been restructured as a mechanism of neoliberal urbanisation (see APPENDIX I). In this period, via urban transformation projects, working class neighbourhoods and neighbourhoods in which minorities and vulnerable groups live have been redeveloped (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). In addition, many mega-projects have been constructed in major cities in Turkey e.g. Third (Bosporus) Bridge in İstanbul, New İstanbul Urban Extension, Canal İstanbul. Each of these projects has been criticised because of aiming to create speculative investments, expanding the urban built areas on natural areas, especially



conservation zones, forest, and water catchment areas. Moreover, cities in Turkey have faced a boom in production of housing enclaves in this period (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). There is no statistical evidence on the number of such enclaves; however, information derived from different sources on numbers of new housing projects provides clues about the number of newly developed enclaves in Turkey, as discussed in the following sections of this Chapter. Furthermore, some of the urban transformation projects have drawn attention because of their gentrification aims or results (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). One of the well-known examples is Sulukule Project, through which the neighbourhood was torn-down and rebuilt, the working-class and Roma minority population was displaced and the housing units were sold to upper middle class buyers. As part of these practices and processes, socio-spatial polarization has intensified (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). Additionally, in this period, a considerable rise in the number of shopping centres in Turkey has been observed (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). In 2013 the number of shopping centres in Turkey reached 299 (AYD, 2013).

Fourthly, urban civil society has been reregulated as a mechanism of neoliberal urbanisation (see APPENDIX I). The liberal city discourse which grants civil rights to all citizens has been replaced with the discourse of privileged citizens (see APPENDIX I). In the research the discourse in news content and catalogues exemplifies this change. In addition, different modes of social control and surveillance have been on the increase (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework) in Turkey in this period, such as the rise of access-controlled housing enclaves with 24-hour security and surveillance, increase in CCTV usage, and increase in use of security personnel. Moreover, coercion policies have tightened up in this period (see (Peck et al., 2009, pp. 59–62)). A very recent example of this practice is the 2013 June protests and the police violence during these events. After the protests ended, the police continued to be visible in public spaces and occupied the central areas that were the places of protests during the 2013 June protests.

Fifthly, the city has been re-represented discursively as a mechanism of neoliberal urbanisation (see APPENDIX I). The discourse of entrepreneurship has become mainstream discourse and entrepreneurship has become the appreciated approach in urban development (see APPENDIX I for its relevance in this framework). The

neoliberal discourse has penetrated urban development, as can be traced in various public sector documents (e.g. vision, mission, strategies in planning documents), and in news content regarding urban development (e.g. appreciation of big capital investments in urban development, appreciation of big projects with large budgets).

To conclude, this adoption of the framework (presented in Appendix 1) to the Turkey case shows that the mechanisms of neoliberal urbanisation have been in practice by path-dependent moments of destruction and creation in Turkey. Therefore, neoliberal urbanisation has been on the table since the January 24th 1980 Statement and the cities of Turkey have been experiencing the deepening of such practice, in the post-2001 economic crash period.

### ***6.1.1) Restructuring of the Legal and Regulatory Framework (In General)***

Post-2001 reforms in the legal and regulatory framework in Turkey align with the “post-Washington consensus-based attempts aiming at the creation and protection of the institutions supporting market-based allocation of resources” (Özdemir, 2012, p. 44). Governance, planning and urban development legislation have been restructured, aiming to liberalise and deregulate planning and development regulations to enable and speed up investment in construction, real estate and tourism (Balaban, 2013, p. 64).

In this period, the legal and regulatory framework has been restructured to support and encourage expansion of construction (Balaban, 2013, p. 63). The existing laws and regulations have been amended and new ones have been enacted in order to enable expansion of the built environment and to encourage redevelopment of the existing housing stock. Balaban (2012) found that in Turkey 78 laws and 10 by-laws which are related to the built environment, urban planning and development control have been completely or partially changed or enacted between the years 2002-2007.

In this period many changes have been made to the legal and regulatory framework in order to open up public land to construction (Balaban, 2013, p. 64). Under these new regulations, TOKI have been granted permission to carry out construction on land which was previously allocated to other public institutions (Balaban, 2013, p. 64). Following the 2001 economic crash, the governance of real estate markets has been radically restructured by the adoption of new laws, regulations and legislative

framework (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010, p. 1484). This restructuring of the legal and regulatory framework is one side of the state's role in fostering the commodification of urban space in Turkey by eliminating the obstacles to construction.

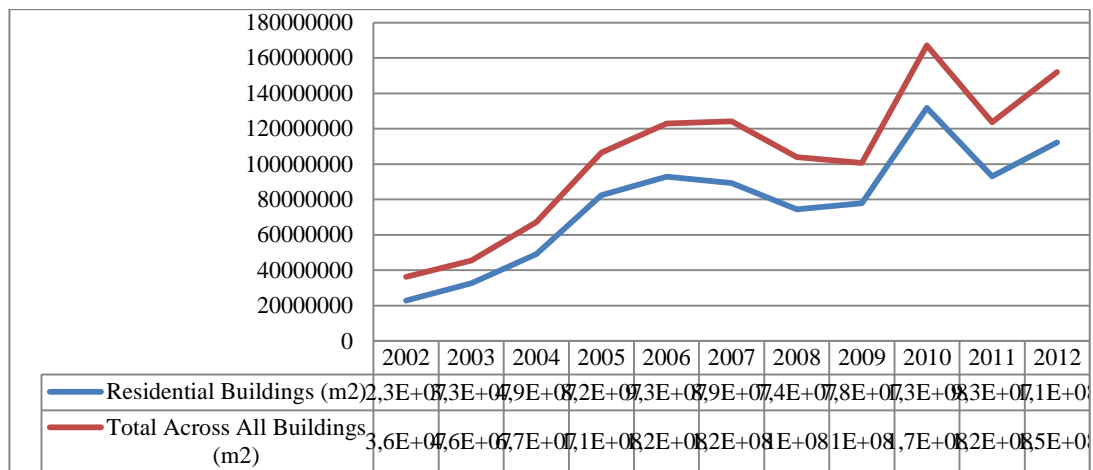
### ***6.1.2) Construction Boom in Turkey***

According to Balaban (2013, p. 60), during the post-1980 period, two boom periods can be defined: the 1980s and the 2000s. While the number of starting of new construction was nearly tripled in six years in the first period (from 54361 in 1982 to 139995 in 1988), the number more than doubled in five years during the second period (from 43430 in 2002 to 106659 in 2007) (Balaban, 2013, p. 60).

Balaban (2012) defines the construction boom in the post-2001 period as an increase in the volume of construction activity in Turkey as reflected in the unprecedented rise in the construction sector's share in GDP, in the share of the construction sector in employment, in financial and capital investments in construction during the years 2001-2007. Firstly, according to Balaban (2012), the construction sector's share of GDP has increased steadily since 2001, when the average annual growth rate was 11.6%. The average annual growth rate of construction activity between the years 2002 and 2007 rose to 22% (according to building permits given in this period). Secondly, the share of employment in construction sector in total employment rose from 4.5% to 5.9% in 6 years in this period. The number of new construction companies founded per year doubled in this period: from 3222 in 2001 to 8124 in 2007 (Balaban, 2012, p. 30). Thirdly, between the years 2004 and 2008 foreign direct investment in construction and the real estate sector increased from US\$ 6 million to US\$ 987 million, and between the years 2001 and 2006 the total amount of mortgage credits increased from US\$ 47.3 million to US\$ 7.5 billion, with the share of mortgage credit in total consumer credit rising from 4.2% to 37.5% (Balaban, 2012, p. 30).

These indicators clearly assert the expansion of construction in Turkey between the years 2002 and 2007. According to Balaban (2013, p. 60), the second boom ended with the 2008 global crash. However, according to the Building Permits Report 2013 of the

Statistics Institute of Turkey (TUIK)<sup>16</sup>, expansion of construction has been continuing with fluctuations. Figure 4.4 demonstrates the change in the number of building permits granted from 2002 to 2012. The total area of buildings which were granted building permits increased fivefold between 2002 and 2012. This fivefold increase demonstrates that the expansion in construction continued until 2013. In this period, investment in the housing sector also increased, and capital moved into the housing sector from other sectors such as tourism or textiles (Perouse, 2013, p. 82).



**Figure 6.1 Square metres of buildings granted building permits between 2002 and 2012 (Türkiye Cumhuriyet Merkez Bankası, 2013)**

Years	Residential Buildings (m2)	Total Across All Buildings (m2)
2002	22907177	36187021
2003	32511687	45516030
2004	49045652	67092693
2005	82297998	106424587
2006	92941776	122909886
2007	89281640	124132360
2008	74340807	103846233
2009	77912168	100726544
2010	131688748	166999697
2011	93072536	123639732
2012	112310865	151967705

**Table 6.1 Square metres of buildings granted building permits between 2002 and 2012 (Türkiye Cumhuriyet Merkez Bankası, 2013)**

<sup>16</sup> The latest published building census, Building Census 2000, has made known the number of buildings produced since 2000. Therefore, the most reliable data for number of constructed buildings can be found in the Building Permits Report 2013.

The public sector plays a core role in this construction boom. According to Balaban (2012, p. 26), the public sector “enthusiastically contributed to the development of construction boom between 2002 and 2007 in Turkey”. The state entered the real estate market through institutions such as TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO, by restructuring them as public developers (which is discussed in more detail in the following sections of this chapter). Since 2002 TOKI has produced 587.615 housing units (TOKİ, 2013) and 237.000 more housing units were in the planning stages in 2013 (Güneç, 2013). The units built by TOKI were distributed across all 81 provinces and 800 districts of Turkey (TOKİ, 2013), which shows the role of state in this construction boom through producing housing in different localities in Turkey. This also shows the accumulation of power in the centre in this period and its relationship with fostering the construction boom in the country.

Balaban (2013, p. 69) also asserts that the state’s involvement in the construction sector is part of the efforts to create income for the state, in addition to continuing privatisation of public assets. In fact, through the TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO housing projects, most of which are built on public lands, public land has been privatised. Since the units within the projects are sold to individuals and become private properties, they have thereby become instruments for the privatisation of public land.



**Figure 6.2** An example of recent developments and existing housing stock, The Zorlu Business Centre (Letsch, 2012)



**Figure 6.3 Bursa cityscape, TOKI buildings within the existing housing stock (NAi, 2012)**

### ***6.1.3) Urban Projects Boom in Turkey***

In this period, together with construction, the number of urban development projects has boomed as a particular way of urban development. Many different types of urban projects have been developed in this period, such as mega-projects, large urban transformation projects, branded housing projects, and so-called social mass housing projects. This is a result of the mainstream approach in the post-2001 period: project-based development (Balaban, 2013, p. 67). The legal and regulatory framework has been restructured according to this approach. For example, by means of the Greater Municipalities Law (no: 5216, year 2004) and the Municipalities Law (no: 5393, year 2005), command over developing urban transformation and development projects was given to the municipalities (Balaban, 2013, p. 67).

Kuyucu and Unsal (2010) describe large *urban transformation projects*<sup>17</sup> as the main mechanisms for neoliberal restructuring in urban governance and housing markets in Turkey. According to the authors, through these large urban transformation projects, “a neo-liberal system is instituted in incompletely commodified urban areas” (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010, p. 1479).

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<sup>17</sup> *Urban Transformation Projects* is direct translation of *Kentsel Dönüşüm Projeleri*, which is a concept used to define any kind of urban project which includes development such as urban regeneration projects, renewal projects, redevelopment projects and clearance. This overarching concept is used in both urban studies literature and daily language.

The number of urban projects or project-based developments is not known since there are no statistics produced for this particular development type. However, the volume of this boom can be traced via the number of projects in particular localities or through some documented types. For example, a webportal for urban development projects in Turkey - Yeni Projeler - lists 1751 in total and 1194 projects located in İstanbul by March 2016 (Yeni Projeler, 2016). Another leading real estate portal in Turkey - Hürriyet Emlak - lists 426 housing projects, 235 of which were located in Istanbul by March 2016 (Hurriyet Emlak, 2016). In addition, the Branded Housing Projects Report of EVA Real Estate states that in İstanbul 7.7% of the total housing stock is provided by branded housing projects (400 000 of 5 103 586), and the number of these projects built in İstanbul has reached 852 (Gökkaya, 2014).

## **6.2) Restructuring Public Institutions: TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO**

### ***6.2.1) Restructuring of Legal and Regulatory Framework in relation with TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO***

As discussed in previous sections, in the post-2001 period, the legal and regulatory framework has been restructured to support and encourage expansion of construction (Balaban 2013, p.63). Aiming at liberalisation and deregulation of planning and development regulations, governance, planning and urban development legislation have been restructured (Balaban 2013, p.64). Within this restructuring in favour of the construction sector, the public sector plays an important role both through realising this restructuring by enacting new laws and regulations and entering real estate market directly through public institutions such as TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO. These institutions have also been restructured by enactment of a series of regulations and amendments to existing legislation according to their new role as public developers and promoters of the construction sector.

### ***6.2.2) Empowerment and Restructuring of TOKI***

The foundation of TOKI goes back to the 1980s, and was a milestone for urban development and housing in Turkey. In the Mass Housing Law (1981), cooperative, cooperative unions/associations, and the Social Security Institution were defined as the main actors for mass housing. By this law, the Public Housing Fund (Kamu Konut

Fonu) was established to support mass housing projects. The Mass Housing Law (1981) was abolished and replaced by the Mass Housing Law (1984, no: 2985) and via this change the Public Housing Fund became the Mass Housing Fund (Toplu Konut Fonu). In the year 1984, through the Law of Saving Incentive and Acceleration of Public Investment (Tasarrufların Teşviki ve Kamu Yatırımlarının Hızlandırılması Hakkında Yasa) (1984, no: 2983) the Mass Housing and Public Partnership Institution (Toplu Konut ve Kamu Ortaklığı İdaresi Başkanlığı) was founded under the office of the Prime Minister. In 1990, the institution was reorganised, and two separate institutions were founded: the Mass Housing Institution (TOKI) and the Public Partnership Institution (Perouse, 2013, p. 83).

The Mass Housing Law (1984, no: 2985) defines the tasks for TOKI (TOKI, 2015), which was founded with responsibility for credit provision for housing production (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 85). In 1985, the Mass Housing Fund financed 31 % of total housing investments (Tekeli, 2010c, p. 226). Between 1984 and 2002, TOKI provided credits for 940000 houses (Perouse, 2013, p. 83), while constructing 43145 houses (including 7852 houses Emlak Konut GYO built) between 1984 – 2003 (Perouse, 2013, p. 83).

Considering TOKI's role in housing production in Turkey, its foundation was a milestone for urbanisation and housing in Turkey. Through TOKI, the state entered housing production directly as an actor involved in mass housing production and funding of housing cooperatives. However, in 1988 the income of the Mass Housing Fund started to be transferred to the national budget (30 percent of income from the Fund in the beginning (Tekeli, 2010d, p. 250)) and in 1995 the fund was transferred to the national budget totally (Tekeli, 2010c). By this transfer, TOKI lost its transformative role as a main actor in urbanisation and housing in Turkey until it was restructured for its new role in the post-2001 period.

The case of the transformation of TOKI into a public developer provides an example of central accumulation of power and capital. The state has been restructuring the legislative framework and empowering the institution with operational powers, which fosters accumulation of authority in the centre and allows TOKI to operate anywhere in the country and produce any type of development. In addition, by means of these



operations, the state creates profitable and speculative development opportunities and also collects the profits together with private developers.

Between 2002 and 2008, 14 amendments were made to the legal framework which expanded the authority and resources of TOKI (Balaban, 2013, p. 64). The institution was taken under the authority of the Office of the Prime Minister in this period (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 93). In 2001 the Mass Housing Fund was abolished by the new law (2001, no: 4684) and TOKI was restructured (TOKI, 2015). Abolishment of the fund cut the income of the institution, and it became dependent for income on funds from general national state budget (Perouse, 2013, p. 83).

TOKI sets out the institution's goals after this transformation as:

- “• Disciplining the housing market by ensuring that housing construction takes place within a certain model via alternative and innovative practices;
- Preventing speculative activity by focusing on quality, durability and affordability;
- Contributing to the even distribution of the population across Turkey's entire geographic area; and
- Contributing to orderly urbanisation.” (TOKI, 2014b, p. 9)

These goals demonstrate the expansion of authority of the institute through its aims of “disciplining the housing market” and “contributing to the even distribution of the population”. These policy goals go beyond those of a public housing provision body by aiming to intervene directly in the housing market and to become an instrument for distribution of demographics in the country.

In the post-2001 period, TOKI became an actor in the construction sector rather than being mainly a funding body for housing projects and developers (Balaban, 2013, p. 64). Since 2002 TOKI has produced 698 832 housing units, which are located across all 81 provinces, and 800 districts throughout Turkey (TOKI 2016b). This restructuring can be discussed under two headings: Accumulation of Capital and Land (through public assets transferred TOKI) and Accumulation of Power (through the authority and remits transferred to TOKI).

## **Accumulation of Capital and Land**

In 2001, assets and real estate belonging to Emlak Bank were transferred to TOKI (TOKI, 2015). In 2004, the Emergency Action Plan of the Government transferred public land (64.5 million m<sup>2</sup>) belonging to the Urban Land Office to TOKI (TOKI, 2015) by the abolishment of the Office through the new legislation (Law no 5273, 2004) (Perouse, 2013, p. 84). With this change, TOKI became one of the biggest land owners in Turkey (Perouse, 2013, p. 84).

In addition, the new legislation (Law no 4966, 2003) granted TOKI the remit of demanding the transfer of public properties to TOKI's use free of charge, these transfers being co-decided by the Ministry of the Treasury and Minister of Development and approved by the Prime Ministry (Ekin-Erkan, 2009, p. 227). This remit gives TOKI the authority to realise development on any public land, and the institution plays a crucial role in reintroducing urban land into the real estate market (Perouse, 2013, p. 83). TOKI as a top-down institution is equipped to act within any locality with full autonomy. Perouse (2013, p. 93) criticises the practice of TOKI for being overly-central and, ignoring the localities and local actors.

## **Accumulation of Power (through the authority and remits transferred to TOKI)**

### **Abolition of Institutions and Authority Transfer**

In the post-2001 period, important state institutions were abolished and their authorities were transferred to TOKI. The Urban Land Office was abolished and the authority of the Office was transferred to TOKI (Law no: 5273, 2004) (Perouse, 2013, p. 84), which granted TOKI control over all public land in practice (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 85). The Housing Undersecretariat and the Project Implementation Unit of the Office of the Prime Ministry were abolished and their duties were assigned to TOKI (TOKI, 2015). The duties of the Department of Dwelling Affairs of the Ministry of Public Works and Settlements, which was restructured as the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, were assigned to TOKI (TOKI, 2015). The remits and responsibilities of Emlak Bank (apart from banking) were also transferred to TOKI (TOKI, 2015).

In addition, TOKI was assigned authority to build partnerships with private companies operating in the housing sector, and to found companies which operate in the housing sector, as well as to subcontract projects (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 85) (Ekin-Erkan, 2009, p. 237).

### **Funding and Financial Authorisation**

The institution was also given authorisation to use both public and private funding, grant individual and mass housing credit, grant credit for various types of projects (rural architectural development, conservation and regeneration historical patterns and local architecture, regeneration in gecekondu areas) and subsidise the interest on such credit when required, issue stocks and bonds, receive foreign credit, and give credit to non-residential activities such as restoration or improvement of architectural assets (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014; Perouse, 2013). Funding urban regeneration and transformation of gecekondu areas was also defined as a responsibility of TOKI (Ekin-Erkan, 2009, p. 227). The authority for valuation of land for revenue-sharing projects was assigned to the Director of TOKI directly (Perouse, 2013, p. 84).

### **Expanding the Field of Operation and the Territorial Jurisdiction**

The extent of TOKI's authorisation reaches beyond housing. The institution was assigned powers to operate in construction activities other than housing, including infrastructure and social facilities (Bugra and Savaskan, 2014, p. 85). The institution was given authority to build or commission construction of housing, infrastructure and social facilities developments; profit-oriented project developments (in order to create income for TOKI); and to build housing, infrastructure and social facilities in disaster zones when required or subsidise and support these (Perouse, 2013, p. 84). In addition, the territorial jurisdiction of TOKI is defined as Turkey and abroad. Therefore, the institution was given authority to develop projects in Turkey and abroad directly as TOKI projects or through TOKI companies (Perouse, 2013, p. 84).

### **Creating a State of Exception for TOKI Practice**

In 2011, TOKI was equipped with the authority to make, commission and amend any type of plans at any scale for slum housing (gecekondu) redevelopment areas, for land

under TOKI ownership and for mass housing areas (Perouse, 2013, pp. 84–85). In addition to attaining extensive planning powers to TOKI, Law (Torba Yasa) (2011) exempts TOKI’s non-housing projects from Public Tender Law (Kamu Ihale Kanunu) (Perouse, 2013, p. 92).

As a result of this transformation, TOKI has become an institution that operates in various areas of urban development from restoration to master planning. Perouse (2013, p. 85) defines TOKI as an “astray actor of public housing policy” and summarises the results of such an expansion in the authority of TOKI as follows:

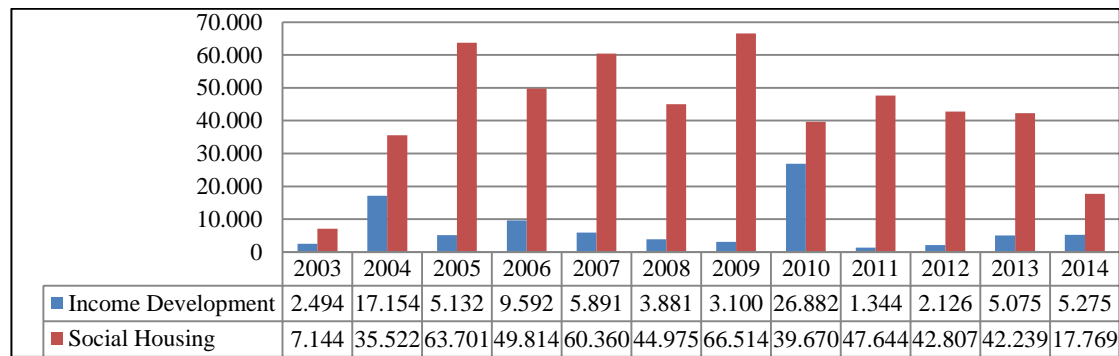
“As a result of this 10-year-transformation period, TOKI has become a unique, complicated public institution whose operation activity areas, projects and facets are numerous. TOKI, which has many construction projects abroad including Kuwait, Romania, Venezuela, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, also takes care of the new campus of the Central Bank [of Turkey] and the TBMM [The Grand National Assembly of Turkey] [parliamentary] lodgements, gives credit for restoration [projects], builds gendarme border stations, constructs the Galatasaray Football Club stadium, housing for the army [personnel], special houses for Assyrians [a minority community living in the South-Eastern region of Turkey], villas for foreigners on the Southern coastal areas... It is obvious that this uncontrolled and disproportioned enlargement [of the institution in terms of authority] caused an unbelievable complication in functions/duties.” (Perouse, 2013, p. 85)

As a result of this restructuring, TOKI accumulates capital, and enormous amount of land and power, which have transformed the institution from a mass housing institution to a public developer.

### **TOKI’s Practices**

By 2003, TOKI had kept most of its land stock undeveloped (Perouse, 2013, p. 84). In 2003, an Emergency Action Plan for Housing and Urban Development was enacted with the objective of building 250,000 housing units by the end of 2007 (TOKI, 2015). Between 2003 and 2015 TOKI produced 698832 housing units, which are located

across all 81 provinces and 800 districts in Turkey (TOKI, 2016a). These figures show the extent of housing construction by TOKI in different localities in Turkey, which also shows the accumulation of power in the centre in this period (through TOKI's extent of construction remit), as well as TOKI's role in fostering the construction boom in the country.



**Figure 6.4 The number of housing units produced either only by TOKI or together with its private partners between 2003 and 2014 (TOKI, 2014a)**

TOKI classifies its projects under two main categories: social housing and income development (*kaynak geliştirme*). While TOKI housing projects which are named as Low and Middle Income Group projects, Poor Income Group projects, Gecekondu Redevelopment projects, Natural Disaster Projects, and Agricultural Village Projects are classified as *social housing projects*, profit-oriented projects developed by the institution are classified as *income development projects* (TOKI, 2014a). Figure 6.4 shows the number of units TOKI developed according to this classification, which is widely criticised and seen as misleading by several urban scholars (as cited below).

Perouse (2013, p. 85) criticises this categorisation: according to payment models and conditions for these projects, the housing units are not affordable for 'poor' and low income groups. According to Perouse (2013), not even 10 % of the houses which TOKI has produced can be classified as social housing. Similarly, according to another urban scholar Adanali, only one fourth of the total housing stock TOKI developed is for lower income groups, and the income band that TOKI set as maximum to access this housing corresponds to 3 times higher than the minimum wage in Turkey (Güner, 2014).

These so-called social housing projects developed by TOKI are based on home ownership and ignore the rented social housing model. These projects are relatively

affordable housing projects where residents buy the housing units by paying back lower-interest housing credit that is arranged for them through a partnership between TOKI and a specific bank. In addition, TOKI's so-called social housing units enter the private housing market a very short time after their transfer to the property owner, even though there are restrictions on selling the units within a certain time period. These legal time restrictions are sometimes avoided through dealing on the black market (Perouse, 2013, p. 88). As a result, TOKI has become an institution which produces housing for those social groups which can afford to buy a house or invest in housing at market rates (Perouse, 2013, p. 94).

The revenue-sharing model<sup>18</sup> is the main development model applied by the institution applies in developing profit-oriented projects through founding partnerships with private developers. The terms 'revenue-sharing projects' and 'income-development projects' are used interchangeably in TOKI institution documents. Perouse (2013, p. 81) argues that this practice of TOKI has been contributing to the *rapid commodification* of housing in Turkey.

### ***6.2.3) Transformation of Emlak Konut to Emlak Konut Real Estate Partnership***

Emlak Konut GYO is the second public institution that has undergone thorough restructuring and thereby contributed to the development of branded housing projects. Emlak Bank (meaning *Real Estate Bank*) was founded in 1926 as a state institution known as Emlak Etyam Bank, in order to create funding for new development (Adam et al., 1981, p. 266). In 1946, the bank was converted into a housing-specialized bank (*konut ihtisas bankasi* in Turkish) aiming to support homeownership, and was renamed as Emlak Kredi Bankasi (Real Estate Credit Bank) (Adam et al., 1981, p. 266). In the government programme of 1974, it was stated as an objective that Emlak Kredi Bankasi would produce affordable and mass housing (Adam et al., 1981, p. 276). However, different from TOKI, according to Adam et al. (1981, p. 266) this institution has never been a funding body for low income groups (Adam et al., 1981, p. 266). In 2001, Emlak Bank underwent further transformation as its banking responsibilities and holding savings were terminated (Perouse, 2013, p. 83), and the banking activities of the

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<sup>18</sup> This partnership model is based on sharing profits from profit-oriented housing projects, branded housing projects in this case, among private and public developers. While the public developer provides the land – public land – for the project, the private developer develops and realises the projects. At the end, after selling the units, they share the profit. (Discussed further in the following sections)

institution were transferred to two public banks (Ziraat Bankası and Halkbank), while its assets and real estate were transferred to TOKI (TOKI, 2015).

Through this transformation Emlak Konut became a TOKI enterprise, with 49.34% of the total shares belonging to TOKI, while 50.66% of the shares are open to the public (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015a). Emlak Konut GYO thereby became one of the biggest real estate investment partnerships in Turkey (Perouse, 2013, p. 92), with its value reaching \$2.200 billion by 2015 (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016a).

Valuable land owned by the institution has been developed as income development projects via the application of the revenue-sharing model since 2004 (Sayıstay, 2013, p. 32). The total value of tenders between 2003 and 2015 reached \$17.78 billion (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015b), and the net profit of the company in 2012 was \$166.5 million (Sayıstay, 2013). Emlak Konut's share in total revenue generated from revenue-sharing projects reached \$4.6 billion by September 2015 (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015c) while by 2013, the number of housing units Emlak Konut GYO had developed via revenue-sharing projects reached 56859 (Sayıstay, 2013). In Istanbul, in 2013, Emlak Konut GYO had developed projects on 416.7 hectares of land owned by the institution, and the institution owned 247.9 hectares of land which had not yet been developed (Sayıstay, 2013, pp. 46–47). Perouse (2013, p. 84) asserts that the restructuring of Emlak Konut GYO has made it the most functional enterprise of TOKI.

By 2014 Emlak Konut GYO had developed 43 branded housing projects in Istanbul alone, based on the revenue-sharing model. Figure 6.6 shows the distribution of these branded housing projects in Istanbul.

### **6.3) The Revenue-sharing Model**

TOKI presents its aim for producing for-profit projects as a tool for accumulating capital for developing social housing projects: “The additional revenue generated from these for-profit projects is essential for the financing of TOKI's future social housing development projects. Filling the gap between short-term capital outlay for construction and long-term receivables from mortgages, this program generates crucial capital to develop low and middle income group housing projects.” (TOKI, 2014b, p. 13) These sentences summarise the policy agenda of the institution for realising profit-

<b>Sourcing of land</b>	TOKI, Emlak Bank <sup>1</sup> , third parties
<b>Tender process</b>	Within the tender process held under the internal regulations of Emlak, the contractor proposes a revenue share ratio together with an estimate of the total revenues the project will generate. The highest bidder is awarded the project
<b>Contractor obligations</b>	Whole process (financing to sale)
<b>Financing</b>	Contractor
<b>Emlak's obligations</b>	Land, approval of design and technical control
<b>Risk allocation</b>	Mainly the contractor
<b>Sales</b>	Contractor and Emlak Konut
<b>Revenues</b>	Shared with contractor, minimum guaranteed to Emlak Konut

**Figure 6.5 Summary of revenue-sharing model** (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015b)

oriented projects. Although it is presented as a simple revenue-generation and re-investment model, the model is criticised by some scholars in terms of its consequence of privatising public land and its production of *so-called* social housing projects (see discussion of Perouse's (2013) and Adanali's (2014) criticisms in this chapter). In addition to these criticisms, the practices of the institution also create a transparency issue: there is no provided evidence regarding the use of the revenue generated from these profit-oriented projects to fund development of affordable housing projects by TOKI.

TOKI has 43 in-progress revenue-sharing projects including branded housing projects such as Spradon, Divan Residence, and Olimpiakent (TOKI, 2016b), while by 2014 Emlak Konut GYO had developed 43 branded housing projects in Istanbul alone. A revenue-sharing model is applied to develop these Emlak Konut GYO projects. This partnership model is based on sharing profits from the profit-oriented housing projects, branded housing projects in this case, among private and public developers. While the public developer provides the land – public land – for the project, the private developer develops and realises the projects. At the end, after selling the units, the institutions share the profit.



Emlak Konut GYO defines this model as a way to ensure “high profitability and fund flows” (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015c). According to the institution, it is the “most important model in terms of generating income” (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015c). By 2013, it was expected that the revenue-sharing projects developed since 2003 by Emlak Konut GYO would generate \$7.1 billion in total, and the institution’s shares would amount to \$2.6 billion (Saystay, 2013, p. 55). The average revenue-share of Emlak Konut GYO in revenue-sharing projects is 34 % (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015c, p. 20)

#### **6.4) Development Processes of the Four Selected Case Projects**

The development processes of the four selected Emlak Konut GYO branded housing projects are briefly detailed below. This is designed to exemplify the development processes associated with this type of project. Two of the projects are located in Atasehir District, in the eastern part of Istanbul, while the other two projects are located in Ispartakule Region, in the north-western part of the city (Figure 6.6). Both project areas are new development areas where branded housing projects (either developed by Emlak GYO or private developer companies) are clustered. Both districts are very close to main connector roads and main junctions of the city. Both areas were vacant land that has been developed in the post-2001 period. While the Atasehir Mass Housing area is surrounded by existing urban tissue, Ispartakule region is located on the periphery of Istanbul.

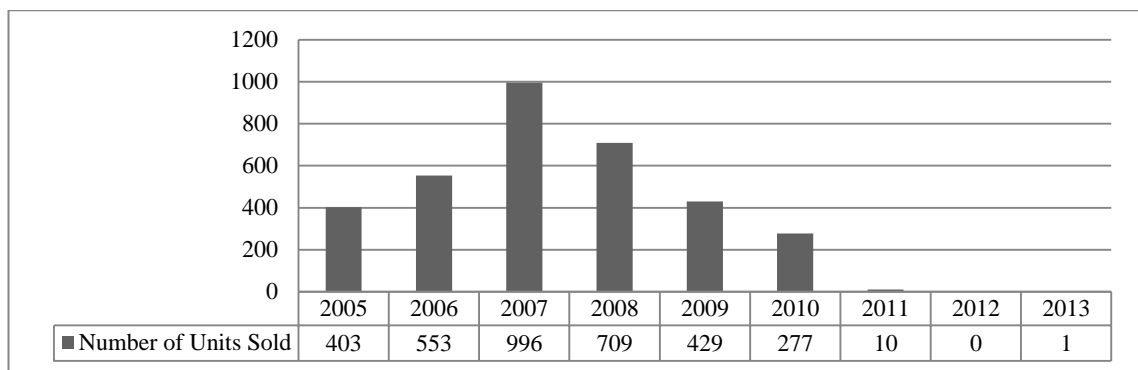


**Figure 6.6 Location of Atasehir and Ispartakule (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**

#### 6.4.1) Ađaođlu My World Ataşehir

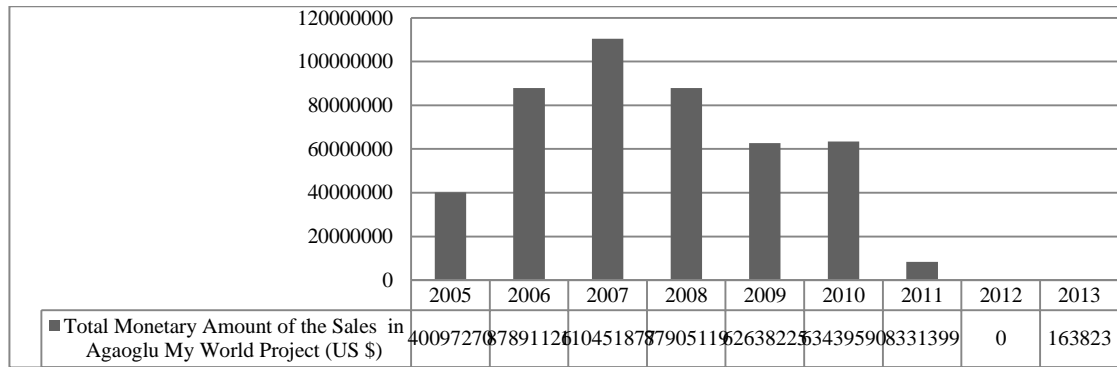
Ađaođlu My World Ataşehir project is located on the Anatolian side of Istanbul in the Ataşehir district. The project started in 2004 and was completed in 2010 (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014). The project was developed on land owned by Emlak Konut and transferred to Emlak Konut GYO as part of the restructuring of this institution (Mimarlar Odasi, 2012). The development of the project area started with the master plan approved by the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement (former Ministry of Urbanism) in 2004, and resulted in objections by NGOs and professional bodies including the Chamber of Architects in Turkey (Mimarlar Odasi, 2009) and the Chamber of City Planners (Sehir Plancilari Odasi, 2008). Subsequent master plans were produced by TOKI and approved by Istanbul Greater Municipality (Mimarlar Odasi, 2010). The project was developed by application of the revenue-sharing model through a partnership between Emlak Konut GYO and the Agaoglu Group<sup>19</sup>. Emlak Konut GYO's revenue share percentage in this project was 38.5% (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016b).

The total area of the project is around 20 hectares. There are 3639 housing units (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014) and 34 apartment buildings in the projects (Agaoglu My World Ataşehir, 2016), together with 69 commercial units and 1 social facility unit (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014). Figure 6.7 shows the number of units sold per year. According to



**Figure 6.7 Number of units (both housing and commercial) sold in Ađaođlu My World Ataşehir per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)**

<sup>19</sup> Agaoglu Group is one of the biggest development companies in Turkey. The company has operations in construction, tourism and energy sectors. Agaoglu group created Agaoglu brand for branded housing projects. The company is one of the main partners of Emlak Konut GYO in developing branded housing projects. 5 of the 43 Emlak Konut GYO branded housing projects in Istanbul were developed in partnership with Agaoglu Group.



**Figure 6.8 Total monetary amount of the units sold in Agaoglu My World Project per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)**

these figures, 3378 units had been sold by 2013 (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c). However, these figures do not provide any information about the occupation rate in the project. Figure 6.8 shows the total monetary amount collected from the project, which is nearly \$461 million, and shared among the partners (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c).

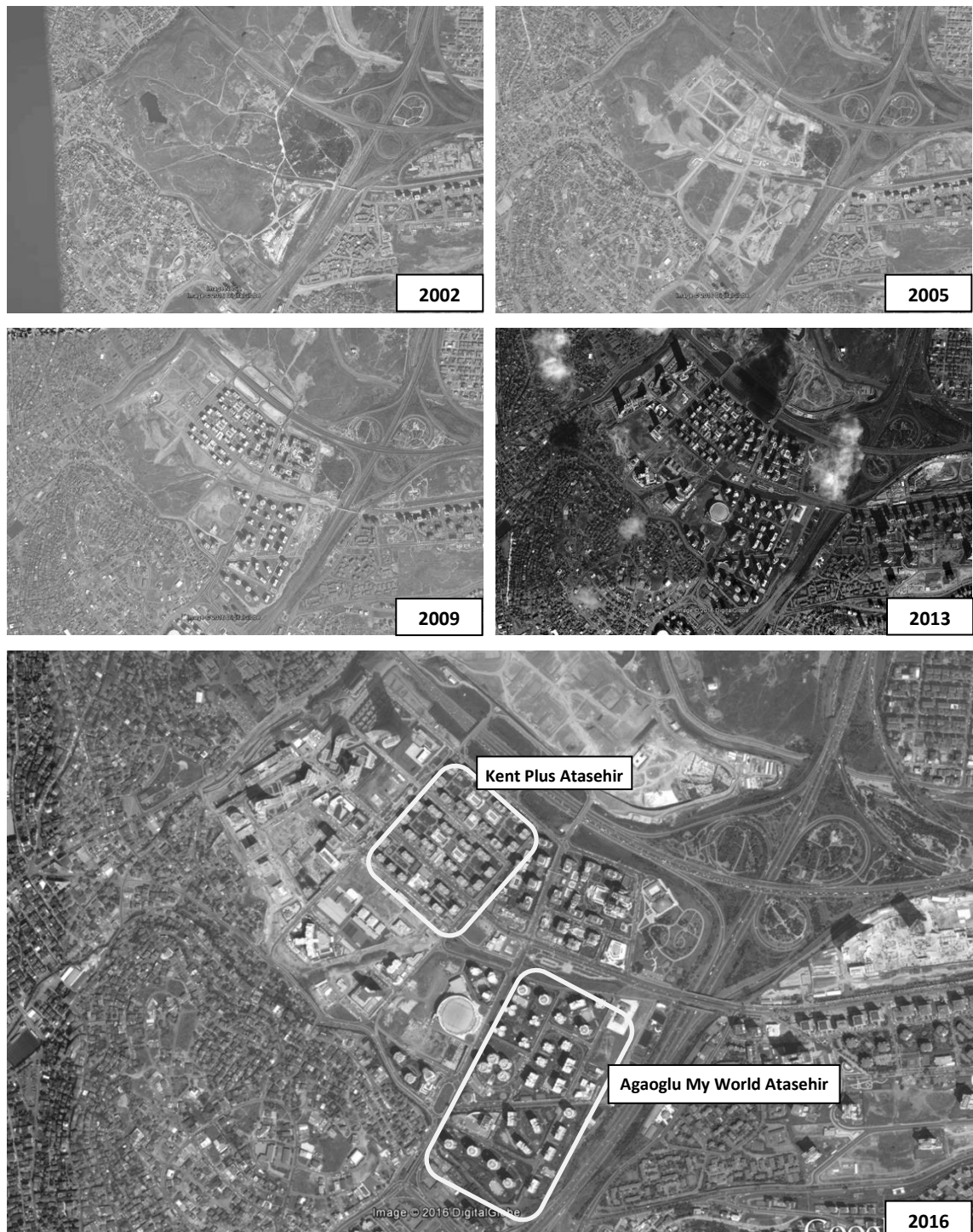
#### **6.4.2) Kent Plus Ataşehir**

Kent Plus Ataşehir project is also located in the Ataşehir district. The project was started in 2004 and completed in 2008 (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014). The land on which the project was developed was also owned by Emlak Konut and transferred to Emlak Konut GYO as part of the restructuring of this institution (Mimarlar Odasi, 2012). It was subjected to the same master plans and planning process as the previous project, since the two projects were located in the same planning area. The project was developed by application of the revenue-sharing model as a partnership of Emlak Konut GYO and Emay-Ipek Consortium<sup>20</sup>. Emlak Konut GYO's revenue share percentage in this project was 33.6% (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016b).

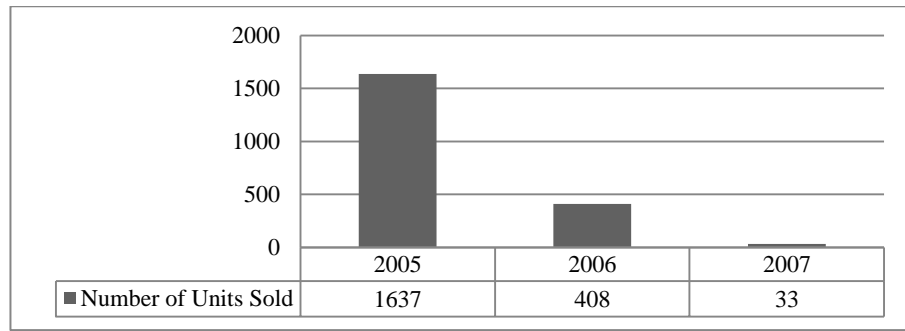
The total area of the project is around 12 hectares. There are 2044 housing units and 47 apartment buildings in the project (Kent Plus Ataşehir, 2016) together with 34 commercial units (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014). All the units were sold by 2007. However, the figures do not provide any information about the occupation rate in the project. Figure 6.10 shows the number of units sold in Kent Plus per year, while Figure

<sup>20</sup> Emay-Ipek Consortium was founded to develop KentPlus Ataşehir. KentPlus brand was created through this project. The consortium also developed another project with the same brand, KentPlus Kartal. Emay Development Company developed 5 other branded housing projects under the brand of Kentplus. The company mainly operates in the construction sector.

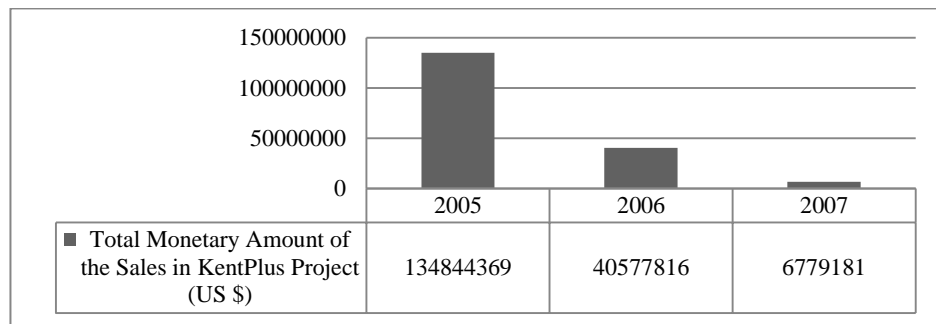
6.11 shows the total monetary amount collected from the project, a sum of nearly \$182.2 million, which was shared among the partners (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c).



**Figure 6.9 Development of western Atasehir District, Agaoglu My World Atasehir and Kent Plus Atasehir Projects since 2002 (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**



**Figure 6.10 Number of units (both housing and commercial) sold in Kent Plus Ataşehir per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)**

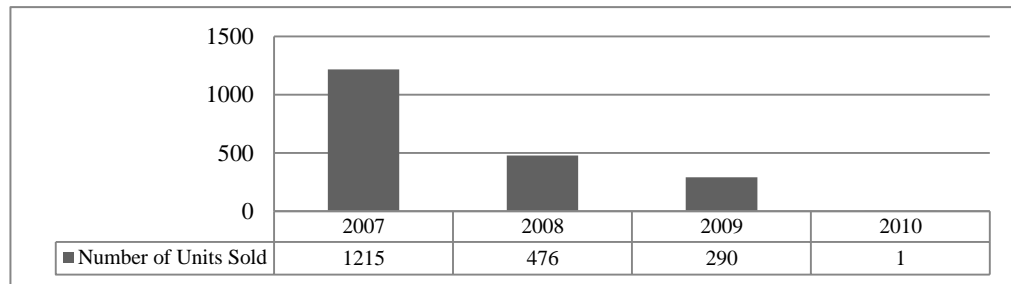


**Figure 6.11 Total monetary amount of the units sold in Kent Plus Ataşehir per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)**

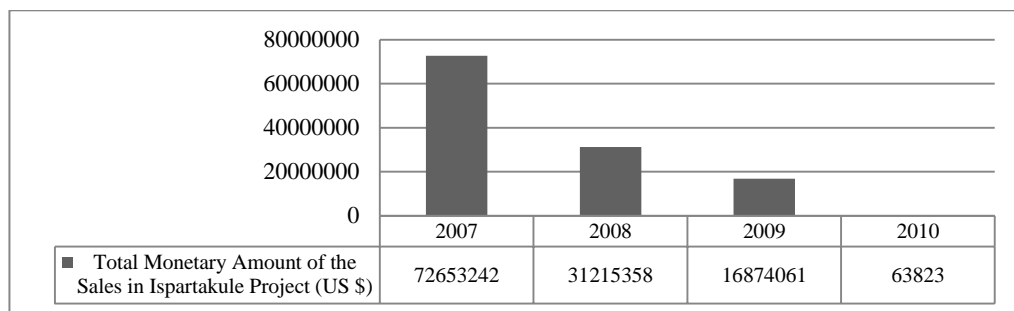
### **6.4.3) Ispartakule Project**

Ispartakule Project is located in the Ispartakue region of Avcılar district as shown in Figure 6.14. The construction of the project was started in 2006 and completed in 2009 (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014). The land on which the project was developed was owned by Emlak Konut GYO (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015d). Based on master planning revisions carried out by Ministry of Public Works and Settlements, the area was declared a mass housing zone, whereas it had been a tree plantation zone in previous plans (Şehir Plancıları Odası, 2005). Due to objections of Chamber of City Planners to this transformation and insufficiency of the proposed social facilities, the plan was terminated (Şehir Plancıları Odası, 2005), and replaced by another master plan developed by the Ministry. However, the area was again declared as a mass housing area in this plan (Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, 2013), and the development was started. In 2013, master plans of the area were revised again by the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism (Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, 2013). The

project was developed by application of the revenue-sharing model as a partnership of Emlak Konut GYO, Emlak Planlama Pazarlama<sup>21</sup>, Fideltus and Oztas Partnership<sup>22</sup>.



**Figure 6.12** Number of units sold in Ispartakule Project per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)

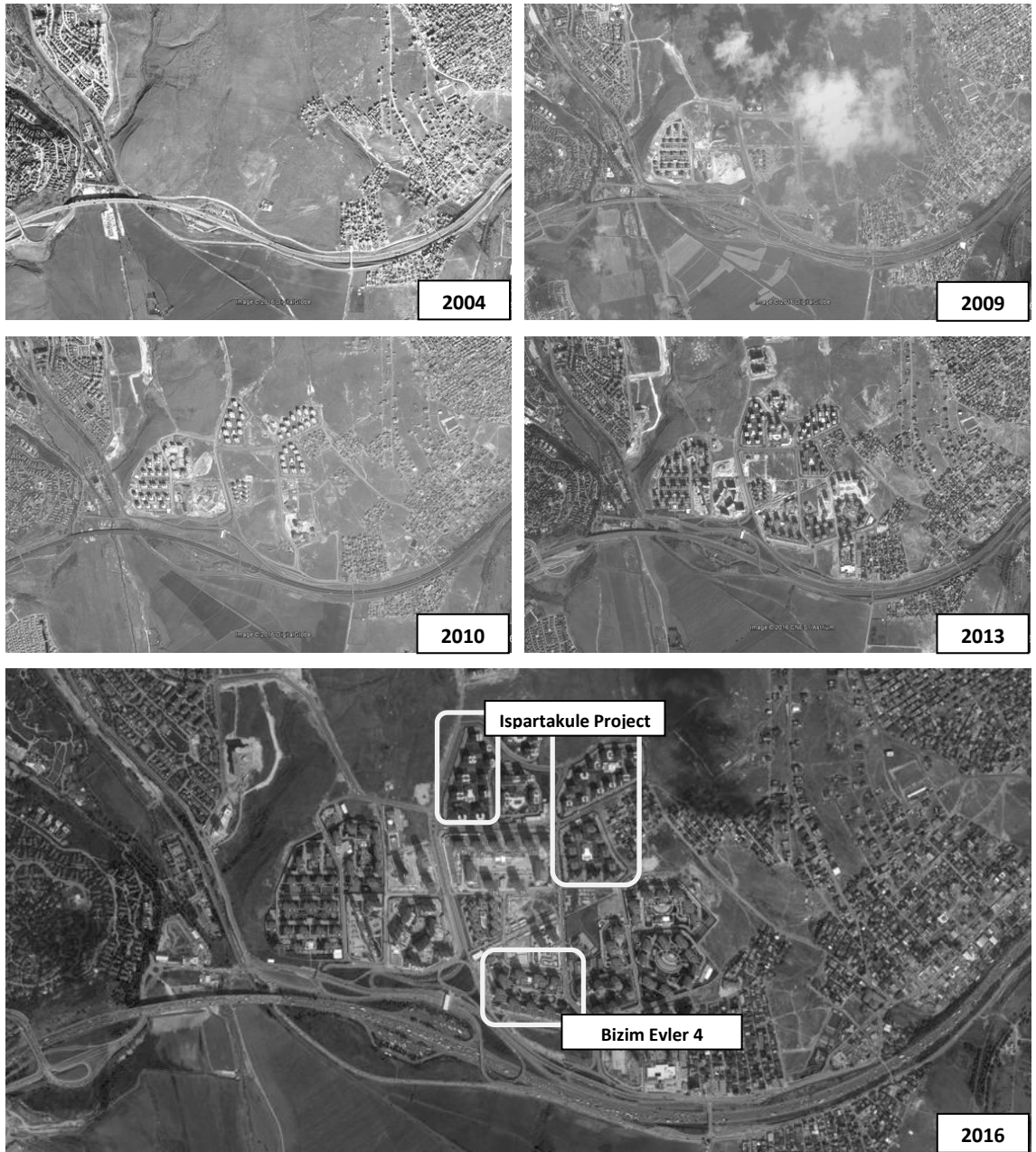


**Figure 6.13** Total monetary amount of the units sold in Ispartakule Project per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)

The total area of the project is around 15 hectares. There are 1982 housing units and 32 apartment buildings in the project (EEP, 2016), together with 2 social facility units (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014). Figure 6.12 shows the sales of the units per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c). 60 % the units were sold in the first year, 2007. However, the figures do not provide any information about the occupation rate in the project. Figure 6.13 shows the total monetary amount collected from the project, a sum of nearly \$120,8 million, which was shared among the partners (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)

<sup>21</sup> Emlak Planlama Pazarlama is one of the TOKI companies that operates in the construction sector while engaging in development of housing projects, management services, and real estate marketing.

<sup>22</sup> Fideltus-Oztas Partnership was founded for Ispartakule Project. Fideltus Company operates in the technology, finance and construction sectors. In contrast to the first two companies (Agaoglu and Emay), the company does not have a comprehensive branded housing project development practice.

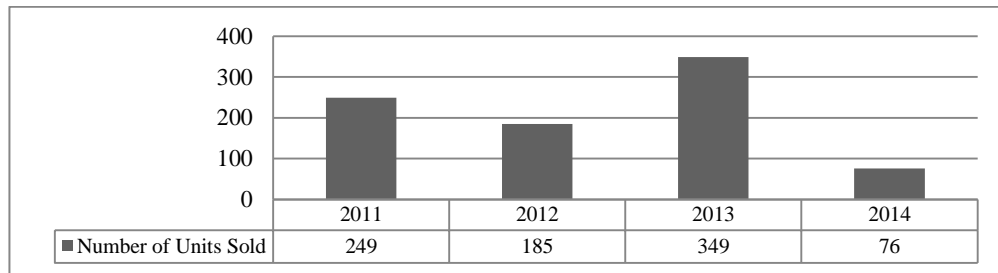


**Figure 6.14 Development of Ispartakule Region, Ispartakule Project and Bizim Evler 4 Project since 2004 (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**

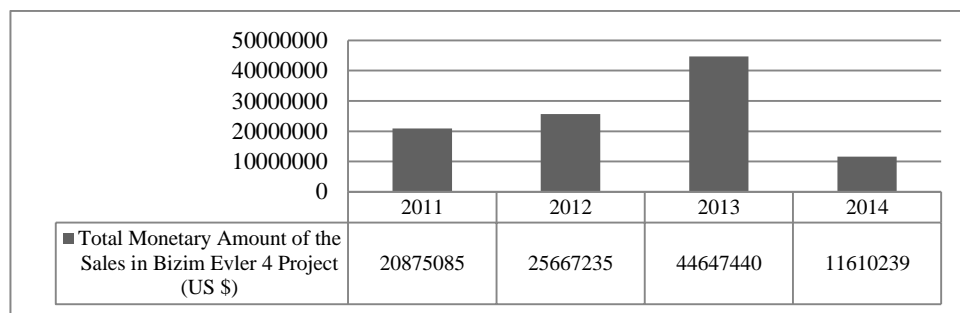
#### **6.4.4) Bizim Evler 4**

Bizim Evler 4 project is located in the south of Ispartakue region of Avcılar district. The project was started in 2010 and completed in 2012 (Ihlas Holding, 2016). The land on which the project was developed was owned by Emlak Konut GYO (Emlak Konut GYO, 2015d). This project (Bizim Evler 4) is located in the same planning area as the previous one, Ispartakule Project. Therefore, it is affected by the same planning

decisions and processes in its development process. The current master plan of the area was prepared by the Ministry of Urbanism in 2013 (Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, 2013). The project was developed by application of the revenue-sharing model in a partnership between Emlak Konut GYO and Ihlas Holding<sup>23</sup> (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016d).



**Figure 6.15 Number of units sold in Bizim Evler 4 per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)**



**Figure 6.16 Total monetary amount of the units sold in Bizim Evler 4 per year (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c)**

The total area of the project is 6 hectares. There are 762 housing units and 9 apartment buildings in the project (Ihlas Holding, 2016) together with 100 commercial units and 1 social facility unit (Emlak Konut GYO, 2014). Figure 6.15 shows the sales of units according to years (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c). While one third of the units were sold in 2011, nearly half of the units were sold in 2013 which was the submission year of the project. However, the figures do not provide any information about the occupation rate

<sup>23</sup> Ihlas Holding is one of the biggest holdings in Turkey. The holding operates in various sectors including construction and real estate, mining, media, and education. Unlike the first two companies (Agaoglu and Emay), Ihlas Holding entered the construction sector after becoming known for its operations in other sectors. The company created Bizim Evler brand for its branded housing projects and has built 7 projects under this brand so far. 4 of the 43 Emlak Konut GYO branded housing projects in Istanbul were developed in partnership with Ihlas Holding under the Bizim Evler brand.



in the project. Figure 6.16 shows the total monetary amount collected from the project, a sum of nearly \$84,8 million, which was shared among the partners (Emlak Konut GYO, 2016c).

## **6.5) Conclusion**

This chapter aimed to critically discuss the development processes of the branded housing projects. As discussed in Chapter 5, the development of the phenomenon of branded housing projects in Turkey cannot be considered apart from the development of neoliberal urbanization in the country. Therefore, the chapter firstly focused on the deepening of neoliberal urbanization in the post-2001 period. As part of this restructuring process, firstly, the legal and regulatory framework related to urbanization in Turkey has been thoroughly transformed by enactment of new laws and regulations and by changing the existing ones. Via this process, a *regulatory mechanism* acting as an enabling mechanism for commodification of urban space was produced. The regulatory mechanism, as part of political society (Gramsci), is critical for the production of branded housing projects. Without the production of such a mechanism it is not plausible for big capital to operate in urban space. In addition, this shows that commodification of urban space requires the engagement of political society, in other words the state, to transform the regulatory framework in favour of commodification

Secondly, operational institutions were created for the practice of the neoliberal state. Restructuring of TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO are relevant examples of operational institutions in this case study. By transforming these public housing institutions into public developers and promoters in the construction sector, the state serves its mission to facilitate capital accumulation (Harvey, 2007, p. 7). TOKI has been operationalised by expansion of its authority and by the accumulation of an enormous amount of land and capital in its hands. By being given planning powers, the institution has gained authority to operate at any scale and in any location in the country. In addition, the granting of authority to TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO to use public land for development has caused them to become the two biggest land developers in the country. Via their practice of opening new areas to urban development for branded housing projects, they also foster capital accumulation by dispossession by expanding the commodity realm (e.g. transforming an allocated tree plantation land into a branded housing area).

Thirdly, the revenue-sharing development model plays a crucial role in this practice. As discussed, in this model, the public sector provides land and the private sector builds housing units on it for the market, then they share the profit which is earned from these projects. Perouse (2013, p. 92) criticises the revenue-sharing model for transferring lands with higher rents to real estate investment partnerships of big holdings in Turkey. Via this explicitly profit-oriented practice, the public sector puts public assets (publicly-owned land) into the housing market and contributes to the construction boom in Turkey. Public land is thereby being transformed into private property; therefore, the model enables covert privatisation of public land. In addition, the practice of engaging in revenue-sharing projects fosters commodification of urban space through legitimising the provision of housing units as market commodities and exclusive provision of services and facilities within their confines. This legalisation is based on the claim that these projects serve the public benefit by creating income for affordable housing projects that are also based on private property. Considering the lack of public open green spaces in Istanbul, this is a very controversial position. While public green space (public parks and gardens) in Istanbul only accounts for 1.5% of total macroform of the city, in London the corresponding percentage is 38.4%, 14.4% in Berlin, and 46% in Sydney (BOP Consulting, 2014). By turning public land into a market commodity (e.g. privately owned housing units), instead of using this land to deliver social services (e.g. urban parks, green open spaces), this practice demonstrates a very clear example of the neoliberal state - “a state apparatus whose fundamental mission was to facilitate conditions for profitable capital accumulation” (Harvey, 2007, p. 7).

As a result, the practice exemplifies the development processes acting as one of the major enabling mechanisms for branded housing projects. The development processes of the projects enable an expansion of commodification of urban space through accumulation-by-dispossession mechanisms (see Harvey, 2008). As defined in Chapter 3, contemporary commodification of urban space presents a “deepening moment”<sup>24</sup> through production of new housing units and expansion of commodity realm to other dimensions (temporal dimension) while producing its enabling mechanisms. The development processes of the projects, as part of neoliberal urbanisation, present the practice of producing a regulatory mechanism as an enabling mechanism for commodification of urban space.

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<sup>24</sup> “systemic provisioning of more and more types of things (goods and services) in the commodity-form” (Prudham, 2009, p. 125)

## **CHAPTER 7 – ANALYSIS OF THE SPATIAL PRACTICES IN BRANDED HOUSING PROJECTS**

As argued in Chapter 3, commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation is deepening by expanding through spatial and temporal dimensions. This chapter discusses the spatial practice as a co-product of spatial pattern and urban experience and its relationship with commodification of urban space. In order to investigate this relationship, firstly the spatial pattern of the four selected projects<sup>25</sup> was analysed according to the design framework proposed by Bentley et al. (1985) for a democratic and viable urban environment, and their findings are presented in this chapter. Secondly, the urban experience offered in branded housing projects was analysed according to the project resident interviews, and this is also presented in this chapter. Finally, the relationship of the spatial pattern and urban experience with contemporary commodification of urban space is discussed in the concluding section of this chapter.

The aim of this chapter is initially to investigate the dialectical relationship between the spatial pattern and urban experience and then to relate this with the dynamics of commodification of urban space, and especially discuss the deepening of this commodification through temporal dimension. The chapter addresses research questions 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 (see Table 1.1). Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2 show the location of the four selected projects and their relationship with the surrounding environment. The characteristics of the districts where the projects are located and development processes of these projects were discussed in Chapter 6, and are therefore not discussed again in this chapter.

### **7.1) Analysis of Spatial Pattern of Branded Housing Projects - Responsive Environments**

The Responsive Environments approach proposed by Bentley et al. (1985) is selected as an analytical framework for the spatial pattern of the branded housing projects due to its

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<sup>25</sup> The four projects were selected among 43 branded housing projects developed by Emlak Konut GYO in Istanbul between 2003 and 2014. Chapter 4 explains in detail the sampling method and reasons why these four projects were selected.

emphasis on producing democratic urban spaces. Bentley at al. (1985, p. 9) define the responsive environment as a place which provides “its users with an essentially democratic setting, enriching their opportunities by maximising the degree of choice available to them”. The authors propose a set of concepts for producing these places as permeability, variety, legibility, robustness, visual appropriateness, richness and personalisation.



**Figure 7.1 Selected projects from Atasehir District, Kent Plus (top) and Agaoglu My World Atasehir (bottom) (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**



**Figure 7.2 Selected projects from Ispartakule Region, Ispartakule Project (top) and Bizim Evler 4(bottom) (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**

### ***7.1.1) Permeability***

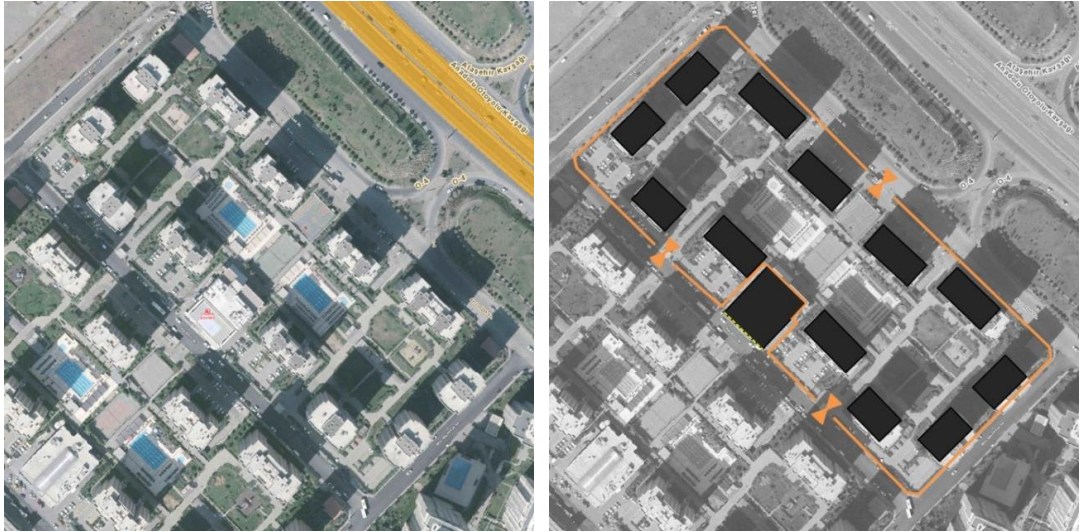
As discussed in Chapter 4, Bentley et al. (1985, p. 10) define the quality of permeability as “the number of alternative ways through an environment”, while Mertens and Moughtin (2003, p. 219) define the concept “as the choice of movement the environment presents to the user”. Therefore, in order to understand the level of permeability of a place, layout and alternative routes are crucial.

The projects were analysed according to permeability by considering the boundary treatments, segregation from surrounding environments and their spatial accessibility from the surrounding environments. Active/passive frontages were also taken into consideration in this analysis since active façades support activity of people (Gehl and Svarre, 2013, p. 104), therefore fostering interaction and choice of movement. While this analysis presents the level of spatial segregation of the projects from the surrounding environment, it also unfolds the level of permeability by analysing alternative access points to the project areas.

For the analysis of Kent Plus, Agaoglu My World Atasehir, and Ispartakule Project, one block from each project was selected due to the repetitive design pattern of the projects. (See Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2) (The blocks selected for analysis are marked with dashed yellow on the figures.) In addition, the blocks are segregated from each other, have controlled access and each block works independently, although they are part of the same project. Bizim Evler 4 project is a one-block-project, therefore the whole project was analysed.

#### **Permeability Analysis of Kent Plus Project Block**

Firstly, Figure 7.3 shows gates and boundary treatments in block selected from the Kent Plus project. The block has three gates, each of which is access controlled. Figure 7.4 shows the two gates. The gates are controlled by security staff, barriers and turnstiles. Therefore, although the block has access from three points and two sides, it is not spatially permeable. Here, only visual permeability is relevant through these gates.

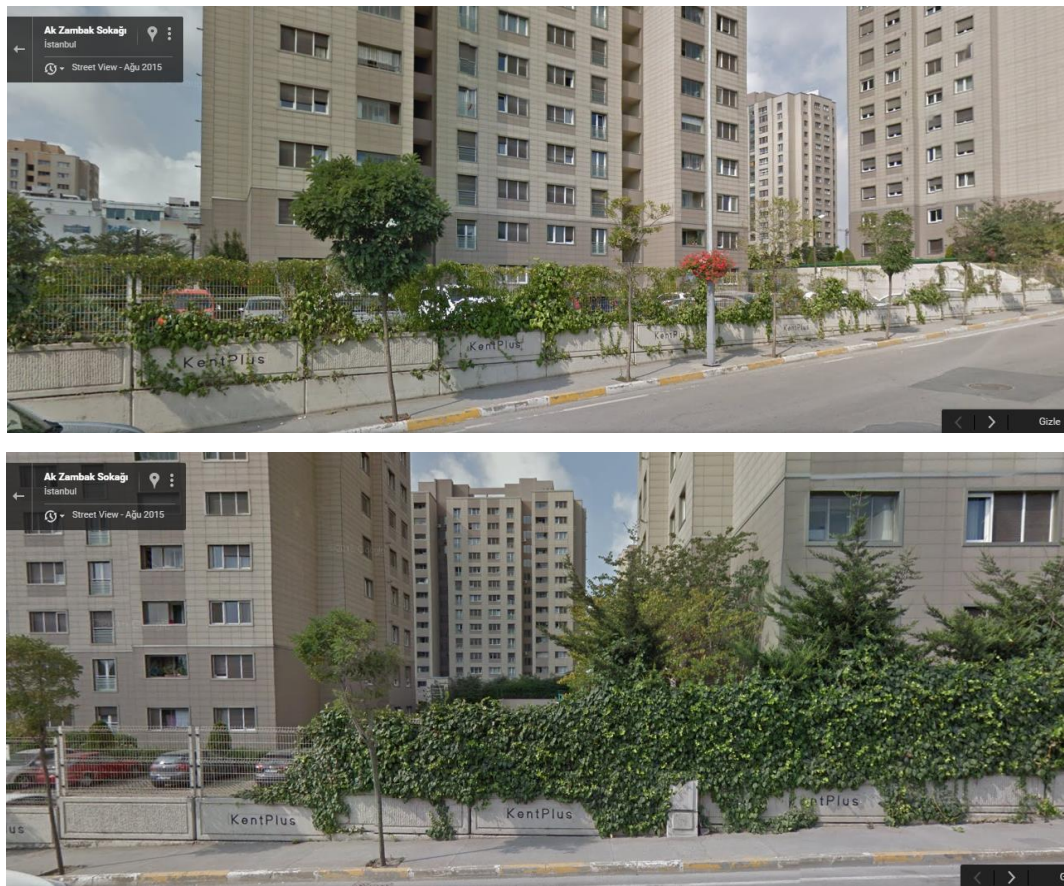


**Figure 7.3 Gates and boundary treatments of Kent Plus Project block**  
 (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)



**Figure 7.4 Gates of Kent Plus Project block** (Google Maps, 2016a)

Secondly, the block is surrounded by concrete walls and metal fences (see Figure 7.5). These elements act as physical barriers and segregate the area from its surroundings. Organisation of housing blocks also contributes to the segregation of the project by preventing visual permeability to the inner area with its facilities and uses. In addition,



**Figure 7.5 Walls of Kent Plus Project block (Google Maps, 2016a)**

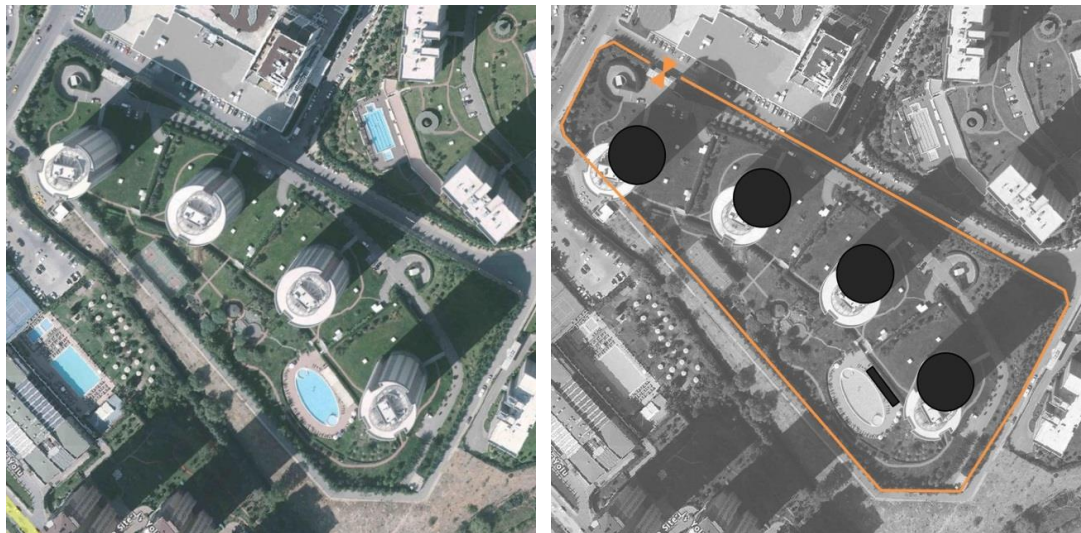
segregation is reinforced by landscaping. The green elements are used to reinforce both spatial and visual segregation of the block from the surrounding area. Therefore, the block is not spatially or visually permeable through these walls. While access to the block is completely blocked on two sides, access is controlled through the gates on the other two sides.

Thirdly, the block was analysed for its active frontages. Although active frontages of the block cannot provide permeability through the block, they act as an interface between the segregated (semi-private) area and the public. A sport centre is located on this block which has an active frontage by the road (See Figure 7.3 yellow dashed line). This façade supports the connection of the block with public roads, and therefore acts as an interface between two districts. However, this sport centre is part of the project and not publicly accessible. It is only accessible to the members of the sport centre, and residents of the project have discounts. Therefore, while this active frontage acts as an interface, and connects the project block with the public roads, it is also a part of the access controlled area.

Fourthly, the dimensions of the block are important for investigating permeability. The dimensions are 130 m, 135 m, 325m and 330 m. Although there are openings on the sides of 325m and 330m that contain gates and the façade of sport centre, due to the controlled access of these features, the block has an area of 44000m<sup>2</sup> which is not publicly accessible or spatially permeable. The rest of the blocks in the project (see Figure 7.1) present a similar pattern. Given the size of the blocks, the project produces an urban pattern which does not support permeability and produces large segregated insulars.

### **Permeability Analysis of Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project block**

Firstly, Figure 7.6 shows gates and boundary treatments of the block selected from Agaoglu My World Atasehir project. The block has one gate, which is access controlled. Figure 7.7 shows the gate, which is controlled by security staff, barriers and turnstiles. Therefore, although the block has access from one point, it is not spatially permeable. Here, only visual permeability is relevant through the gates (see Figure 7.7).



**Figure 7.6 Gates and boundary treatments of Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project block (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**

Secondly, the block is surrounded by concrete walls and metal fences (see Figure 7.8). These elements act as physical barriers and segregate the area from its surroundings. In addition, segregation is reinforced by landscaping. Green elements are used to reinforce



both spatial and visual segregation of the block from the surrounding area as it is used in the previous project. Therefore, the block is not spatially or visually permeable through these walls, while being accessible only from one side through the only gate.

Thirdly, there are no active frontages on any side of the block (see Figure 7.6); therefore, there is no façade to act as an interface between the segregated (semi-private) area of the block and the public roads. Fourthly, the dimensions of the block are 300m, 120m, 50m, 275m, and 55m. Although the gate is located on the 300m side, due to its controlled access, the block produces a façade which is not permeable for 300m. The block also has an -area of around 27000m<sup>2</sup> that is not publicly accessible or spatially permeable. The rest of the blocks in the project (see Figure 7.1) present a similar pattern. Given the size of the blocks, the project produces an urban pattern that does not support permeability and produces large segregated insulars similar to those in the previous example. The difference in this project is that the block pattern is not as orthogonal as in the previous project (see Figure 7.1)



**Figure 7.7 Gate of Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project block (Google Maps, 2016b)**



**Figure 7.8 Walls of Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project block (Google Maps, 2016c)**

### **Permeability Analysis of Ispartakule Project Block**

Firstly, Figure 7.9 shows the gates and boundary treatments of the block selected from Ispartakule project. The block has two gates, which are access controlled. Figure 7.10

shows the gates of the project block. The gates are controlled by security staff and barriers. Therefore, although the block has access from two points, it is not spatially permeable. On the other hand, visual permeability is relevant through the gates (see Figure 7.10).

Secondly, the block is surrounded by metal fences and razor wires (see Figure 7.11). These elements form physical barriers and segregate the area from its surroundings. Similar to the Kent Plus project block, the organisation of the housing blocks contributes to the segregation of the project by preventing visual permeability to the inner area with its facilities and uses. In addition, the segregation is reinforced by landscaping. Green elements are used to reinforce both spatial and visual segregation of the block from the surrounding area, which is similar to their use in the previous project. However, this project is surrounded by metal fences rather than concrete walls, and therefore it has greater visual permeability than the previous ones. In this context, landscaping elements are the only boundary elements used for visual segregation. The block is not spatially permeable through the fences, while provide partial and changing visual permeability according to the landscape elements. It is accessible only from two sides through the gates.



**Figure 7.9 Gates and boundary treatments of Ispartakule Project block (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**



**Figure 7.10 Gates of Ispartakule (Top (Patara Sitesi, 2016) Bottom (Google Maps, 2016d))**

Thirdly, there are no active frontages on any side of the block (see Figure 7.9); therefore, there is no façade with an interface between the segregated (semi-private) area of the block and the public roads. In this respect, it is similar to the previous project.

Fourthly, the dimensions of the block are 190m, 65m, 195m, 150m and 250m. The façade of the block is non-permeable for 250m, even though there is a controlled access gate, since the gates are located on the 150m and 190m sides. The block also has an area of around 46000m<sup>2</sup> which is not publicly accessible or spatially permeable. The rest of the blocks in the project (see Figure 7.1) present a similar pattern, given the size of the blocks. As a result, the project produces an urban pattern which does not support permeability and produces large segregated insulars similar to the previous example. The block pattern is not as orthogonal as in the first project, and the connections of the insulars are weak due to their locations (see Figure 7.1). Therefore, the blocks of the project are completely segregated from each other as well.

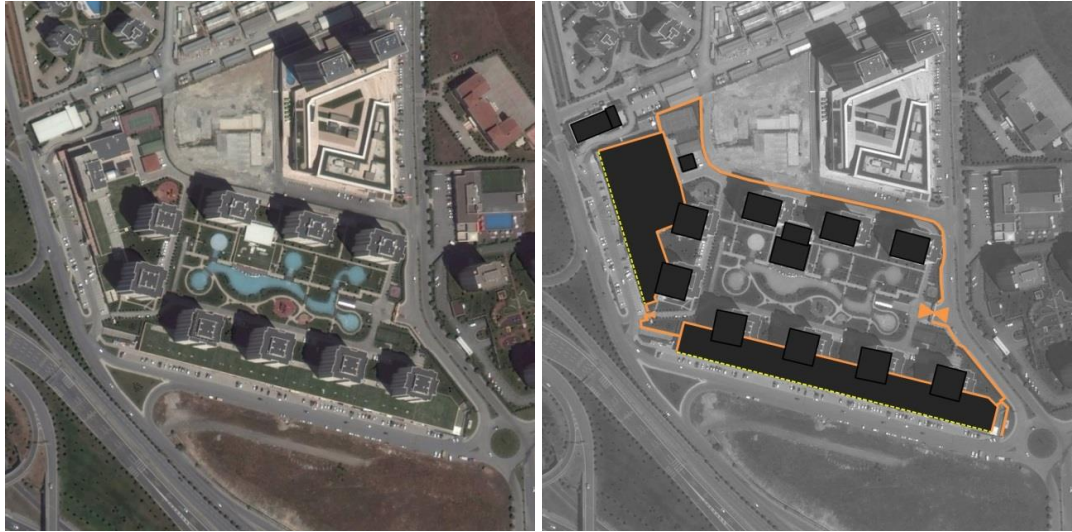


**Figure 7.11 Walls of Ispartakule Project (Google Maps, 2016e)**

### **Permeability Analysis of Bizim Evler 4 Project**

Firstly, Figure 7.12 shows the gates and boundary treatments of Bizim Evler 4 Project. The project has two access controlled gates. While the east gate is controlled by security staff and a metal door, the west gate is controlled by security staff and barriers. Therefore, although the project has access from two points, it is not spatially permeable, but only visually permeable (see Figure 7.12).

Secondly, the project is surrounded by metal fences and razor wires (see Figure 7.14). These elements form physical barriers and segregate the area from its surroundings. In addition, the segregation is reinforced by landscaping. Similar to Kent Plus and Ispartakule project block, the organisation of the housing blocks contributes to the segregation of the project by preventing visual permeability to the inner area with its



**Figure 7.12 Gates and boundary treatments of Bizim Evler 4 Project block**  
 (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)

facilities and uses. However, this only applies to the northern periphery of the project. On the southern and eastern peripheries, commercial areas block visual permeability. Green elements are used to reinforce both spatial and visual segregation of the project from the surrounding area as in the previous project (Ispartakule Project). Also similar to the previous example, metal fences provide visual permeability, and landscaping elements are the only boundary elements used for visual segregation. The project is not spatially permeable through the fences; partial visual permeability applies for this project. It is only accessible only from two sides through the access-controlled gates.

Thirdly, the dimensions of the project are 325m, 25m, 100m, 70m, 200m, 55m, 100m, and 180 m. The project has an area of around 55000m<sup>2</sup> which is not publicly accessible or spatially permeable. The project presents a different approach from the previous three blocks in terms of active frontages. Commercial areas of the project form active frontages on the 325m and 180m sides of the project area (Figure 7.15). These active frontages present a more connected approach to public roads compared to the previous three projects. However, since the active sides of the project face connector roads (see Figure 7.1), it is not connected with the other side of the road.



**Figure 7.13 Gates of Bizim Evler 4 Project (Google Maps, 2016f)**

The active frontages contribute to non-segregation of the area by avoiding continuous walls or fences for 325m and 180m. However, the active frontages do not provide intermediary space and do not contribute to the permeability of the project area due to the lack of direct connection between the commercial areas and common areas of the project.

Permeability analyses of the four selected projects present that the projects are segregated from the surrounding environment and introverted. Choice of movement is controlled by the walls/fences and the gates. It also shows that segregation is not limited to spatial one, but there is an intention to segregate the areas visually as well. In this segregation, landscape elements play an important role.



**Figure 7.14 Walls of Bizim Evler 4 Project (Google Maps, 2016g)**

This high level of segregation contributes to deepening of the commodification of urban space by segregating *a slice of urban tissue*. Segregating an urban tissue allows developers to package this area with common spaces, green areas, walking track and other facilities as part of a commodity package. Through segregating the area spatially, and controlling the level of permeability, the commodity realm extends through these common spaces, green areas, walking track and other facilities. This deepening moment is closely related with the expansion through the temporal dimension (urban experience) discussed in the following sections.



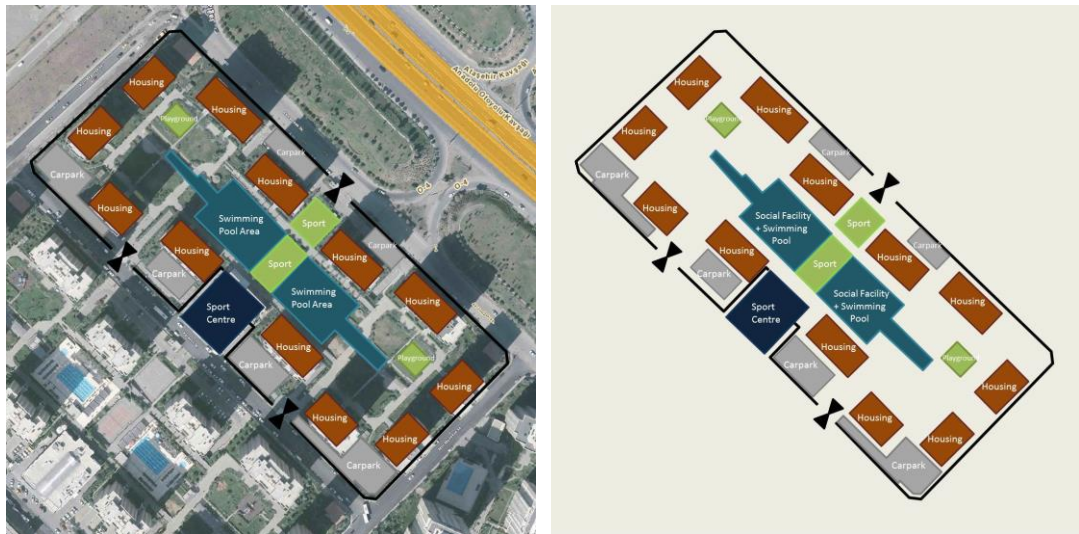


**Figure 7.15 Active frontages of Bizim Evler 4 Project (Google Maps, 2016h)**

### **7.1.2) Variety**

As Bentley et al. (1985) argue, variety of land uses is directly related to variety of spatial experience. The variety in the projects was analysed through the land uses provided within the confines of the projects. This analysis is important to investigate the use of space in the project areas. Since the project areas are exclusionary, the analysis focuses on the use of space by the project residents. This is critical for the spatial experience of the residents, which is discussed in the next section of this chapter as part of the spatial practice.

## Variety in Kent Plus Project Block



**Figure 7.16 Land uses in Kent Plus Project block**

**(Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**

Kent Plus project block provides variety of uses exclusively to its residents within its confines. The block provides sport areas, swimming pool, playground, social facility, and green open spaces in addition to carparks and housing (see Figure 7.16 and Figure 7.17). Housing blocks and carparks are located on the peripheries of the block, and surround the facilities (see Figure 7.16). As mentioned in the previous section, a sport centre is located in the project area. However, this sport centre is not exclusive to project residents, but accessible through membership (dark blue in Figure 7.16). The sport centre is accessible from the public road; therefore, its relationship is different than the rest of the social and sport facilities provided within the confines of the block.

Within the block the project provides social facilities and uses that are usually provided in public spaces (such as green open spaces and playgrounds) exclusively for its residents. Therefore, on one hand, while the project offers easy access to these uses for its residents, on the other hand, by providing these separately in each block and exclusively for its residents, the project controls the choice of its residents as well. Spatial experience of residents is analysed in the next section of this chapter through resident interviews in detail.



**Figure 7.17 Land use in Kent Plus Project block (Panoramio, 2016a)**

### **Variety in Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project Block**

Agaoglu My World Atasehir project block provides a variety of uses exclusively to its residents within its confines. The block provides sport areas, a swimming pool, playground, social facility (including a café), and green open spaces in addition to carparks (open and closed) and housing (see Figure 7.18 and Figure 7.19). Housing blocks form an arc surrounding the sport and social facilities (see Figure 7.18). The project covers a smaller area than the previous one, and active green areas are limited due to its size. Active green spaces are limited with walking tracks and sport facilities are therefore also limited in comparison with the previous project.



**Figure 7.18 Land uses in Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project block**  
 (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)



**Figure 7.19 Land use in Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project block**  
 (Top (Panoramio, 2016b) Bottom Personal Archive, August 2014)

As in the previous one, the project provides social facilities and uses which are usually provided in public spaces, such as green open spaces and playgrounds, in the block exclusively for its residents. Figure 7.1 shows Agaoglu My World Atasehir is large project which is organised as separate blocks, and each block works separately. Although this block does not have a sport centre, the block residents have the right to discounted registration at the sport centre located in another block of the project. While the project offers easy access to the uses for its residents as in the previous project, by providing these separately in each block exclusively, it controls the choice of its residents.

### Variety in Ispartakule Project Block

Ispartakule project block provides variety of uses exclusively to its residents within its confines. The block provides sport areas, swimming pool, playground, social facility, and green open spaces in addition to carparks and housing (see Figure 7.20 and Figure 7.21). Housing blocks and carparks are located on the peripheries of the block, and surround the facilities (see Figure 7.20).



**Figure 7.20 Land uses in Ispartakule Project block**  
 (Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)

The project block provides larger active green spaces than the previous one. This offers project residents places similar to public parks. However, as discussed in the next

section (as part of spatial experience), these open spaces are under the control of and mediated by the project management team. The ratio of car parks to total area in this block is the highest among all the case project blocks. This is because, unlike the Kent Plus, Agaoglu My World Atasehir and Bizim Evler 4 projects, this project does not have closed car parks.

Within the block the project provides social facilities and uses that are usually provided in public spaces (such as green open spaces and playgrounds) exclusively for its residents. Therefore, on one hand, the project offers easy access to these uses for its residents; on the other hand, by providing these separately in each block exclusively, the project controls the choice of its residents as in the previous two projects



**Figure 7.21 Land uses in Ispartakule Project**

**(Top (Ispartakule Project Website, 2016), Bottom (Panoramio, 2016c))**

## Variety in Bizim Evler 4 Project

Bizim Evler 4 project provides a variety of uses exclusively to its residents within its confines. The project provides sport areas, closed swimming pool, playground, social facilities, and green open spaces in addition to carparks and housing (see Figure 7.22 and Figure 7.23). The project also has extensive commercial areas which are publicly accessible.



**Figure 7.22 Land Uses in Bizim Evler 4 Project block**  
(Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)

The housing blocks and carparks are located on the peripheries of the block, and surround the facilities (see Figure 7.22). This project presents a similar case in terms of provision of social facilities to the rest of the projects, while also presenting some differences. The project provides social facilities and uses that are usually provided in public spaces, such as green open spaces and playgrounds, in its confines exclusively for its residents. Therefore, on one hand, while the project offers easy access to these uses for its residents, on the other hand, it controls the choice of its residents. To illustrate, this project does not have an open swimming pool. Therefore, by limiting this use, the project developer plays an important role in the spatial experience of the residents of this project.



**Figure 7.23 Land use in Bizim Evler 4 Project block**

**(Top (3DKonut, 2014), Bottom (Bizimevler 4 Sitesi, 2016))**

As a result, analysing variety in the project areas presents valuable points for investigating the spatial patterns and experience in project areas. Firstly, findings show that the projects offer a variety of uses in their confines exclusively for their residents. While this might be seen as a positive input, it also creates control over the spatial experience of the residents. This is discussed further through the resident interviews in the following sections. Secondly, the land uses provided in the projects allow developers to extend their commodity package, therefore expanding the realm of commodity into land uses and to the temporal dimension considering the attachment of urban experience to land uses. In other words, total and exclusive provision of uses within the project areas contributes to deepening of commodification of urban space considering that their access rights are attached with buying or renting a house in the project area.



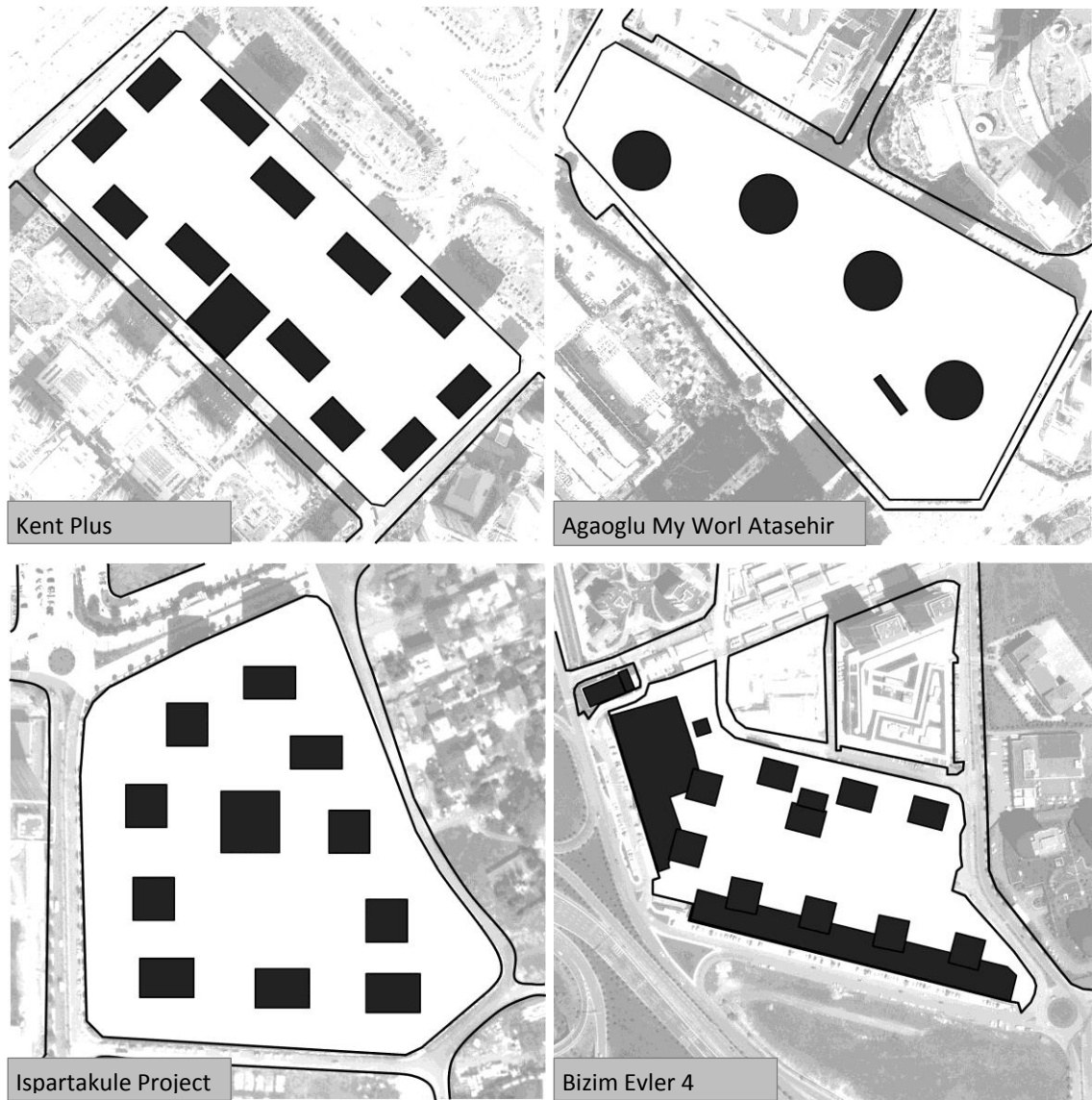
### **7.1.3) Legibility**

Lynch (1960, p. 2) defines legibility as “the apparent clarity ... of the cityscape”. The projects were analysed according to legibility by figure-ground analysis (masses and paths in the projects) together with volumes of their spatial elements via a Lynchian analysis of the project blocks. This is a brief analysis due to the limited observation of the project blocks because of their exclusive nature.

The role of masses and volumes of housing blocks are analysed to investigate their role of producing edges for the project blocks. In addition, spatial organisation of the masses of housing blocks and social facilities are analysed in terms of their contribution to forming nodes, edges, and paths as well as districts. Layout of the project blocks is also important in order to investigate their segregation patterns. Therefore, analysis of legibility is closely related to the analysis of permeability previously discussed.

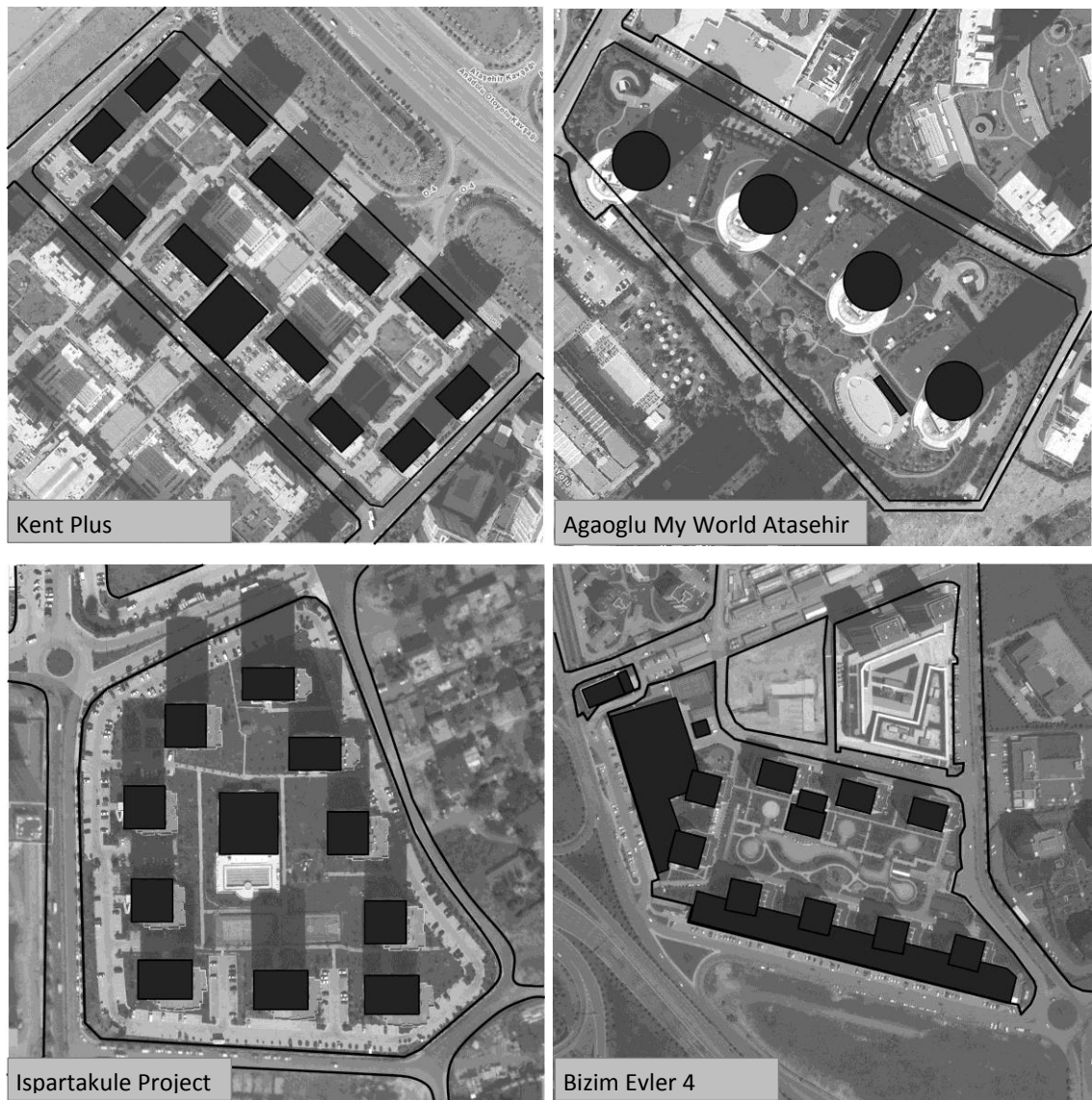
The housing blocks in Kent Plus project and Ispartakule Project contribute to the formation of edges of the district, while in Bizim Evler project commercial areas produce a clear edge and housing blocks contribute to it. In these three cases, a cluster-like form is produced while locating the housing blocks in the peripheries and common spaces in the middle of the project blocks. Agaoglu My World Atasehir presents a different organisation in terms of edge-formation. In this case, the housing blocks with its masses and volumes contribute loosely to the formation of enclosure for common spaces by forming an arc. However, they do not act as an edge for the project block. (See Figure 7.24) Therefore, formation of edge is reinforced with walls, fences and landscape elements as discussed in the previous section.

In each case, pedestrian and car roads are separated. Access to car parks is provided by an outer car ring either in the project or using the public roads. (See Figure 7.25) While in three cases (Kent Plus, Agaoglu My World Atasehir, and Bizim Evler 4) there is a path formation in the middle of the cluster connecting uses (including social facilities, parks, etc), in one case (Ispartakule Project) the social facility acts as a node in the centre of the cluster.



**Figure 7.24 Figure-ground analysis of the four projects (1)**  
**(Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**

The volume of the spatial elements is critical in the formation of paths, districts and edges. In three cases, the multi-storey housing blocks contribute very little to closure of the common areas due to their scale and the dimension of the cluster-like forms of three projects and the arc of the one project block. (See Figure 7.26) However, as discussed, they contribute to the formation of edges of these blocks with their volumes and masses. All in all, while the project blocks are designed as segregated districts, and the masses and volumes are used to create edges, the paths in and nodes within these districts are not defined by masses of volumes, but defined by either landscape elements or areas allocated for social facilities (See Figure 7.25 and Figure 7.26).



**Figure 7.25 Figure-ground analysis of the four projects (2)**  
**(Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)**

This analysis shows that while the project blocks are defined through their masses as districts, these masses contribute very little to production of legibility within the project block and the common areas are organised by use of landscape elements and buildings for social facilities. The project blocks produce closed, self-contained, introverted districts with minimum and very controlled relationships with the surrounding environment.



**Figure 7.26 Volume of the four projects**

(Source: The author | Aerial Image Source: Google Earth Pro)

#### ***7.1.4) Robustness***

Bentley et al. (1985, p. 9) define robustness as the quality of space which allows users to use the same place for different purposes. The authors argue that robustness is important for both indoors and outdoors. The projects were analysed according to robustness by analysing the multi-functionality of outdoor spaces and adaptability to different uses of these spaces and exclude indoor spaces due to the scope of this research.

Outdoor spaces of the selected projects are designed through considering one function for each area. To illustrate, the projects offer sport areas in the form of basketball pitches, tennis courts or swimming pools. Therefore, each function is designated for a particular area and the areas are also regulated according to their designated functions through rules set by private management of the projects. These rules control the use of these areas according to their designated functions, such as a designated area for dog walking, a designated area for kids playing, or open green areas where sitting on the grass is allowed or restricted.

This is discussed in the following section in detail as control and mediation of everyday experience; however, it is concluded through the analysis of spatial pattern that the projects avoid robustness deliberately by designating particular uses for particular areas. This allows the private management company to control the use of space throughly. Moreover, it allows the developer companies to promise particular uses and facilities for the future buyers in the commodity package. In other words, it contributes to deepening of commodification of urban space by transforming an open space into an item in a commodity package by designating a particular use. This also provides certainty for the developer companies and for the future buyers (what is and is not included in the package).

#### ***7.1.5) Visual appropriateness***

Bentley et al (1985) define visual appropriateness in relation to the external image of the buildings. According to Bentley et al. (1985), the use of the building, context of the building and surrounding environments are important aspects to take into account for visual appropriateness of the buildings. The authors argue that visual appropriateness contributes to the legibility of urban space. The projects were analysed very briefly for visual appropriateness due to the scope of this research. One aspect of the projects that is highlighted in terms of visual appropriateness is their gates. Figure 7.4, Figure 7.7, Figure 7.10, and 7.13 show the gates of the selected projects. As seen through these figures, the gates of the projects are designed to look like ‘gates’ rather than just entrances to the project areas. This is an attempt to mark the difference of the project areas from their surroundings and foster their segregation and controlled access by architecturally emphasising their entrances. This reinforces the perception of here and there (Cullen, 1961), which fosters the perception among residents of living in a special and exclusive place. This also fosters perception of specialness of the projects among non-residents by marking a barrier for them rather than an entrance.

#### ***7.1.6) Richness***

Bentley et al (1985, p. 11) define the quality of richness in relation to “developing the design for sensory choice”. In other words, the quality of richness of a place is increasing “the variety of sense-experiences which users can enjoy” (Bentley et al., 1985, p. 89). The projects were analysed according to richness through the everyday

experiences of the project residents, which are discussed in detail in the following section.

### ***7.1.7) Personalisation***

The projects were analysed according to personalisation by analysing their level of flexibility to allow residents to alter the environment in which they live. Again the indoor environment is excluded from analysis of this quality due to the scope of this research. The projects leave very little to their residents' personalisation of outer spaces. The common areas are extensively regulated and rules and regulations are reminded to residents by private management firms when breached. This quality is also discussed in the following section in detail through the everyday experiences of the project residents.

## **7.2) Spatial Experience and Control over Everyday Life**

### ***7.2.1) Spatial Experience***

Spatial experience in the project areas was analysed through resident interviews. 20 residents were interviewed from 11 branded housing projects developed by Emlak Konut GYO in Istanbul between 2003 and 2014. (See Chapter 4, APPENDIX III and APPENDIX IV for distribution of the interviewees among projects and sampling details.) This inductive qualitative analysis is based on in-depth interviews. The spatial experiences highlighted by residents are briefly discussed under three headings as services and facilities, change in everyday life in the projects, and social relations and family.

#### **Services and Facilities**

The interviewees highlighted the services and facilities provided in the project areas in general. The projects' services and facilities used differ according to the interviews. Most of them argued that their frequency of use of the facilities changes from time to time, while 30% of the interviewees had not used similar facilities before moving to the projects. Those who were used to using similar facilities (e.g. sport centres, swimming pools) had used them through paid membership. Half of them used to drive or use public transport to reach these facilities, since the facilities were not located in their

previous neighbourhoods. Many of the interviewees mentioned that their frequency of using these facilities has positively changed since they moved into the projects.

Firstly, the interviewees consider private security as a positive aspect and as one of the main advantages of living in a housing enclave. The interviewees consider private security as a necessity due to the security problems in Istanbul and housing enclaves as helping to manage this problem. The excerpts below exemplify this content.

“The main service we receive is security. We live in a closed area. If you have children in a cosmopolitan place like Istanbul security is important.”  
(Interviewee no. Res-002)

“I think it [private security] is necessary considering the conditions in Istanbul.” (Interviewee no. Res-016)

“You know no strangers enter [the project]. This comforts us. You don’t need to worry about the children. It [private security] is a useful, nice thing.” (Interviewee no. Res-006)

Some interviewees also mentioned that the private security is necessary due to the location of the project (located at periphery of a problematic neighbourhood), or density of the projects (considering the number of residents)

“I think private security is necessary since the project is not located in a vibrant area. It is not a deserted location, but it is a very large project, so you do not know who comes and goes. When you live in a small place [referring to project, neighbourhood or an apartment], you know who is from the project and who is not. But here, since it is too big, I cannot know this. Therefore, you feel anxious, but since there is private security at the gates, you know not everyone is allowed to enter [the project].”  
(Interviewee no. Res-013)

85% of the interviewees argue that they feel safer living in the project than in their previous neighbourhoods. They relate this with having private security, surveillance, and the social class of the residents (“profile of residents”, “quality of people”).

Secondly, open green spaces are the facilities the interviewees use most. The interviewees are positive about the open green areas in the projects and happy with the maintenance of these areas as well. Some of them emphasise the scarcity or inaccessibility of these types of areas in the city. The interviewees with children emphasise the convenience and security of accessing these places in the confines of the projects. Most of the interviewees use these spaces for taking a walk, relaxing, taking children to the park and playground, and socialising.

Thirdly, sport areas and centres are among the services and facilities which are important to the project residents. While open swimming pools, and sport areas like basketball pitches or tennis courts are provided in the projects without any additional payment, this is different for sport centres and closed swimming pools that are parts of sport centres. While in some projects, memberships to the sport centres are included in the monthly payment of the projects, in other cases project residents are required to buy memberships. The residents are usually offered discounts. In some cases, non-residents can also buy membership from the sport centres located in the project areas.

The interviewees comment positively about sport centres, however, with one exception, they do not use the centres regularly. Most of them relate this with the fact that they are busy. Some of them claimed that they have health or personal conditions that prevent them from using these places.

Fourthly, one of the services the interviewees use is maintenance services such as plumbers, joiners, and repairers. These services are provided by the private management of the projects. When needed, the residents call the management of the project, and the management send the staff to handle the problem. In return for these services, in some projects residents pay extra, while in others it is included in the monthly payment.

“I use technical services [maintenance services] ... My oven was not working. It was almost 11 – 12 at night. I called security. They said they would direct me to someone from technical services. They came and fixed it. They work 24-hours-[a day]” (Interviewee no. Res-013)

“There is something called a technical office. It is open 7/24 for any [technical/maintenance] issue at home. You do not have the problem of



finding a handy man. We use this [service]. I even called them to change the light bulb” (Interviewee no. Res-014)

The interviewees also use the commercial services located in the confines of the projects such as restaurants, convenient stores, dry cleaning, tailor, car wash, shoe repairer. The management of the projects do not provide these services directly. The commercial units are rented out to service providers. Some interviewees claimed that due to the high prices of these services they do not use those located in the project areas.

To conclude, the analysis shows that this exclusive provision provides convenience and accessibility of these services to the residents; on the other hand, the residents were very well aware that the access rights to these facilities and services are part of the commodity package. As a result, this provision fosters the deepening of commodification of urban space through the facilities and services per se, as well as the spatial experiences attached to them.

“We have to pay for the services we receive. The swimming pool, green area, cleaning, carpark, etc. .... I pay for these services. The management of the project provides these in return for my payment.” (Interviewee no. Res-019)

The interviewees are well aware of the private provision of the services in the projects and mentioned the salaries of the security staff, cost of maintenance of open-green spaces and sport facilities while talking about their monthly payments to the projects (see excerpts above). This demonstrates the normalisation of private provision of key urban infrastructure. Firstly, the results show the normalisation of private security and commodification of access to safe and secure living areas through this practice. Considering living in a secure environment as a commodity is critical in terms of expansion of commodity realm into the temporal dimension and, therefore, spatial experience. Secondly, the results show that interviewees are aware of the fact that the access rights to the open-green spaces and sport facilities are part of the commodity package. They were explicit about the commodity form of the access rights to the facilities.

“You should consider these green areas as areas you have got in return for money” (Interviewee no. Res-002)

“We pay 136TL (as montly payment). In this amount, the swimming pool, price of 24-hour security, three gates, price of cleaning are included. Plus you use all the green areas.” (Interviewee no. Res-012)

Lastly, the interviewees framed maintenance and technical services as a bonus of living in a project. These services are ususally provided as market commodities. In the case of the branded housing projects, the difference is packaging as many services as possible in the commodity package. This is critical to the claim that the projects are places that make everyday life easy for their residents.

Most of the interviewees are willing to pay the monthly payment in return for these services and access to these facilities. One interviewee criticised this situation (excerpt below), but s/he accepts it anyway.

“We pay this because we have to. I wish we did not pay for these services and still got them. Actually, there is cafeteria which is rented out, so that rent could cover the cost of management [of services and facilities]. But, this is a profit oriented business run centrally by the X development company... There is no way out, if you live here, it means you accept this.” (Interviewee no. Res-017)

The results of this analysis ground the argument of the expansion of commodity realm into the temporal dimension through the commodification of urban experience via commodifying the access rights to these services and facilities.

### **Change in Everyday Life in the Projects**

After moving into the branded housing projects, the main change in the everyday life of the interviewees is that they spend more time in the project areas rather than going out to a place in the city. However, some interviewees also mentioned that although they spend more time in the project than the city, the time they spend outdoors has increased. This is related to the characteristics of the interviewees’ previous neighbourhoods as

well as the convenience of access to open green spaces in the projects. To illustrate, in the first excerpt below, the interviewee explained that in their previous neighbourhood they used to go out more to socialise since there are many recreational areas in their previous neighbourhood, while in the second excerpt another interviewee explained that in the project they spend more time outdoors than they used to in their previous neighbourhood.

“Back then, when we used to live at Kozyatagi, it was close to Bagdat Street [a well-known high street on the Anatolian side of Istanbul], Bostanci seaside and Cadde Bostan seaside. We used to walk to Bagdat Street to have a cup of tea or coffee, or to the seaside on summer evenings without bringing the car. Here, of course, it is not possible. You have to take your car [to go such places], and there is traffic at the evenings, so you say ‘Forget it, let’s stay at home!’ What happens in the Project X is that we have a walk in the project. We have our tea or coffee by the pool.” (Interviewee no. Res-006)

“While living in my previous neighbourhood, after coming home from work, I was always at home. Now you say, let’s take our tea and have some tea outside, or let’s have a walk outside [referring to open spaces in the project].” (Interviewee no. Res-007)

Some interviewees relate this with the secure environment that the projects provide for them. They said that they feel secure in the open spaces of the projects; therefore, they use them more than the ones in their previous neighbourhoods.

“At the time we got married, we used to live in Esenler district. There, if I wished to go out in the evenings, and my partner said he was tired, we would stay at home. Now, even if it is 10 – 11 o’clock at night, no matter what, I take my earphones and have a walk in the project.” (Interviewee no. Res-011)

## **Social Relations and Family**

Interviewees presented mixed experiences of socialising. Those with children spend more time in common areas and get to know people through these experiences, and some interviewees claimed that there is a social environment; however, people keep a distance from each other to show respect for each other's personal space. Other interviewees complained about a lack of neighbourhood relationships in their projects.

Most of the interviewees with children or expecting children emphasised the role their children played in their choice to live in a housing enclave.

“Our choice to live in a project is about our children. We moved to a project when my daughter reached age 6. [The project] is more secure. She can play in the garden [referring to common green spaces]. She is freer. Otherwise, in a flat [referring to a flat located in a neighbourhood], there is no chance that she can go out and play [in the street]. She could be more social here. ... We moved to such a life [referring to life in a project area] for children.” (Interviewee no. Res-017)

The interviewees highlighted two aspects regarding children: access to open green spaces (playgrounds, parks, etc) where children can enjoy and security concerns. Therefore, interviewees consider the projects as providers of these two aspects for their children.

The results of the analysis show that the interviewees associate social relations in the project areas mostly together with the services and facilities provided in the areas. In addition, the interviewees frame living in a project as a different experience from living in a 'normal' neighbourhood in terms of building social relations, which fosters the discursive formation of the branded housing projects as special places (see Chapter 8). The next section discusses the mediation and control of everyday life in the projects, which is critical for expansion of commodity realm into the temporal dimension.

### ***7.2.2) Mediation and Control of Everyday life***

The projects are managed by private management companies<sup>26</sup>. This includes both management of the buildings, social and sport facilities and open spaces. The private management of the projects is also responsible for municipal services such as landscaping, garbage collection, maintenance of the hard and softscape of open spaces, but they are provided privately in the projects. Most of the interviewees are satisfied with private management of the projects and with the existing management. Three interviewees prefer elected committees. However, as the following excerpt illustrates, some interviewees relate the necessity of professional management with the scale of the projects:

“There are 3300 houses in 36 blocks [in the project]. Without professional management, it is not possible [to manage this place]. It is not possible to elect a manager among the residents, like this [the project] is a three-floor-apartment block. The place is large. There is security, management of swimming pool, landscaping, ... It is not possible for the residents to handle all of these.” (Interviewee no. Res-014)

One interviewee mentioned the problems with continuous control by developer companies over the management of the projects:

“In such places [referring the projects] the management continues with Brand X [referring the developer company]. Brand X gives the management of swimming pool, cafeteria, etc to another company, but it is a company Brand X selected. The residents do not have any control over this. For example, if there are people who are not happy with the management of the cafeteria, they do not have any chance to change it freely. The residents need to apply to the Brand X management and demand the change. This demand is either taken into consideration or not.” (Interviewee no. Res-017)

Although this interviewee points out the problems of continuous control by the developer, s/he also prefers private management of the project. The results of this analysis show that the residents support private management and provision of key urban infrastructure and control by a private company of this provision (despite stating

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<sup>26</sup> Two projects are managed by a committee of elected residents, but the system of management is the same.

controversial points regarding this practice). This is critical for production of social consent for the private provision of services and facilities as market commodities (see Chapter 8 for a detailed discussion) and, therefore, expansion of commodity realm into spatial experience.

The projects apply certain rules to regulate everyday life in the projects, which vary from regulations for the use of open spaces to frequency of garbage collection. The interviewees responded to mediation via these rules in a positive way. While some interviewees argued that rules are necessary because of the density of the projects, the interviewees argue that in a shared living environment, there should be rules, which recalls Ballard's Highrise: "Living in high-rises required a special type of behaviour" (Ballard, 2012).

"Having rules is a positive thing, especially for the shared places like this. In fact, I can't imagine a life without rules." (Interviewee no. Res-015)

"I think there must be rules in such environments. If there are no rules, everybody does a different thing. S/he can hang carpets, or shake carpets like you are living in a neighbourhood." (Interviewee no. Res-008)

Some interviewees associate the following rules with having cultural capital as shown in the quotation below:

"I think in society, there should be rules, so it is in the project. If people consider themselves modern, social, educated and experience, they should know they have to follow the rules." (Interviewee no. Res-007)

The interviewees, with two exceptions, complained about other project residents for not following the rules. They are not happy about this situation, and consider this as a violation of their rights:

"If you follow the rules, then life is beautiful. ... But, if the rules are not followed, let's say, if people do not park properly, it means they abuse your rights. Then you cannot find a place to park your car. ... If we are sensitive

to each other, then living in a project is beautiful. Otherwise, it is a torture.”  
(Interviewee no. Res-017)

Therefore, according to the residents, people who do not abide by the limitations in using a particular area or service, they violate others' rights. Two-thirds of the interviewees said that the rules in the projects must be tightened, while one interviewee thinks there are too many rules in the project.

As part of this regulation, security staff plays a mediation role in case of any issues. The mediation via security staff is much appreciated by the project residents. The interviewees stated that if they saw anyone not following the rules, they would call the security and let them handle the situation (rather than facing their neighbours regarding the issue). One interviewee stated his/her reasoning about this behaviour: “because in such mass housing areas, it is not good to argue one to one, since you don't know their reaction, because you don't know these people”. However, the interviewees also complained that security does not have any authority to enforce the rules on the residents. One interviewee clearly pointed out this problem: “in such a situation, either the security or the management warns them, but cannot enforce any sanctions, since they do not have any authority to do so”. Therefore, security can only warn those who are not following the rules. This is a question of the mediation role of the security staff in the area as well as a question of legitimacy of the rules and regulations.

“They are not following the rules much. Although the management tries to apply the rules, our people do not want to follow. Still they want to shake out the carpets [from the windows or balcony]. You can see a carpet shaken on your head like you are living in a normal neighbourhood.” (Interviewee no. Res-014)

The results of this analysis show that consent of the project residents were produced for this mediated and controlled everyday life. While the residents argue that the rules and regulations in these large and crowded living areas are necessary, the developers' control over their everyday life is normalised through this practice. This normalisation presents a fetishized version of everyday experience in the projects, which is critical for expansion of the commodity realm into spatial experience. From this perspective, fetishized and alienated everyday experience leads to compartmentalisation of spatial

experiences, which allows the developers to package these experiences as parts of commodity packages.

### **7.3) Conclusion**

This chapter aimed to investigate the spatial practice in the branded housing projects in relation with dynamics of commodification of urban space. As discussed in Chapter 3, the research argues that commodification of urban space is deepening under neoliberal urbanisation while producing its enabling mechanisms. This deepening is realised through expansion of the commodity realm into spatial practice (the urban space and experience). Therefore, the analysis of spatial practice in branded housing projects demonstrates these commodified practices in the project areas. Firstly, the spatial pattern of the projects presents a segregated and introverted enclave pattern where both spatial and visual permeability are limited. The projects also present a pattern whereby provision of land uses is exclusive and controlled while providing variety of land uses within their confines. This level of segregation and control over spatial production allows the development companies to package a slice of urban space as a commodity for the market. Secondly, the analysis of the spatial experience in the projects shows that this experience directly related to the land uses provided in the projects. The interviews also show that the spatial experience in the projects is highly mediated and controlled, which fosters commodification of urban space through fetishising and alienating everyday experience.

This chapter showed the realisation of deepening of commodification of urban space through spatial practice, whereas the next chapter focuses on the second enabling mechanism for this deepening, and explores the discursive formation of the branded housing projects. .



## **CHAPTER 8 - ANALYSIS OF THE DISCURSIVE FORMATION OF THE PHENOMENON OF BRANDED HOUSING PROJECTS**

“The arcades thus provide a concrete example of the moment in which the relation between capitalism and the world of dreams is revealed.” Ferris (2004, p. 116) on The Arcades Projects of Walter Benjamin

Benjamin’s work on Parisian Arcades reveals “the relation between capitalism and the world of dreams” (Ferris, 2004, p. 116) through presenting a comprehensive picture of a spatial example - the arcades. Exploring this relationship is intricate considering the capitalist relations and subtlety of the world of dreams. This research proposes a theoretical framework for investigating the discursive formation of branded housing projects which is also a product of capitalist relations and subtlety of the world of dreams. The research proposes that consideration of Lefebvrian production of space and Gramscian theory of hegemony together provides a theoretical base for this investigation. The two dynamics of production of space – representations of space and representational space – have dialectical relationships with the production of common sense and social consent around branded housing projects through producing their discursive formation. The appropriation of representational space by the effect of representations of space is critical for the production of social consent. However, as Gramsci points out, this relationship is never one way. While producing representations of space, hegemon groups also embrace the values of subordinates. Therefore, this research proposes a hegemonic relationship in the production of discursive formation rather than a dominating or colonising one (see Chapter 3 for details).

In this case, the analysis of the discursive formation of branded housing projects through the dialectical relationship between representations of space and representational space aims to investigate the appropriation of the world of dreams and representations and the role of this appropriation in the deepening of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation.

According to this framework, the discursive formation of branded housing projects was analysed based on two groups and four sources: representations of space through the analyses of the news articles and promotional materials (print advertisements and project catalogues); and representational space through the analyses of the views of residents and non-residents on branded housing projects.

Firstly, by analysing news articles and promotional materials, this chapter aims to explore the framing of the projects through these documents (representations of space). Secondly, by analysis built on the residents' views on the projects and the views from random sampling of the general population, the research aims to explore the common sense of branded housing projects and the social *consent* which allows the expansion of these commodified living environments (through analysis of representational space). The chapter therefore addresses research questions 2.5 and 2.6 (see Table 1.1).

### **8.1) Discursive Formation of Branded Housing through Mass Media**

“Neither economics (e.g. money controls the media) nor culture (e.g. people's values shape the media) contains the only key to unlock our understanding of communication.” (Mosco, 2009, p. 156)

As discussed in Chapter 4, discourse produced in the media content was explored through the analysis of 181 news articles by reviewing online databases of the four most highly circulated newspapers (Sabah, Hurriyet, Posta, Zaman) for 6 branded housing projects (Agaoglu My World Atasehir, Avrupa Konutlari Atakent 3, Bizim Evler 4, Ispartakule Project, Kent Plus Atasehir, Soyak Evostar) published between 2003 and 2014, and the IFEA newspaper clippings archive for 43 Emlak GYO projects to widen the sample.

#### ***8.1.1) Adaptation of Dominance-Resistance Model***

Analysis of the dynamics of production of media content provides clues on the dynamics of production of social consent and common sense (in Gramscian terms). As discussed in Chapter 3, according to Gramsci, common sense is a part of the production of hegemony of the ruling class over the working classes by imposing its own views on society. The analysis of the news articles provides findings about whose views are

represented in news content, therefore, whose views are enacted in the discursive formation of branded housing projects.

In order to investigate the power relationships shaping discourse production in the news, Kumar's dominance-resistance model was used as the analysis method by firstly identifying whose views are represented in the news content through main reference persons of the news articles, and secondly by reviewing the ways of news collection (including the collection method, the location or event of the news collected, and the collection agent of the news).

### **Source Analysis**

Sources referred to in the sample news articles are categorised under 23 groups (see APPENDIX V), through the analysis based on reviewing the news article texts and identifying the people or institutions who are quoted, or whose views are included in the texts or whose releases and documents are used as news sources (see APPENDIX V for details).

The category with the highest number of references is the **CEO of the Developer category**. Nearly half of the total number of references corresponds to this category. Alternative sources such as the project residents, Chamber of Architects, Chamber of City Planners and NGOs are only referred to 5 times in 181 news articles. The findings demonstrate that the news contents are heavily based on references and sources among the key actors of the projects such as developer companies and Emlak GYO and TOKI.

The source analysis identifies the number of news sources in each article, which is defined as the **reference density** in the research. According to the findings, one third of the news articles include no references, while nearly half of the news articles include one reference in the news text. When crossed-checked, 78% of the news articles with one reference refer to private and public actors in the projects. The news articles with two references present a similar pattern. This shows that the news content is based on one-sided views, and even the news with more than one source mostly refers to similar ones – e.g. from actors in the projects. These findings support the Gramscian approach to common sense, which considers that the represented views in the news articles are

the views of the capitalist class, state officials and experts (see APPENDIX V for details).

### **News Collection Methods**

According to Kumar (2009), since news production is an industry aiming to collect profits, newspapers have a tendency to collect news by using cheaper methods (e.g. using company releases, press meeting attendances, and PR department releases) than investigative journalism. In addition, by producing news articles based on releases, the newspapers avoid covering any controversial issues about the news topics, which creates a safe zone for the papers (e.g. no court cases). Therefore, according to the Dominance/Resistance model, the way how the news contents are collected (e.g. news collection methods, news collection event or location and news collection agent) is an important indicator for understanding the power relationships in the production of news content. Kumar also criticises contemporary journalism for being event-based, which is easier and cheaper than investigative journalism. In this type of news collection, reporters are sent to certain locations or events where there will be possible statements or releases, such as meetings or courts.

For this analysis, the news collection methods were reviewed in the sample articles. In half of the articles, it wasn't possible to identify how the news contents were collected through reviewing the articles. Among those news articles for which collection methods were identified 20% are based on meetings, ceremonies or press conference attendances, while 39% of these are based on various documents. While the names of the reporters are stated in only one third of the articles, there is no reference to the collection agents in nearly half of the news articles. This supports the use of ready made content distributed by developer companies, PR department or press releases of public institutions (see APPENDIX V for details).

These findings demonstrate that the content of the articles presents the views of the capitalist class, state officials and experts by being based on ready-made content, releases and event-based journalism.

In addition, the articles were reviewed according to the newspaper sections in which they were published, in order to investigate the presentation of the news articles to the

reader. The majority of the news articles were presented in the economy sections, which demonstrates that housing projects are considered in relation to the economy rather than to life, the city or even real estate by the newspapers (see APPENDIX V for details).

These analyses provide findings on the production of news content and delivery to the audience. These two groups of findings contribute to the analysis of representation of space by revealing the actors of representation (news references) and means of representation (newspaper sections). The following sections focus on the news content itself.

### **8.1.2) Quantitative Content Analysis**

In order to find out the most frequent concepts and themes in the news articles, a qualitative content analysis was undertaken via producing a word frequency list by NVivo software. By identifying the most frequent words, the lexical density of the news articles were presented. The list was narrowed down to 0.1 of weighted percentage of word frequency, and 71 words were identified as the most frequent words in the news content (see APPENDIX VI for the complete list).

Firstly, the list of most frequent words shows that nearly one fifth of these are related to economy / monetary value. The top 10% of the most frequent words were identified as *thousand, project, house, Turkish Lira, flat, percentage* and *the most*<sup>27</sup>. Nearly half of the top 10% most frequent words are about economy / monetary value. Secondly, distinctive adjectives (such as important, precious, special, good, tall / high, big) and superlatives are among the most frequent words. The discourse frames projects as superior to, or distinctive, places from the other projects or the rest of the urban pattern.

The most frequent word list was also used to identify the concepts for qualitative analysis of the textual content, in addition to the key concepts which the researcher identified while reviewing the news articles.

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<sup>27</sup> In Turkish (respectively): bin, proje, konut, Turk Lirasi, daire, yüzde, en

### 8.1.3) *Qualitative Content Analysis of the News Text*

Qualitative content analysis was undertaken via coding the news articles inductively. Although subsampling is a method designed to create inductive codes (See Boyatzis, 1998), in this research, the inductive codes were created by reviewing all the sample articles. During reviewing the news articles for the Dominance/Resistance model, key concepts were identified and then used to create inductive codes. These key concepts were also used to run queries to identify related content, in addition to running queries for the most frequent words. As a result, thematic codes were created and the news articles were reviewed according to these codes. Through this analysis, 7 thematic codes were identified as: branded housing, the most, the gain/benefit, home ownership, the speed, services and facilities, and economic development.

The first theme is '**branded housing**'. Branded housing is framed through emphasising being branded, associating branded housing with quality and luxury housing, and identifying branded housing as 'more than just housing'. Firstly, being branded is associated with provision of certain standards for quality. The quality standards are either associated with particular brands, or quality standards of previous projects are shown as evidence for forthcoming projects (excerpt below). Within this discourse, having similar qualities with other projects of the same brand is presented as a positive aspect, which has similarities with branding the consumer goods.

“The project has not much difference with other Avrupa Konutlari [projects].” (Kara, 2011a).

The development companies apply different branding strategies for the projects. While in some texts having a certain brand is presented as a positive aspect (as in the excerpt below) explicitly, in other cases, it is conveyed latently.

“In housing, from now on, people choose a brand. We, the Avrupa Konutlari brand, become the brand of quality and trust in housing. Every project we founded elevates the Avrupa Konutlari brand.” (Sabah, 2010a)

Self-avowing themselves as *branded housing* projects is another strategy the projects apply. The type of presentation varies according to the company. To illustrate, while

the developer of Avrupa Konutlari puts emphasis on ‘being the brand of housing’ and the value of the ‘Avrupa Konutlari brand’, the developer of Kent Plus uses the ‘Plus concept’.

“Are you going to apply the same concept in Mimaroba?

Yes we will apply the same concept, the ‘plus’ concept. What is this plus concept? To create things that will add value to people’s lives. That is to say, from material to construction technique, using everything that the A group uses, but to create homes for the price that the B group can buy. What is luxury? Italian kitchen, elevator made in Germany, imported ceramics...”

(Sabah, 2005)

Secondly, in the news content, the term *branded housing* is interchangeably used with *quality housing* and *luxury housing*. While the projects are framed in relation with the needs of the residents (such as access to services and facilities or a decent living environment), the term ‘luxury housing’ has different connotations related to rarity, comfort and inessentiality. With connotations of expensiveness, the use of the term ‘luxury housing’ also produces contradictions with the emphasis on ease of payment and affordability.

“Süleyman Çetinsaya, who points out that many construction firms produce ‘branded houses’, said that through this [provision] earthquake resistant, quality and high-living-standard-houses are produced, and the citizens make use of this.” (Hurriyet, 2010)

According to this framing, branded housing companies produce quality housing which is better than the rest of the housing stock. The discourse contributes to the production of social consent for branded housing projects, thus, if it is desired to have more quality housing, it is logical to support such branded housing developments. This discourse resonates with the interviewees as well. One interviewee clearly stated that “each neighbourhood should be demolished and rebuilt as a branded housing project”. S/he continued that s/he is aware of the fact that this is not the best solution, but according to him/her it is the best possible solution to the urban problems for now.

Thirdly, branded housing is framed either explicitly or latently as a provision of *something more than just housing*. To illustrate, the excerpt below clearly frames the projects as packages of commodities in addition to housing.

“From now on, while buying a house, the having a ‘roof over my head’ period is over. Branded housing projects add many activities from social facilities to pitches where professional sports can be played, even to hobby rooms, to their projects while selling the houses.” (Taş, 2012)

In some examples, the companies frame their products as living areas and emphasize that their product is not a housing unit, but a living area. The relationship of this conceptualisation with commodification of urban space is more explicit in some news contents such as “we do not sell a house, we sell a living area, and give the flats as giveaways” (Yoldas, 2010a). Framing branded housing projects as commodity packages of houses and facilities enhances the commodification of urban experience and access rights to these facilities.

The second theme is **‘the most’**. This discourse presents projects as superior to other neighbourhoods of the city and fosters idealisation of the projects by using superlative with positive adjectives (e.g. “We see My World as the most important project in Europe.” (Dunya, 2008)). The facilities provided in the projects are framed as extreme versions of their own kind as well. Therefore, living in the project or buying a house in the project gives the resident rights to access world class facilities such as “Turkey’s biggest sport and life centre” (Yoldas, 2010b). These contents produce a discourse of extremity and affirmation.

The third theme is **‘the gain’**. The branded housing projects are presented as developments which will be beneficial for several parties such as *target audience* (future residents, buyers, customers), *public sector or state*, the *surrounding area* (surrounding environment, district, city), and the *country’s economy*. In other words, according to this discourse, building such projects is a win-win situation. This is an important aspect of the discourse contributing to the production of social consent to these projects.



Firstly, the projects are framed as good investments for their target audience<sup>28</sup> in terms of economic gain and in terms of increasing their life quality. Secondly, in the texts it is claimed that the public sector (or the state) will benefit from these projects via collecting profits. The amount of profit the state collects is emphasised and framed as a public benefit. This discourse fosters the claim that the production of these projects has a public interest; therefore, it contributes to the production of social consent for the projects. The excerpt below exemplifies this framing:

“The state gets unbelievable profit from land which it may not sell even for 100 million without doing anything. With the profit it gained from here, it provides services at which private initiative aims but cannot accomplish.”  
(Cumhuriyet, 2006)

In addition, the state claims that the income earned from branded housing projects is used to fund affordable/social housing projects. Therefore, it is creating funds for affordable housing for the working classes. An interesting example in this discourse is that relating TOKI with Robin Hood (see excerpt below). This controversial connotation contributes to the production of social consent by framing building branded housing projects for the ‘rich’ as a means of ‘wealth transfer’ in favour of the ‘poor’. It also connotes a ‘heroic’ stance for the role of the state as the carer of the poor while attaining for the private developers the role of charitable enterprises. This framing is the opposite of criticism that relates to these developments with the privatisation of public land, and *dispossession* of the public.

“We are being Robin Hood, the poor become homeowners!  
What do you do next? Do you distribute what you have got from the rich to the poor?  
Yes we do. We use the money coming from luxury housing for constructing 153 thousand houses in total in 400 worksites in 81 provinces and almost 200 districts in Turkey.” (Kadak, 2005)

Thirdly, it is claimed that the surrounding area (surrounding environment, district, or city) will benefit from these projects, since they are developments adding value to the

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<sup>28</sup> In the texts, the target audience is identified as buyers, consumers, clients, citizens, homeowners, residents, renters, and people who would like to be homeowners.

surrounding environment. Fuzzy language containing assumptions and taken for granted definitions is used. It is not clear how the benefit will be realised.

“Elmas emphasises that when 8-10 branded housing project producers develop projects in a district as part of urban transformation, the value [referring to economic value] of the district increases by more than 35-40% of its current value... .. Projects are becoming an attraction centre while they also develop the surroundings” (Kara, 2011b)

“The Chairman of TOKI Erdoğan Bayraktar ... said that ‘Avrupa Konutları Atakent 3 project is a project which will add great value to Istanbul.’” (Sabah, 2011)

This discourse contributes to the production of social consent by claiming that the areas in the city other than the projects themselves will benefit from the development of the branded projects.

Fourthly, building branded housing projects is framed as a positive input to sustain economic development. The discourse is used to veil the profit-orientedness of the projects and connote positive remarks for the practice of the construction industry.

“While remarking that they would like to support all sectors, it is extremely important to keep the ball rolling, sustaining the production and producing employment and they work with this approach. Ağaoğlu expressed that in the realization of the projects, the will to succeed is at the forefront rather than commercial profit.” (Hurriyet, 2009)

As in the excerpt above, the projects are framed as engines to sustain economic development; therefore, such a discourse contributes to the production of social consent for the practice.

In addition, a charitable discourse is used in relation with the developer companies and the projects. The companies are framed as creating benefits, advantages, win-win situations for the people, the public or the state, for the urban environment and for the economy.

“Agaoglu, who states that houses built in the previous period are not habitable considering the material used, said that ‘now we are creating a chance to have quality houses with accessible and affordable prices’”.  
(Dunya, 2008)

Framing the development companies as organisations whose *raison d'être* is not for-profit veils the high profits companies gain from these projects, and contributes to the production of social consent for the branded housing projects.

The fourth theme is **‘home ownership’**. In the news content, the term ‘home owners’ is used interchangeably with ‘house owners’, ‘flat owners’ and ‘deed owners’<sup>29</sup>. The targeted audience is named as investors, consumers, customers, people who would like to be home/ flat/ house owners. The definitions suggest both economic and social aspects of homeownership.

In the texts, becoming a homeowner is presented as a desired situation. It is framed as a goal that has to be reached. In some texts, being a renter is framed as something negative and something to be saved from or rescued from (see excerpts below)

“Our advice to people is to become homeowners, and escape from rentals.”  
(Hurriyet, 2011a)

“Çetinsaya, who stated that there is no-one who couldn't pay bank credit instalments so far, said that ‘40 percent of Turkish people settle in rental houses. It is needed to save these [people] from the rentals.’” (Balta, 2011)

In this respect, the projects are framed as developments that create chances for people to become homeowners. In some cases, the campaign or payment models of the projects are presented as inescapable opportunities or chances for people such as “the last chances to become homeowners” (Tas, 2012). As a result, the discourse that frames projects as developments creating opportunities for people contributes to the production of social consent for the projects.

The fifth theme is **‘the speed’**. It is framed through the content of the speed of construction, the early submission of houses and the speed of sales. The speed of

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<sup>29</sup> In Turkish (respectively): ev sahibi, konut sahibi, daire sahibi, tapu sahibi.

construction and early submission of houses are mostly discussed in relation with each other. The speed of construction is framed as part of the success of the company.

“The company officials, who stated that they completed the first three projects with early submissions, said that early submission is on their agenda for the new houses which they had already started finishing.” (Zaman, 2012)

The emphasis on the speed of construction is presented in relation with homeownership and investment return. When the houses are submitted to the buyers, the new homeowners can settle in the projects and pay instalments like paying their rents or the investors receive their investment property. The speed of sales, however, is mostly presented in relation with the success of the projects. It also implies a high demand for the projects and that the projects are desirable places to live.

“People buy houses for two reasons. Either for investment or for settling in. Submitting [the houses] after a long time period does not make either group happy. Thus, in Atasehir, we backdated the submission date which was 36 months to 18 months.” (Evrans, 2005)

“The important point here is to shorten rent-paying time for those who have bought the houses by building quickly and with quality and quick submissions.” (Sabah, 2010b)

This discourse includes both aspects of exchange value and use value in relation with speed of sales and construction. Both contribute to the production of social consent for the projects: projects need to be built fast, so the renters can move into their own houses (use value) and buyers can get their profits as soon as possible (exchange value).

The sixth theme is **‘the services and facilities’**. Services and facilities are discussed in relation with the theme ‘more than housing’. The projects are presented as whole packages of commodities including housing, services and facilities. In the news articles, the services and facilities are not framed as amenities exclusive to the project residents. In some articles, it is explained how the access rights to these facilities can be bought by non-residents as well.

The services and facilities are listed as amenities in the news content. The texts cover the content of the commodity packages, which presents to the buyers clearly what they are going to acquire in return for their payments. In some articles, these lists are presented together with the campaigns and sales conditions for the projects, while in some the quantity of the areas allocated for services and facilities (such as ‘largeness’ of the area allocated for a particular use) is emphasised in the news articles:

“My World, with green areas, open-air and indoor swimming pools, playgrounds, walking tracks, 30-thousand-square metre entertainment and shopping centre, botanical gardens, basketball fields, meeting rooms, enclosed carparks and security services, provides all the social facilities of a contemporary city.” (“Agaoglu’ndan tapu gibi teklif,” n.d.)

Two types of facility are particularly emphasised in the news content: green areas and sport facilities. This emphasis is related with the scarcity of these infrastructures in Istanbul. The discourse offers a practical and exclusive solution for this problem for those who can afford to live in the projects.

The sixth theme is ‘**the economic development**’. This content is closely related to the *gain* theme. In the news content, the economic aspects of the projects are emphasised in relation with the investment, big capital and value-creation and the country’s economic development (together with the economic crisis).

Firstly, the notion of the projects as individual investment tools is emphasised through the news content. Housing is framed as the most convenient and traditional investment tool for individuals. In addition, the accessibility and affordability of the projects are supported by extensive content about discount and launching campaigns and so-called low interest rates the companies offer. Via this content, the projects are framed as good investment opportunities for the buyers as well as being affordable for future residents. Secondly, the projects are associated with big capital. In this discourse, the emphasis is on the value the projects produce, rather than the capital invested in the projects. Thirdly, the discourse claims that the projects will support the economy by attracting foreign capital to the country. Therefore, developing these projects is good for the state and the society. This claim is supported with many references to CEOs of the

companies (in relation with a possible change in the law which will allow them to sell housing units to foreign investors, especially for those from Gulf countries).

“Let’s look at Spain and France, and sell the foreigners 1 million houses ... CEO of Ađaođlu Companies Group Ali Ađaođlu said that the best investment to make for Turkey is housing sales to foreigners. Agaoglu, who said that this kind of investment will directly contribute a very important value to the economy of the country, underlined that this will also expand locomotive sectors like construction and tourism.” (Hurriyet, 2007)

Fourthly, the role of branded housing projects in the economic development of the country is emphasised through the content about the construction sector’s role in Turkey’s economy, the economic crisis and the projects’ (economic) contribution to the public sector. The construction sector is framed as an engine for Turkey’s economy, and any practice supporting the construction sector is presented as a positive input for economic development (including the branded housing projects). Given the time period on which the research focuses (2003-2014), the economic crisis is an important discussion point in the news content.

“Rahvanli said ‘The real estate sector is shown as the reason for the crisis. However, the reasons for the crisis are financial markets, derivative products and toxic values. Therefore, the way out from the crisis will again be the real estate sector’.” (Hurriyet, 2009)

#### ***8.1.4) Analysis of the Visuals Accompanying the News Articles***

The visuals accompanying the news articles were analysed by undertaking an inductive content analysis. The visuals were reviewed according to their presentation (consisting of the mode of representation of the building, project or district, and colours) and their content (of spatial aspects and of represented people) as two analysis categories (see APPENDIX VI).

More than two-thirds of the total visuals present representations of the projects (either renders or models). This is to be expected considering that at the time of publication, the projects were either in the state of being launched or under construction. The

AĞAOĞLU ŞİRKETLER GRUBU YÖNETİM KURULU BAŞKANI ALI AĞAOĞLU

## 'Krizde rağmen 3.5 milyar dolar yatırım yapacağız'

Ağaoğlu Şirketler Grubu Yönetim Kurulu Başkanı Ali Ağaoğlu, "Kriz deyip yerimizde oturursak, krizi tetikleriz" dedi. Ağaoğlu, 2009 sonuna kadar 3.5 milyar dolarlık yatırım yapacaklarını açıkladı



### EKONOMİ SERVİSİ

Ağaoğlu Şirketler Grubu Yönetim Kurulu Başkanı Ali Ağaoğlu, dünya ekonomisinde çok sıkıntılı bir dönem yaşandığını, Türkiye'nin de kaçınılmaz olarak bu durumdandığını belirterek, "Krizi nasıl avantaja dönüştürürüz?" diye düşünmek gerektiğini söyledi. Emlak sektöründe büyük fırsatların bulunduğunu kaydeden Ağaoğlu, "Ben konuşmaktan değil, icraat göstermekten yanayım. Kriz deyip yerimizde oturursak, krizi tetikleriz" dedi. Ağaoğlu şunları söyledi: "Ülkemizin hâlâ büyük bir potansiyeli var. 2001 krizinde 5 konut projesine başlamıştık ve sonuçta büyük bir başarı yakaladık. Şimdi de yeni projelerle krizi avantaja dönüştüreceğiz. 2009 yılının sonuna kadar yaklaşık 3.5 milyar dolar yatırım yapacağız." Konut, otel ve enerji yatırımlarına hız vereceklerini kaydeden Ağaoğlu şöyle konuştu: "Bahçelievler'de 1500, Ayazağa'da 1100 ve Doğu Ataşehir'de 1000 konutluk projelerimizin değeri 2.5 - 3 milyar doları buluyor. Çamlıca, Omraniye, Seyrantepe, Ataşehir, Yeniköy ve Merter'de de otel yatırımlarımız olacak. Seyrantepe'de proje çalışmalarımız sürüyor. Ayrıca, enerji sektörüne 640 milyon dolar yatırım yapacağız. Bu kapsamda Mersin'de bir rüzgar enerjisi santralimiz faaliyete başladı." Körfez ülkelerinde büyük sermaye birikiminin



bulunduğunu anlatan Ağaoğlu, şunları söyledi: "Bu yatırımları çekebilirsek krizin etkilerini de en aza indirebiliriz. Türkiye'de çok büyük konut ihtiyacı var. Biz de her kriz döneminde olduğu gibi yeni projelerimizi satışa çıkarıyoruz. Ataşehir'deki 3 bin konutluk My World projemizin son etabı olan Southside'in satışını iki ay erkene alarak kriz ortamında da başarılı olabileceğimizin mesajını vermek istedik."

Emlak fiyatlarının çok şıktığı şeklindeki yorumlara katılmadığını belirten Ağaoğlu, fiyatların hala düşük seviyede olduğunu ve daha fazla yükselme potansiyeli taşıdığını söyledi.

### Fiyatlar 249 bin YTL'den başlıyor

Ataşehir'de 3 bin konutluk My World sitenin son etabı olan Southside bölümündeki 4 apartmanda 376 daire yer alıyor. Southside'de da 68 metrekarelik 1+1 tip dairelerin fiyatı 249 bin ile 260 bin YTL, 121, 130 ve 139 metrekarelik 2+1 dairelerin fiyatı 345 bin ile 382 bin YTL arasında değişiyor. 158 metrekarelik 3+1 tipteki dairelerin fiyatı ise 445 bin YTL.

### Yüzde 10 peşinata yüzde 1.45 faiz

Ağaoğlu İnşaat Genel Müdürü Hasan Rahvalı da, Ağaoğlu'nun özkaynaklarını teminat göstererek güncel faizin altındaki oranlardan konut kredisi kullandığını söyledi. Rahvalı, Southside kampanyasında peşin ödeme oranını yüzde 10'a çektiklerini belirterek, 12 ay vadede yüzde 0.75, 120 ay vadede ise yüzde 1.45 konut kredisi faizi uygulandığını söyledi. Rahvalı, yüzde 35 peşinat verenlerin ise kalan borcu 1 yıl içinde sıfır faizle ödeyerek daire sahibi olabileceğini ifade etti.

Figure 8.1 An example news article with accompanying visuals

visuals make extensive use of general views of the projects and the building exteriors, which is consistent with the emphasis of the news on provision of a living area rather than just housing.

A gender-based analysis of the visuals shows that men are represented three times more frequently than women. As the dominance/resistance model analysis shows that the sources of many news articles are the CEOs and public officials, and visuals representing people mostly consist of photos of these executives (see Figure 8.1). This unequal representation of genders, therefore, is a result of the gender inequality among these executives. In addition, people's outfits are dominated by office wear, rather than casual clothes, which is also consistent with the news collection methods and event-based journalism, since in many cases the news was collected by attending launch events or press conferences (see subsection 8.1.1 of this Chapter). The accompanying visuals do not convey information related to future or current (daily) life in the projects, but connote the economics of the projects with executive men in suits.

### ***8.1.5) Conclusion***

This section presented the analysis of mass media discourse through analysing sample news articles about branded housing projects. The results of this analysis show, firstly, the power relations behind production of the news content. According to this adaptation of the dominance resistance model, the news content reflects the views of partners in the projects who are hegemon groups of society. This is critical considering the dynamics of production of social consent for commodification of urban space through the development of branded housing projects. Secondly, quantitative content analysis of the news shows that the projects are presented in relation with concepts from economics. In other words, in the news content exchange value of the projects is emphasised rather than their use value, which presents a direct contribution to the commodification of urban space discursively.

## **8.2) Discursive Formation of Branded Housing through Promotional Materials**

### ***8.2.1) Analysis of the Print Advertisements***

Print advertisements of the selected branded housing projects were analysed qualitatively in order to investigate the discourse produced via these advertisements. Since print advertisements are products of textual and visual content, these two are considered together. The first print advertisement is the magazine advertisement of Agaoglu brand (Figure 8.2). The slogan of the brand, “the life architect” is presented at the top of the page. The life architect phrase is directly related to the production of everyday life. The company’s self-definition as an architect of life frames its products as more than housing, but life itself. The text at the top supports this claim by stating “Agaoglu, the construction giant of Turkey, builds not only housing, but living areas which are designed in the greatest detail, and which are designed to add beauty to life.” (Atlas, 2008). In the continuum of the text, the advertisements states that “Agaoglu builds the future Turkey with the innovations it brings to the [construction] sector, with its original projects, and with its practice which eases becoming homeowners.” (Atlas, 2008).

In this advertisement (Figure 8.2), the text clearly declares the development company a “construction giant”. Via this definition the company presents itself as a big company



that promises buyers a guarantee of the success of its projects. In addition, through its practice, the company is framed as a contributor to the future of the country.

The advertisement uses a very clear and simple image that mainly conveys the idea of building the country. It is a strong visual which communicates through use of a lush green area, in the middle of which “Turkey” is being constructed by the workers, a bulldozer, trucks and tower cranes. Through this installation, the image reinforces the idea of the company as both a big capital company and an asset for the country.

The second print advertisement is a magazine advertisement for the Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project (Figure 8.3). The slogan of the advertisement states “Have you realised the change in the city!” (Yeni Para, n.d.). The branded housing projects of the company, in addition to Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project, are framed as places contributing to the city and urban life. Therefore, building these projects is associated with doing good for the city; and for non-residents as well. In this advertisement, the

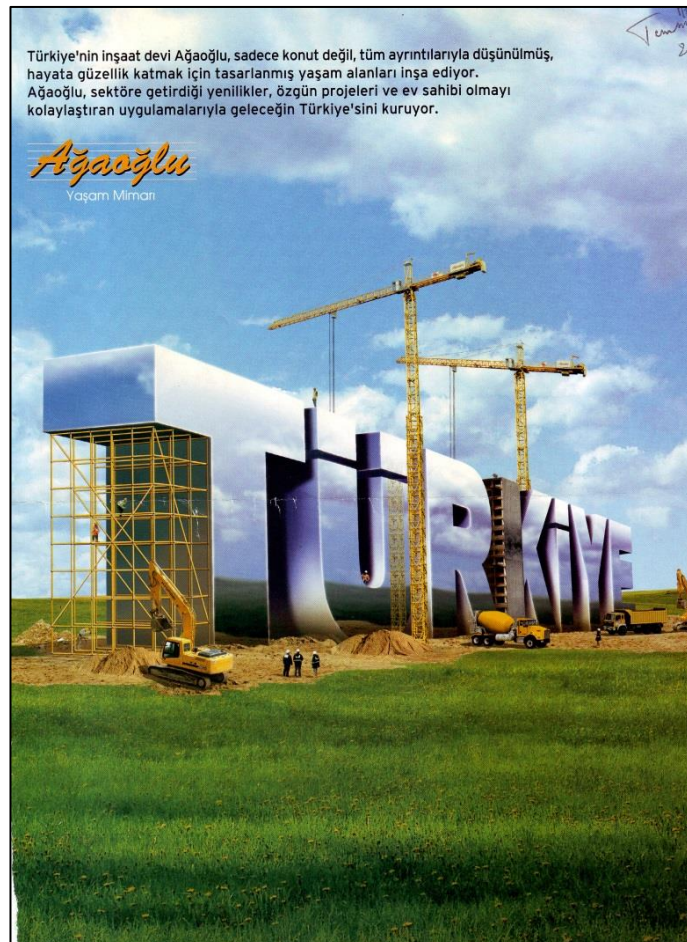


Figure 8.2 Agaoglu magazine advertisement (Atlas, 2008)



**Figure 8.3 Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project magazine advertisement (Yeni Para, n.d.)**

company also puts emphasis on the concept of life architect and its relation with daily life. In the right bottom corner, it is stated that “Agaoglu residents live the exciting change in the city, which you have realised, in their everyday life. ... We will continue to be life architects with our contributions to urban life.” (Yeni Para, n.d.). In this text, the residents are framed in an enviable position: while non-residents can only realise that the city has been changed, the residents are living this change. Such discourse supports the claim that the projects are ideal places to live; therefore, they are required to be built to provide people with these idealised lives.

The advertisement also uses the images of general views of Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project (the largest image in the middle) and images of the other branded housing projects of the same company. Different types of buildings located in the projects are also presented as a way of framing how different alternatives are provided in these project areas. Although external shared spaces of the project are not clearly shown, the external shared spaces of other projects are clearly presented with images of facilities like open green spaces, swimming pools and recreational pools. Lastly, an image of a happy woman, possibly a resident, is shown. To conclude, the projects are framed as promising living areas for a happy daily life, areas which are changing the city and which, therefore, are forward-looking places to live and invest in.

**İDEALİST KENT**  
**İSTANBUL'DA İDEAL OLAN NE VARSA BİR ARAYA GELDİ!**

İdeal bir İstanbul'da; Okullar eve yakın olmalı... Çocuklar güvenli alanlarda oynamalı...  
 Pencereleer yemyeşil mutluluğa açılmalı...

**İdealinizdeki İstanbul'da yaşamaya davetlisiniz!**

Dünyanın en güzel şehirlerinden biri olan İstanbul'da yaşamak isteyen ve ideal olan herşey İdealist Kent'te buluyor ve sizce, bilirsiniz aynı bir yaşam alanı sunuyor. Çünkü güzelliği ve konforunu aynı anda sunan en uygun yerleşim alanı olan İdealist Kent'te yaşamak için sadece bir adım yeterli. İdealist Kent'te yaşamak için sadece bir adım yeterli.

**KONUT**

- 250 villa
- 250 apart
- 800 apart daire
- 7000 m2 alan

**ÖZEL SOSYAL TESİSLER**

- 2 adet restaurant
- 1 adet fast food restaurant
- 1 adet market
- 1 adet sinema
- Açık alanlar
- Çocuk yeme alanları
- Kapalı yüzme havuzu
- Sosyalite ve diğer aktiviteler
- Aşık ve kapalı otopark
- Sauna

**AÇIK ALAN**

- Aşık Yeşil - Çocuk parkları
- 1.5 dönüm alanlar ve yeşil alanlar
- Köpek ve yürüyüş parkuru
- Basketbol parkuru

**EĞİTİM**

- Akademi ve kütüphane
- Birinci sınıf ilköğretim okulu
- 3 okul

**SPOR TESİSİ**

- Tenis kortları - Basketbol sahaları
- Yürüyüş alanları - Kapalı spor salonu

**TİCARİ MERKEZ**

- Showroomlar

**HEKTAŞ İNŞAAT**  
 İNŞAATÇI VE MİMARLIK

**İDEALİST KENT**  
 İSTANBUL'DA İDEAL OLAN NE VARSA...

Figure 8.4 Idealist Kent newspaper advertisement (Hurriyet, 2006)

The third print advertisement is the newspaper advertisement of the Idealist Kent Project (Figure 8.4). The slogan of the advertisement is “All the ideal things in Istanbul have come together!” referring to the notion that the project will provide ideal solutions to the city’s problems. The sub-heading explains what these solutions are: “In an ideal Istanbul: Schools should be close to homes... Children should play in safe areas... Windows should be opened to a lush green happiness...” (Hurriyet, 2006). In these sentences, five topics can be identified: the convenience of accessing social facilities, safety, a children-friendly environment, greenery, and happiness.

The advertisement continues with a second slogan: “You are invited to live in your ideal Istanbul” (Hurriyet, 2006). Within this sentence, the project promises to realise *ideals of the residents*. The text lists the *items included in the package* as houses, exclusive social facilities, open spaces, education facilities, sport facilities and a commercial centre. The developer claims that the project will meet the expectations of the residents



advertisement states that the “Traffic problem is ending” (Sabah, 2008). By this statement, it acknowledges the traffic problem in Istanbul and claims that the project offers a solution for it. It is also stated, “Call us now for an elite alternative home which is within the green, with a Lake view and away from the noise of Istanbul while being close to urban life” (Sabah, 2008). This statement condemns Istanbul as being a noisy place and offers a better alternative. However, the project does not present an anti-urban approach, but offers a “new alternative to Istanbul, Ispartakule-A New Town” (Sabah, 2008).

This alternative is produced discursively through the definitions of life in the project area, social, sport and shopping facilities, security service, technology use in the project, materials used in the houses. Presented facilities and services in the advertisement are directly related to everyday life of the residents; therefore, everyday life is described in the project areas via this content.

The advertisement also uses images of general views and the external shared spaces of the project. Through images of the external shared spaces, the advertisement presents the facilities the project provides. In addition, the advertisement demonstrates some happy images of future residents, which supports the claim of living in an ideal place. The advertisement also presents a special payment model and discounted interest rates, and a transportation diagram showing the location of the project. This content shows a package of commodities which are attached to buying a house in the project area. Such a presentation supports the commodification of urban experience and access rights to these facilities and services.

The fifth print advertisement is a newspaper advertisement for the Istmarina Project (Figure 8.6). The headline slogan of the advertisement is that “There is not any [project like this] in Dubai, Hong Kong, Sydney, New York, London or Tokyo. The best mixed life project [referring to mixed use] in the world has been rising in Istanbul” (Sabah, 2014). In this advertisement, the emphasis is on the uniqueness of the project. The uniqueness is associated with the superiority of the project by claiming there are no other projects like this one even in global cities. This superiority claim is fostered by another slogan defining future residents as “those who want to have the best in life and investment value”. Therefore, the project is described as the place which offers “the

DUBA'DE, HONG KONG'DA, SYDNEY'DE,  
NEW YORK'TA, LONDRA'DA, TOKYO'DA YOK!

**DÜNYANIN EN İYİ  
KARMA YAŞAM PROJESİ**  
İSTANBUL'DA YÜKSELİYOR.

İstanbul Marina'da hedeflenen 1.000 ünitenin  
950'si, 45 günde satıldı! Şimdi, 2. kısımdaki  
500 ünite lansman fiyatlarıyla satışa sunuluyor.

**ŞUBAT 2015'TE**  
PEŞİNATI ÖDEME AVANTAJI

**30 AY VADELİ FAİZSİZ**  
DAP FİNANSMANI KOLAYLIĞI

**120 AY VADELİ**  
BANKA KREDİSİ FIRSATLARI

Yaşam ve yatırım değerinde en iyisini isteyenler için İSTANBUL MARINA.

- Otel • Marina alanı • Özel hastane • Özel okul • AVM • Ofis • Rezidans konut
- Geniş sahil bandı • Lüks restoran ve kafeler • Hızlı tren • Helikopter pisti

**iSTMarina** 444 43 46  
www.istmarina.com.tr

**DAP**  
YAP  
DÜNYA ALANINDA PROJELER

**Figure 8.6 Istmarina Project newspaper advertisement (Sabah, 2014)**

best in life”. The slogan also emphasises the economic value of the project, a claim supported by listing the payment options.

In addition, the advertisement lists the items that are included in the project package (such as hotel, marina area, private hospital, private school, shopping mall, offices, serviced apartments, wide coastal strip, luxury restaurants and cafes, speed train, and heliport). The advertisement includes both use value (facilities provided and experience in relation with these services) and exchange value of the project through the content presented in the texts.

The advertisement also uses the images of general views of the project, views from the houses, images of balconies as vista points, the marina area, and the seaside. The advertisement presents the location of the project as a valuable asset and characteristic of the project. Living in the project is presented as a ticket to access this view, while the slogans present the project as an exceptional place by which residents will be privileged.

As a result, the uniqueness of the project and privileged residents are two important points conveyed in this advertisement. This emphasis presents an example of the exclusive character of the projects.

The sixth print advertisement is a newspaper advertisement for the Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project (Figure 8.7). The headline slogan – “the nine wonders of the world” (Atlas, 2005) – refers to the nine different sections of the project and the Seven Wonders of the World. Through presenting the project’s sections as wonders, the advertisement claims the preciousness and uniqueness of the project. The sub-heading continues with this claim by stating that “In this world of wonders, you will find the life you are looking for” (Atlas, 2005). The text continues with the advantages of living in the project, which will come with the purchase of a house in the project. It also includes a list of the items included in the commodity package such as a “natural living area” (Atlas, 2005), referring to the project’s open green spaces, “eye-catching harmony of

functional and aesthetic architecture” (Atlas, 2005), social facilities (open-air/indoor swimming pools, playgrounds, walking tracks, botanical gardens, tennis and basketball courts, meeting rooms), entertainment and shopping centre, technological infrastructure (internet, TV, phone, air-conditioning, white goods) among others. Living in this

project area is presented as a ticket to a new life. Buying or renting a house in the project is defined as a life-changing moment that allows residents to live in an exceptional place; a world of wonders.

The advertisement uses the images of a general view of the project, the greenery (which is very vaguely pictured without any borders), the projects’ different sections and their external shared spaces, and a diagram showing transportation routes together with the location of the project. The surroundings of the project are covered by greenery. This



Figure 8.7 Agaoglu My World Atasehir Project magazine advertisement (Atlas, 2005)

is deceptive, since in reality the project is surrounded by an urban area.

The seventh print advertisement is a newspaper advertisement for the Agaoglu My Towerland Project (Figure 8.8). This advertisement does not make much use of images, writing or description. The slogan of the advertisement is “Whoever likes me, likes me without an [economic] interest, and move in to your house now”. The advertisement conveys two messages: there is no interest rate (for 50-month-payments) (exchange value) and the houses in the project are available immediately (use value). The advertisement also uses images of a general view of two projects from the same brand and a photo of the CEO of the development company as the presenter of these.





**Figure 8.8 Agaoglu My Towerland Project newspaper advertisement (Hurriyet, 2014)**

The eighth print advertisement is a newspaper advertisement for the Idealist Kent Project (Figure 8.9). The slogan of the advertisement is “A garden villa for the price of a flat” (“Idealist Kent Newspaper Advertisement,” n.d.). It continues with the statement that “You can enjoy your villa within the greenery for the price of a flat in a skyscraper” (“Idealist Kent Newspaper Advertisement,” n.d.). In the left corner, the advertisement presents the interest rate and the payment instalments. The text also lists the *items included in the package* such as the house, social facilities, open space facilities, ponds, playgrounds, education facilities, sport facilities and shopping centre. As a result, the advertisement presents the projects as high quality spaces offered at reasonable prices.



**Figure 8.9 Idealist Kent Project newspaper advertisement** (“Idealist Kent Newspaper Advertisement,” n.d.)

The images present a building of the villa type, greenery and future residents on a hammock (possibly father and his son). With these images, the project emphasises horizontal living, quality of open spaces and a ‘slow’ lifestyle. These images are directly associated with daily life of the future residents. It promises relaxed everyday experiences (e.g. spending time with your kids in a hammock in your garden).

The name of the project is ‘Idealist Kent’, which means idealist city, and the slogan of the project is “whatever is ideal in Istanbul [is in here]” (“Idealist Kent Newspaper Advertisement,” n.d.). The advertisement presents the spaces that the project offers as ideal places to live and this idealisation is conveyed by comparing the housing type with high rise projects and by indirectly presenting the villa as a superior type to the flat. The advertisement refers to both exchange value and use value by referring to payment methods and daily life experiences, which contributes directly to the discursive formation of the branded housing project.

### **8.2.2) Analysis of the Textual Content of the Project Catalogues**

“In Bizim Evler 4, which we built by being inspired from your dreams, you will live the pleasure of all of your expectations being met. With its inside

and out, its blue and green, its night and day, its every detail, Bizim Evler 4 is the place where you would say ‘That's the place!’” (“Bizim Evler 4 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

In order to investigate how the projects and the life in the projects are represented in the catalogues as part of the consent-production processes, qualitative content analysis was applied inductively on the textual content of the project catalogues.

The textual content of 28 project catalogues was reviewed to identify the frequent concepts and topics. According to the initial review, 3 overall themes (together with their thematic codes) were identified as ‘branded housing projects as special places’, ‘promises for the future project residents’, and ‘projects promoting welfare and wellbeing of the residents’, and then the content was analysed according to these codes.

### **Branded Housing Projects as Special Places**

In the project catalogues, the branded housing projects are presented as special places by describing the projects as *branded*, *desirable*, *forward looking*, *superior* places, and special places on account of their *design* and *location*.

Firstly, being branded is presented as a positive input and as a way of guaranteeing a high standard of living together with a degree of certainty about the end product referring to the completed projects of that brand. (See excerpts below.) In this case, similarity of the project with other projects is presented as a desirable characteristic of a branded product and as a positive aspect.

“What do you buy without checking its brand?” (“Avrupa Konutlari TEM 2 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

“Agaoglu My World Europe, **like all the Agaoglu projects in the past**, has been designed in a way which will meet all the needs of the people who buy a house with the aims of living in it and investing.” (“Agaogly My World Europe Project Catalogue,” n.d.) (Bold emphasis added)

In addition, the value of the brand of that particular project is appreciated and having that particular brand is presented as a positive input. In some cases, reputations of former projects are used to promote the value of the brand as well.

Moreover, the brand itself is associated with being different from the rest of the housing stock and from other housing projects and offering a better place and living experience. The discourse presents an effort of the companies to differentiate their brands from the other brands (or their company from other development companies). The brands, or in some cases the projects, are presented as unique entities which can provide experiences that only ‘they’ can provide. In this sense, they offer different ‘things’ or achievements to the buyers and the residents, which are unique to their brands. For example, in some cases, the brands are associated with particular values (see excerpt below).

“But, as Agaoglu, what we really offer to people is always more important for us. We have never worked just to let people have a roof over their heads. Actually, till now, we have worked to offer people living areas, not houses. For people not to live mediocrely, but to live in quality, to live safely and more importantly, to live with their families in places which embellish their life more... **This is probably the most important difference of Agaoglu.**” (“Agaogly My World Europe Project Catalogue,” n.d.) (Bold emphasis added)

Secondly, in the textual content, projects are defined as desirable places where people would like to live or choose to live. While in some cases the content of desirability is implicit, in other cases it is framed through amenities, advantages of the projects or places with quality explicitly. This content also associates an ideal place with the amenities in the projects and relates it with provision of high living standards. Quality is also presented in general and by elaborating it with tangible aspects such as living quality, amenities with quality, and using quality materials in construction.

Thirdly, in the textual content, the branded housing projects are framed as *forward-looking* places through the themes of *future* and *newness*. The future is associated with themes such as being ahead of the time, creating a better future, and good investment for future (see excerpts below).

“Next generation living...” (“Varyap Meridian Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

“All you need to do is enjoy this change and live the future today.”

(“Varyap Meridian Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

In addition, the newness of the projects is emphasised in the text as a positive aspect, while framing the projects as *being new* and *innovative*, and in relation with *dynamism*. The *newness* is presented as something progressive and better than existing conditions in the city, whilst the projects are framed as being *innovative* projects presented together with the ideas of “being contemporary”, “energetic”, and “looking forward to the future” without any clarification about the innovations the projects offer.

Fourthly, in the catalogues, the projects are framed as *superior places*. In some cases this is explicitly materialised through ‘superior’ qualities of the projects. The projects are differentiated from the rest through attaining in various ways superlative material characteristics such as being “one of the largest projects in Europe” or containing “one of the tallest towers in Europe”. In this content, quantity overtakes qualities of the projects. In some cases, the superiority of the projects is vaguely defined and unquantifiable, in phrases such as “Turkey’s most modern living centre” and “the largest life complex in Europe” (see also excerpts below).

“You are living on the top of the world.” (“Quasar Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

“The shopping mall with world brands, wide coastal line, marina, hotel, serviced apartments on the top of the privileges, offices which are the addresses of the prestigious business world, luxury restaurant and cafes, private school, modern hospital, heliport, high-speed train, sea plane, and other superior qualities.” (“Istmarina Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

As part of framing their superiority, projects are presented as different and unique, which is associated with particular aspects such as “unique architecture”, unique experiences, “unique location”, “unique social amenities”, the project’s “unique view/scenery” and unique design approach. Although the definitions are usually implicit and vague, being different and unique is the core of this self-defined superiority of the projects.

Moreover, the projects are associated with *excellence* as successfully realised perfect living areas, which are superior to ‘imperfect’ projects built by other developers. While in some cases the projects are defined as excellent places in general, in other cases, excellence is associated with different aspects of the projects such as excellence in architecture and excellence in details (see excerpts below). The projects are defined as successfully realised places as part of their excellence. In some cases the awards the projects received are presented as evidence of success (see Figure 8.10).

“Bizim Evler 3 ‘short definition of ‘excellence’” (“Bizim Evler 3 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

“By continuing the tradition of excellence in architecture, VARYAP MERIDIAN project promises to create a new sector standard for sustainable commercial design.” (“Varyap Meridian Project Catalogue,” n.d.)



**Figure 8.10 Awards for Varyap Meridian Project** (“Varyap Meridian Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

As part of the superiority discourse, the projects are associated with luxury and prestige. In some cases, luxury is used without associating it with any specific characteristic of the project (first excerpt below), while in other cases it is associated with particular promises of the projects such as experiences offered for their residents (second excerpt below).

“**Quasar Istanbul** is a result that escapes the cliches of so-called luxury. It is about the pursuit of luxury beyond luxury.” (“Quasar Project Catalogue,” n.d.) (Bold emphasis in the original)

“The most luxurious residence experience” (“Metropol Istanbul Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

In some cases gaining prestige is explicitly associated with living in the project area. For example, in the excerpt below, the project is related with Gaudi’s work and framed as an artwork; therefore, it offers a prestigious and superior experience for its residents.

“It will be a precious heritage which we will leave to the future generations as a masterpiece that visitors of the city would like to see, just like the works of Spanish architect Gaudi.

Istanbul Marina, which DAP Yapi presents to our country, will draw attention of the world to our country, will bring infinite happiness and pride to those who live in it, will always profit buyers and investors.” (“Istmarina Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

Fifthly, the projects are described with their architectural and urban design characteristics. These characteristics are presented as aspects contributing to the life quality of the project residents. The aspects used in this framing vary from specific architectural elements to urban design approaches (see excerpt below).

“An important detail is that while you can access the shopping area whenever you like, shopping customers can never access housing areas unless you allow them. Thus, the shopping area and houses are being constructed for you with a special architectural design, segregated but

nested within each other.” (“Avrupa Konutlari Atakent 3 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

Sixthly, locations of the projects are framed as ‘convenient locations’ with various positive qualities: easy access to transportation networks, close proximity to district centres and facilities, and pleasant surrounding areas including natural areas (lakes, forests, etc). In addition, being located in Istanbul is presented as a positive locational input for the projects. The projects are associated with positive aspects of Istanbul while also contributing some positive aspects to the city (e.g. a global city or a lively city).

“Those who know the importance of location have been choosing Bataşehir.” (“Bataşehir Project Catalogue,” n.d.)



**Figure 8.11 Visual showing the surrounding landmarks in the Dumankaya Miks Project Catalogue**

### **Promises for Future Project Residents**

The catalogues make some promises for the projects’ future residents, including a *better life, a place where dreams come true and expectations are met, exclusiveness in the projects, pleasant experiences, and gaining various benefits*. Firstly, *life* is a recurrent theme throughout the catalogues. The usage of *life* is vague in terms of what aspects of life are inferred. This allows the readers to assign a meaning themselves to any aspect



they prioritise. The promised life in the project areas is presented through the aspects of personal life and social life. Both tangible aspects (e.g. *a healthy life*) and more vague concepts (e.g. *exclusiveness which a person dreams of*) are used throughout the catalogues. The textual content frames and reproduces *the daily life* by framing the patterns, actions, activities of daily life together with spatial elements like parks, sport facilities, open green spaces.

“Everything is geared for living: fashion, retail, recreation, sports, cinemas, just name it and it is here... This is Istanbul's new "go to" destination, a place that everyone will flock to. Each step through the Metropol Catwalk will bring you the colours of life.” (“Metropol Istanbul Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

In particular, the projects are framed as places that offer *new life* for their residents. This new life is defined as a desired life style (e.g. “life you are looking for”) or an ideal life. In some cases the content is more specific in defining the new life such as “a healthy life”. The new life theme is fostered by framing the projects as places for change. In this sense, buying a house in the project area or living in the project is presented as a ticket for this *new life*. In addition, the projects are associated with *dynamism in life* through framing them as the places that transform the life of the residents into a dynamic, enthusiastic and active one.

Secondly, the projects make the promise to their residents of realising their dreams and meeting their expectations. While framing the projects as places people dream of, the catalogues also frame projects as tools which help to realise residents’ dreams. In addition, the projects are framed as places that meet the expectations of their residents, or the place which provides anything residents demand. In some cases, they are defined as places providing opportunities, services and facilities that go beyond expectations of the residents. In this respect, they are defined as progressive places offering a better life to their residents, a much better life than the residents are expecting. In addition, the concept of desired living space is discursively re-produced through the textual content. The text re-constructs *the places people dream of* rather than offering what people dream of, while reconstructing the expectations of the residents (rather than simply meeting them). The excerpt below exemplifies this discursive formation:

“Think about an ideal life and ideal living space. Let there be a pond, open and closed swimming pools, walking tracks, schools in it, and a subway station at its entrance. Practical as you could go shopping whenever you wished, and romantic as you could be with nature whenever you wished.”  
(“Idealist Kent Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

Thirdly, the catalogues promise future residents exclusiveness. The project residents are promised exclusive access to the services and facilities. Exclusiveness is defined as a positive aspect in the catalogues, while fostering it through being privileged, and being special.

“An important detail is that whilst you can reach the [shopping] centre, customers of the [shopping] centre can never enter the housing areas without your permission. That is, the [shopping] centre and the housing area are built nested within each other but separated at the same time.” (“Avrupa Konutlari TEM 2 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

Throughout the textual content of the catalogues, being a project resident is associated with being a privileged person. Being privileged is discursively produced through offering so-called *privileges* to the residents; however, the content is vague on the meaning of such privileges. In addition, (even the most basic) services and facilities are framed as *privileges of the project*. This contributes to the discourse transforming key urban social services and municipal facilities into privileges of one group of society. In one-fifth of the sample catalogues, the site lists of the projects are presented as a list of “privileges of the projects” (see Figure 8.13).

The project residents are also defined as *special individuals* implicitly or explicitly in the text. The projects are also framed as extraordinary places, such as being “destined to be one of the futuristic symbols of Istanbul”. Therefore, living in such a project offers an exclusive experience.

Everything which will make you feel special and make your life easy awaits you in **Uphill Service**. (“Uphill Court Project Catalogue,” n.d.)  
(bold emphasis in the original)



“[In Bizim Evler 4] you have so many options to add pleasure to life... You can rest under pergolas. You can enjoy scenery of green and blue at Lake Café, you can live the pleasure of being together with beloved ones at restaurants and cafeterias, you can taste a healthy life at the fitness centre.” (“Bizim Evler 4 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

In the catalogues, socialising is concurrently promised as an experience. In most of the cases, socialising as an experience is supported by social activities taking place at the facilities and open spaces of the project. Within this framing, in addition to facilities, the *social circle of the residents* is used: neighbours, friends, or beloved ones. This is expected content due to the nature of socialising. However, the projects promise specific types of neighbours and future residents such as “elite project residents” or white-collar workers. This framing is critical in terms of the usage of future residents as an aspect of the promise. Within this framework, the residents themselves become commodities in this package.

In terms of promised experiences, family and children are emphasised throughout the textual content. The projects are framed as places that offer families pleasant experiences with the provision of social facilities and recreation areas (see excerpt below). The projects are framed as places where families can access services and facilities in a protective environment. Therefore, living in the projects is framed as a tool for families to access these services and facilities in a secure way while also avoiding urban problems (e.g. commuting time).

“In the green areas of Batisehir, there is space for the whole family. Batisehir, which has rich green areas citizens need, is designed for families who wish to live life in nature.” (“Batisehir Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

As part of offering a family-friendly environment, facilities and experiences for children are concurrently described in the catalogues. For example, in one catalogue, the project is defined as “a place where you can hear cheerful laughter of your children”. Three aspects are emphasised in relation to this content: open green spaces that children can enjoy freely, indoor play rooms, and education facilities. The projects respond to the scarcity of public parks in Istanbul (see BOP Consulting (2014)), together with children’s need to play in open spaces, and promise adequate open/green areas and parks

for children as well as indoor play rooms/areas. Lastly, the catalogues promise tools to ease the parents' lives, while contributing to the personal development of the children as stated in one catalogue example: "let your children live their childhood, you live your life".

Fifthly, the catalogues promise that residents will gain various benefits from the projects without specifying them. Economic gain is much elaborated on in the catalogues. The economic gain of the residents is framed by presenting projects as profitable investments and as budgeted establishments to live in (e.g. low monthly payments). While *being profitable investment* refers to the exchange value, *being a budgeted enterprise* refers to the use value of the projects. This is a result of the heterogeneous nature of the target income groups, from middle to higher income.

### **Projects that Promote Welfare and Wellbeing**

Welfare and wellbeing of the project residents is a concurrent theme throughout the project catalogues. The catalogues frame the projects as places contributing to people's health and mental wellbeing, as tools for solving urban problems, as places meeting all daily needs of the residents, and places providing services and facilities for their residents within their confines.

Firstly, the projects are framed as places which positively affect the health and mental wellbeing of the residents either by offering a living area contributing directly to their physical health (e.g. sport areas, fresh air, walking tracks) or to their happiness. The projects are framed as places which contribute to healthy living via providing facilities for a healthy life. Two facilities are emphasised because of their positive relationship with health: green open spaces and sport facilities. The projects are also framed as places where the residents will find happiness – e.g. "its every detail has been designed for your happiness". Happiness in the project areas is also conveyed indirectly by using moods and gestures related to happiness, such as smiles, laughter, and cheerfulness. This state of happiness is conveyed by concurrent use of the term *keyif/keyifli*, which means delightful, pleasure, pleasant, joyful, merry, or enjoyable. In addition, the projects are framed as peaceful places, where the residents can be away from the stress and congestion of the city. In this sense, the projects are defined as supportive places for mental wellbeing. However, while making this promise, the catalogues are also cautious not to make them sound like anti-urban places.

Secondly, the projects are framed as places that offer solutions to urban problems. The projects are thereby framed as places that provide comfort to their residents by associating comfort with the facilities and services provided in the projects (e.g. provision of carparks). The catalogues promise that the projects will provide within their confines everything (services and facilities) that will make the life of their residents easy. This is presented as one of the main differences of living in a branded housing project from living in a ‘normal’ neighbourhood. To illustrate, it is usually stated that private management will provide municipal services (e.g. landscaping) and technical services (e.g. electricians, joiners) which are provided by small enterprises. It is claimed that this provision will make the residents’ lives easier, since they will be provided with high quality services and will not need to deal with such issues themselves.

**“Residence services**

**Just one button for all residence services. My Card privilege is special to My World Europe residents...**

My Card is a convenience centre which serves 7/24 via its Call Centre for Golf, Arena and Pool Residences. It is designed to save you from any burden of [arranging] technical services, personal assistant, [provides] concierge services, discount shopping at contracted shops, reservation and organisation services, [helps with] house moving, home decoration, even selling or renting your house.” (“Agaogly My World Europe Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

The catalogues also frame projects as places offering solutions to problems in Istanbul. The textual content emphasises some of the problems while claiming it offers solutions to them. Four problems (together with projects’ so-called solutions) are highlighted throughout the catalogues: high building density and scarcity of open spaces (solution - wide and bright areas), lack of green spaces and natural areas (solution - access to natural areas, provision of large green spaces and fresh air), traffic congestion (solution - less commuting time due to easily accessible project location and provision of services and facilities within the projects, and provision of carparks) and earthquake risk<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Istanbul is located on an active fault zone. In 1999, the region of Istanbul was hit by an earthquake which left more than 18000 people dead (Erdik, 2016). The housing stock is vulnerable to such risk, most of the housing stock needs to be supported or redeveloped, and an earthquake responsive approach needs

(solutions – provision of earthquake resistant buildings) (to illustrate, see excerpts below).

“Imagine your ideal home. Away from the noise of the city, secure and spacious, comforting with its living areas.

That is why, in Idealist Kent, 250 decares [25 hectares] of the project in 330 decares [33 hectares, which is the total area of the project] is allocated to green areas. 72% of Idealist Kent is allocated to green areas, 12% is allocated to building areas and 16% is allocated to roads and parking areas.” (“Idealist Kent Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

“It looks like a dream hard to realise, to breathe at the centre of Istanbul. Despite access to green space needing a long search [in Istanbul], thanks to the neighbouring woodland to Sehrizar Konaklari, the owners of mansions enjoy touching lush green trees and relaxing with the fresh air of the woodland.” (“Sehrizar Konaklari Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

Thirdly, the projects are framed as places meeting all the needs of their residents by providing all required facilities and services within their confines (in addition to housing provision). The text emphasises the total provision of ‘everything’ in one place, which is presented as a distinctive aspect of the projects. This is often associated with ‘being a new town’ located within the city. In other words, the projects are framed as places designed to be slices of urban areas. As a result, buying a house in such a project will be a ticket for the resident to resettle in such an establishment.

“The privilege of meeting all your needs without going outside is waiting for you at your new home.” (“Bizim Evler 4 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

In addition, ‘the needs of the residents’ is also discursively produced by identifying these needs with what is offered within the projects.

Fourthly, the projects are framed as tools for accessing key urban infrastructure. It is presented that the projects offer several services and facilities which are usually

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to be adopted. In the projects, this problem is addressed and the buildings in the projects are framed as earthquake resistant.

provided by municipalities or private enterprises. These facilities and services are framed as exclusive assets that increase quality of life. Provision of these services and facilities is framed as the key for solving the urban problems and meeting the needs of the residents.

The facilities and services are presented in three ways: listing, relating them to one another, and defining particular services in detail. The listing of services is a direct way of presenting the commodity package as explicitly written in Figure 8.13: “Agaoglu My Assistant Service Package” (“Agaoglu Maslak 1453 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

The second one is to define facilities and services in relation with other services and facilities while framing them as aspects which make residents’ lives easy. The content offers a pleasant experience through this framing (see following excerpts).

“From **limousine service**, which will take you and your guests from work to home, to **private heliport**, from car and house cleaning to **Natura** and the **Animal Park**, where you can leave your plants and pets safely, from **Uphill Kids**, where you can leave your kids peacefully, to technical assistance services, from special spaces where you can realise your hobbies (**music, dance, library**) to sport and social activities, **at Uphill Service there is an excess of everything that makes you privileged!**” (“Uphill Court Project Catalogue,” n.d.) (Bold emphasis in the original)

“Professional Management

24-hour-security service, landscaping and management of green spaces, good management of social facilities, technical services and all other services will ease the life of project residents.” (“Bulvar Istanbul Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

The third way is to elaborate on particular services and facilities by defining the qualities of these services and appreciating them. Highlighted services are private security and technical services, while highlighted facilities are social facilities, sport facilities, recreation areas/open green spaces, car parks, and shopping facilities. This provision of security is presented through security infrastructure such as CCTV,



intercoms, and access-controlled gates. This presents a very controlled everyday life in the project areas, which is framed as the basis of a secure and peaceful life.

The technical services or support refer to services such as plumbers, electricians, or joiners. The content of technical services varies according to the projects. In this framing, the projects emphasise their supportive role against everyday life problems.

**Figure 8.13** Example presentations of listing of services (“Agaoglu Maslak 1453 Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

In some cases these services are offered as “after-sales services”, with after sales support for market commodities, since the problems defined here are indoor infrastructure problems that may be caused by faulty fitting.

The social facilities are presented as a distinctive characteristic of the projects. These facilities are framed together with the pleasant experiences, and presented together with sport facilities, since they are usually located in the same buildings. The sport facilities can also be open ones such as basketball pitches or tennis courts. The sport facilities are often listed together with a promise of experience. They are framed as facilities contributing to quality of life, changing residents’ lives and offering support for a healthy life.

“Tennis court, basketball-volleyball pitches, bike lanes and walking tracks, indoor swimming pool, saunas, steam rooms, Turkish bath, fitness centre, pilates and spinning rooms are at your service for you to relax and rest your soul...” (“Bizim Evler 4 Project Catalogue,” n.d., p. 4)

The recreation areas in the projects include open green spaces and water elements such as pools and ponds. Open green spaces are described in detail together with pleasant experiences. Abundance of green areas and easy access to these areas are emphasised throughout the textual content, which is directly related to solving the problems of the city and making the life of the citizens easy. The green areas are associated with nature and fresh air. Throughout the text, water elements are presented as important recreational and relaxation elements that will increase quality of life.

The shopping facilities are usually presented together with social and sport facilities. The shopping areas are framed as easily accessible and convenient places that will meet the needs of the residents. The catalogues present these facilities as high quality and comprehensive with provision of a variety of consumer goods “from clothing to decoration, from supermarket to toys and kitchenware, from pharmacy to food court”. Moreover, the projects promise shopping experiences together with socialising at the shopping facilities (see following excerpt).

“Your new shopping street...

A life reflecting your standards is at Gol Panorama with its fancy shops which stand side by side on the street. Grab your coffee after a colourful shopping trip, enjoy the sunshine with your beloved ones...” (“Gol Panorama Evleri Project Catalogue,” n.d.)

### ***8.2.3) Analysis of the Visual Content of the Project Catalogues***

The visuals of the catalogues were analysed quantitatively. This inductive quantitative content analysis investigates the visual representations of the projects and life in the projects. This analysis is complementary to the quantitative and qualitative inductive analyses of the textual content of the catalogues, and the qualitative analysis of print advertisements. These three analyses comprise the inductive analysis of promotional material of branded housing projects.

Initially, the catalogues were reviewed and visual codes were identified inductively, and the visual content was analysed according to these codes. According to this coding, six groups of most frequent visuals were identified as spatial features, facilities, people, activities, transportation modes, and plans and diagrams (see APPENDIX VII for details). These identified groups of visuals are consistent with the textual content of the catalogues. The most frequent visual group in the catalogues is the spatial features. Represented spatial features were identified as enclosed spaces, open spaces, the projects represented with surrounding environment, and representation of the surrounding environment per se. The most frequent images within the spatial features were open spaces, which is consistent with the claim of selling living areas, not just houses.

The second most frequent visual group in the catalogues is the facilities. Represented facilities in the catalogues were identified as facilities provided both indoors and in open spaces (carparks, water bodies (swimming pools, ponds, canals, etc) and sport facilities and centres), indoor facilities (cinemas, education facilities, health facilities, indoor gardens, lobby and social facilities), open space facilities (green-open spaces and recreation areas, private outdoor gardens, and playgrounds), and facilities for entertainment and shopping (restaurants and cafes, shopping streets or centres, and shops). The most frequent images within facilities were visuals of open spaces, while the second most frequent were facilities provided both indoors and in open spaces and the least frequent ones were visuals of enclosed spaces. These results are consistent with the emphasis on open spaces in the promotion of the projects.

The third most frequent visual group in the catalogues is the images of the activities of people living or working in the projects. Represented activities were identified as activities of daily routine (inc. relaxing, having a rest, walking, enjoying the environment), doing sports, receiving healthcare or education, playing (kids, youths or adults), posing<sup>31</sup>, shopping, socialising, swimming and working (both office users and workers at the project). The most frequent activity was daily routine activities, posing was ranked second and socialising activities were ranked third. These results show that catalogues use activities of spatial experience while discursively producing everyday life in the projects. The results also show that with posing being one of the most frequent activities, the visuals aim to build direct contact with readers and, therefore, to

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<sup>31</sup> The images in which groups or individuals directly look at the camera in order to pose were coded under the posing category.

actively engage with them rather than just presenting them with the content. Active engagement is critical for the discursive formation of spatial experience in the projects considering the dialectical relationship between representations of space and representational space.

#### ***8.2.4) Conclusion***

This section investigated discourses produced in promotional materials of branded housing projects as part of discursive formation of the phenomenon itself. Firstly, print advertisements frame projects as special and ideal places to live and as superior places to ordinary neighbourhoods of the city and to other projects. The projects are also framed as problem solvers for everyday life problems such as traffic. Buying or renting a house in the projects is presented as a life-changing moment and a ticket to a better life. This framing shows the clues for the production of common sense for branded housing projects and the aspect of contributing to social consent for development of such places by presenting the projects as problem-solvers, tickets to better life and superior places.

Secondly, sample project catalogues were analysed separately in terms of their textual content and visual content due to the large volume of the catalogues. In the textual content, three aspects were highlighted. First, the projects are framed as special places as in the print advertisements. Due to the scope of the catalogues this framing is more detailed than in the print advertisements (while advertisements convey the messages in one page, catalogues vary from 5 to 70 pages.). Second, the catalogues make certain promises to future residents regarding a better life, a place for realising their dreams, exclusiveness, pleasant experiences, and various benefits. While these promises also frame the projects as a ticket for a better life, they also produce a discourse addressing representational space of future residents by defining their expectations, dreams and future experiences. This is a critical point considering the dialectical relationship between representations of space and representational space and appropriation of representational space as discussed in Chapter 3.

Third, the projects are framed as places which contribute to welfare and wellbeing of their residents in terms of mental and physical health through meeting the needs of their residents by providing required facilities and services and by providing solutions to

urban problems. This framing is quite explicit in describing items in the commodity package (e.g. walking tracks, green areas, sport areas) and their relationship with health and wellbeing (fresh air, morning walk, healthy living). Fourth, in terms of items in commodity package, future project residents are also described and the projects are framed as tickets for an upper social circle, which results in transforming the future residents themselves as commodities in this package. Thirdly, visuals in the catalogues highlight the spatial features, facilities provided in the project areas, and promised experiences for future residents through representations of people and activities. The highlighted visual content is consistent with the commodity package presented in textual content. After cross-checking, it is concluded that spatial experiences in the project areas are also presented as items in the commodity packages along with more tangible items such as spatial features and facilities and services.

### **8.3) Discursive Formation of Branded Housing based on Residents' and Non-Resident's Views**

#### ***8.3.1) Analysis of the Residents' Views***

The residents of the selected branded housing projects (see Chapter 3) were interviewed qualitatively, and representational space was explored through the project residents' views on the projects they live in and their expectations from the projects.

The first highlighted topic in the interviews was projects as branded housing enclaves. The interviewees presented a positive attitude towards living in the branded housing projects. Some interviewees mentioned that the brands provide them with certainty of quality to expect from the project when completed (see first excerpt below). Similarly, some interviewees stressed that familiarity with that particular brand affected their choice of purchase (see second excerpt below).

“This was a new development area and Brand Z proved itself with the previous projects. We like the other projects [of this brand], so we decided to move in here.” (Interviewee no. Res-018)

“Ispartakule is developed with a regular order and as a place caring for nature. Brand X maybe reassures us with its other projects as a prominent brand. The reason we would like to buy our house at Ispartakule is the

abundance of green, and air, and because people live in the projects there. But the reason why we selected that brand is maybe that our terms fit with the project's terms. And, what else you consider while buying [something] is the trust. In this respect, we thought that we can trust [this brand] by checking its other projects.” (Interviewee no. Res-007)

While the excerpts above exemplify the responses focusing on tangible qualities of the projects, in other cases the interviewees focused on the perception of being branded and brands themselves (see excerpt below).

“There is actually a Brand Y project in Halkalı. My mind was always there. I like it a lot; I always check show flats. That project [in Halkalı] was the one I like, but since the Ispartakule one is more affordable, I bought this one. Halkalı is a more expensive district [than Ispartakule]. **I like this brand. My dream was always [to live in] Brand Y projects.** We chose the brand, Brand Y, the house and people who live in the project took my attention [as well].” (Interviewee no. Res-009)

In addition, the excerpt below exemplifies the expectation of people before moving into the projects, which is that they will access more than just a house. It exemplifies the image produced via the discursive formation of the branded housing project:

“Actually, you have high expectations you know. I don't know what we were expecting. Was that because it is Brand X? I don't know if we were expecting Brand X was going to put gold in the bricks. It was like a disappointment when we saw the house the first time. The guy was showing us the flat, but all of us, all of the family, we feel a kind of disappointment.” (Interviewee no. Res-007)

It is also worth highlighting the disappointment of the residents with the house. The frustration of these new residents shows a gap between the image of the project and the real situation. As it is clearly stated by the residents, in their expectation, there are various items attached to the house itself in relation with being a ‘branded’ house. Therefore, when the residents had the actual house, they were faced with a reality which did not fit with the image.

As these excerpts exemplify, the responses from the resident interviews show the effects of images of branded housing on the representational space of the residents, which is framed as a dynamic behind the discursive formation of the branded housing projects and consent production processes for the projects in this research.

“It is a really good choice to live in a project which meets all the needs within its confines.” (Interviewee no. Res-015)

“In the project area, our opportunities are really good. We have a supermarket, hairdresser. We have a tobacco shop. All are in the project”.  
(Interviewee no. Res-009)

The second highlighted topic in the interviews was access to facilities and services through the projects. In general, interviewees approach positively the total provision of services by the projects. This positive approach is based mostly on the convenience of access to basic facilities that the project provides. Therefore, living in the project was presented as a tool to access this convenience. In other words, the projects are framed as enabling tools for accessing facilities and services.

The projects were seen by the interviewees as facilitators of everyday life (see excerpts below). On the other hand, the city was framed as a place where people cannot access these facilities easily.

“In my previous neighbourhood, it wasn’t possible to take my kids out for a walk after dinner. But now, we take them out in our project area.”  
(Interviewee no. Res-007)

“Living in a project is easy, considering living in Istanbul. I mean, I have a 5-year-old daughter. In the project, there are 2 parks, a swimming pool, tennis court for children, a basketball pitch. Places where kids can play.”  
(Interviewee no. Res-005)

“Also, we don’t have a carpark problem here, and I think parking is a huge problem in Istanbul. You come, leave your car, and go upstairs. That’s it.”  
(Interviewee no. Res-002)

Interviewees with children also emphasised the role of their children in their decision to move into a housing enclave. Living in a project was defined as a way of providing their children with appropriate social facilities and sport facilities in addition to a comfortable social environment. The interviewees stressed that they had chosen to live in such a place in order to enjoy the open green spaces together with their children, and children can enjoy these spaces freely by themselves since it is a controlled environment (controlled access, private security, walled enclave).

This total provision was idealised by residents as one interviewee put bluntly: “I actually would like everyone to live like this” (Interviewee no. Res-007). Although there are also criticisms from the residents of the existing conditions in the projects, these criticisms are usually accompanied by the claim that these problems are mostly the problems of Istanbul, or problems that can be seen almost everywhere. On the other hand, one point of criticism that was mostly associated with the projects themselves, which is being too crowded.

The third most highlighted topic in the interviews was feeling safe, peaceful and secure. The projects are associated with safety, security and peace in the interviews. In general, the interviewees asserted that they feel safer in the projects than in their previous neighbourhoods. The main reasons for this feeling were stated as having 24 hour security guards, controlled access, security infrastructure and living with people of similar backgrounds and class.

“When you enter through the gates, it [24-hour-private security] makes you feel that you are in a safe place. It is a very important thing. One can feel more safe and secure.” (Interviewee no. Res-14)

“You know a stranger wouldn’t enter. It is a relief it gives. You don’t worry about the children”. (Interviewee no. Res-006)

During the interviews, threats that make people unsafe and make them feel insecure (like theft, assault, kidnapping) were framed as things which are left beyond the project walls. While defining non-residents as strangers, there is a general trust of other project residents. However, most of the interviewees mentioned that they do not know their neighbours personally, and considering the density of the projects (a population varying from 5000 to 10000), it is not expected that all the residents would know each other



personally. Some responses of the interviewees are more explicit regarding their concerns over security and its relationship with social issues and exclusion, such as in these two quotations: “When I look around [in the project], I don’t see people who bother me. I feel safer [in terms of profile of people living in the project area]” (Interviewee no. Res-013), “Living in a project is secure; you can stay in the house by yourself. It is because one part of society is living [in the project]” (Interviewee no. Res-019) In this respect, the interviewees associate the social segregation of the projects with security and safety issues, while associating outsiders with security concerns and insiders with general trust

The fourth most highlighted topic in the interviews was social issues and relations. The projects were framed as enabling their residents to belong to circles of higher social and cultural capital. The interviewees described the project residents as “people like us”, “people with similar cultural level”, “quality people”, “educated people”. City neighbourhoods are defined as “too crowded”, “too cosmopolitan”, “too diverse”. Some interviewees criticised the residents of their previous neighbourhoods as being ignorant, uneducated, and uncultured. This association is directly related to the discursive formation of a typical project resident. One interviewee defined the project residents as “All [residents] are families, of our social status, like-minded to us” (Interviewee no. Res-006). Another stated that “You look around [in the project] and see people who have similar economic power to you, maybe not the same education level though. You get used to this.” (Interviewee no. Res-002). Another interviewee stated that “It is good to meet with good families and be neighbours with them”. (Interviewee no. Res-018).

In this sense, moving to the project is a way of escaping from this “too diverse” urban life to a place where they believe there are people with similar social capital, similar cultural capital and lifestyle. The projects were defined as areas that can provide access to social capital. Some interviewees mentioned explicitly that living in the projects helps to gain this access. Through the interviews the image of the project resident is produced as a decent image, on the contrary of a non-resident. The excerpt below exemplifies this superficial image of residents by providing a counter-image:

“Once, around midnight, we saw a man in the lift. But, it was so obvious that he is not living in the project. His outfit was dirty and old. He wasn’t

sure which floor he was going to. Later, I called security. They [the security staff] said they would check. They came and checked the building. They couldn't find anyone. He may be one of the handymen. He looked like a Syrian to me. But, at least, the security came and checked. This was a relief for me.” (Interviewee no. Res-010)

While the content above includes issues of race and xenophobia in addition to class, class segregation was the main theme in the interviews as exemplified below. In this example, the interviewee demonstrates his/her discontent with working class people living in the area.

“We have some problems here as well. They have given a flat to the people who did finishing of the construction, such as painting. In return for their work, they were given a flat. So, their families and children are living here as well. They [The project developer] gave them [subcontractors] an apartment block. There have been some problems among some groups of kids [S/he meant that two groups of children – kids of subcontractors and kids of residents – were having problems and fights]. It is a cultural problem [implying those kids have a violent nature]. It is about level of education. I think education is a must [implying that the kids are ignorant].” (Interviewee no. Res-012)

In this example, the interviewee associates some potential problems among the kids with their class background, while explicitly stating his/her unhappiness with living in the same area with what s/he thinks of as working class people. On the other hand, some residents emphasised their disappointment with their neighbours while describing the projects as “too diverse” (in terms of class, race or background) or describing project residents as “not civilised enough”.

“You come here with a hope. I don't want to classify but, you expect these people to be of a higher [social] status, educated. You expect to see a culture. You come here with this expectation. You expect these from these people. When you see this kind of disrespect from these people or see them not following rules, you feel disappointed. ... Actually, you see these kinds of problems in apartments as well [referring to apartments in any

neighbourhood of the city]. You come here [to the project] to protect yourself against these kinds of problems. When you see similar things here, it is a disappointment.” (Interviewee no. Res-017)

“People living here [in the project] are a little bit diverse. There are people who bought the houses from the model [meaning with very early discounted sale rates], there are also rich people who paid a million to buy [a house]. I am observing a too diverse environment.” (Interviewee no. Res-003)

“I know the education level of people is high here, though. But this means being educated is not enough [to be civilised]. Civility is *about education in the family* starting from age zero, not about level of education [in terms of school education]. You can see this clearly in such places, since there are too many nouveau-riche people [living here]. They pride themselves on saying “I live in this project”, and feel like they own all the project by buying a house using a 10-year mortgage.” (Interviewee no. Res-014)

On the other hand, another interviewee claimed that actually those who are not following the rules and who bother the project residents are people who come daily to work in the project, such as house cleaners, which is a claim associated with class. These two assumptions – relating the behaviour of the residents with their nouveau-riche status and assuming they are not residents but workers in the project – provide clues about the discursive formation of the projects and their idealisation. These support the image of project residents as upper class people with higher cultural and social capital, which is part of the discursive formation of branded housing projects. It shows that before moving in, the residents were expecting to be part of a different community from where they lived previously, in terms of social capital, class and culture.

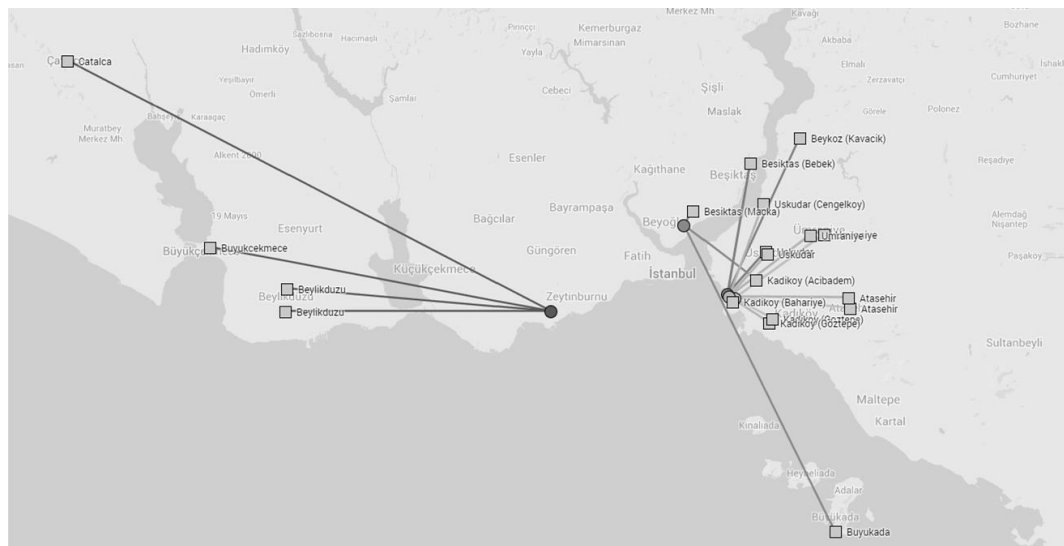
### ***8.3.2) Analysis of the Non-Residents' Views***

Interviews with non-residents were undertaken in order to investigate their image of the ideal living environment. It was designed as a scoping study for this image and to identify the differences and similarities with representational space of the project residents.<sup>32</sup> While defining their ideal living spaces, non-residents responded to these

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<sup>32</sup> Non-residents of the projects were asked about their ideal living space and how they define the neighbourhoods they live in. The aim of this phase of the research is to investigate clues about the ideal

questions by mentioning social, spatial and mental aspects. The interviewees defined their ideal living space spatially as being spaces with green open spaces, as places where they feel peaceful (mental aspect), and socially as places where good social relationships were built. These aspects resonate with the representations of space in promotional materials. While the branded housing projects are defined as peaceful places where one can escape from the congestion of the city, the projects are also defined as providers of abundance of open green spaces that are unlikely to be found in the city. The branded housing projects are also defined as places where one can build decent social relationships, meet with new people and socialise. The first two aspects are based on the problems of Istanbul city considering people’s disturbance with congestion in the city and lack of open green spaces in the city (as discussed in previous sections), while the last aspect is one of the basic human needs to socialise as social beings.



**Figure 8.14 Distribution of Non-resident interview locations (Represented with Circles) and districts where interviewees live (Represented with Squares)**  
**(Source: .The author | Basemap Source: Google Maps)**

living space as given by non-residents. The questions (see APPENDIX III) were open ended and branded housing projects were not mentioned to avoid interference with the idealisation by the non-residents.

### **8.3.3) Conclusion**

This section aimed to investigate representational space in relation with branded housing projects through project resident and non-resident interviews. Firstly, project residents approach branded housing projects positively. In general being branded was defined as a positive aspect of a project as it is seemed as a guarantee for a higher living standard. This framing from representational space was consistent with the framing in promotional materials. Secondly, access to facilities and services through the projects was an important issue for project residents, which is also consistent with the previous findings. Thirdly, feeling safe, peaceful and secure was highlighted by the project residents. Safety and security was also one of the consistent aspects of promotion of the projects. Lastly, non-residents mentioned social, spatial and mental aspects (such as a peaceful place or good social relations) while defining their ideal space to live, which resonates with both the content of promotional materials and the content of resident interviews.

### **8.4) Conclusion**

This chapter aimed to investigate the discursive formation of branded housing projects through representations of space and representational space and investigate its relationship with production of social consent for commodification of urban space. While the news content emphasises economic gain through the projects and frames the projects as beneficial developments for both individuals and society, the promotional materials frame projects as special places to live. The projects are idealised and normalised through these discourses. In addition, the interviewees describe the projects as safe, secure and peaceful places, and places which produce solutions to problems of everyday life. Therefore, idealisation processes for the projects are continuing through the representational space of the interviewees. This analysis shows the intrinsic relationship of discursive formation of the phenomenon of branded housing projects, representations of space, representational space and production of social consent and hegemony. Production of social consent for these commodified forms of production of space plays a crucial role in the deepening of contemporary commodification of urban space.

Referring back to the theoretical framework of this research, from a Gramscian perspective, hegemony is not merely domination of one group over another, but it is lived and continuously produced. Therefore, social consent and production of common sense is critical for building hegemony, and hegemon groups embrace some of the values of subordinates while creating common sense. Here, a dialectic relationship of representational space and representations of space in relation with the production of common sense can explain these consistencies between project promotional materials and interviews. It is not plausible to claim that these consistencies are a result of representations of space's domination on representational space completely. A more sensitive conclusion can be derived that representations of space and representational space are in a dialectical relationship in the discursive formation of branded housing projects. While formulating representations of space, dominant groups embrace basic human needs (e.g. feeling safe and secure, accessing fresh air) and merge them with the commodity package. These result in the appropriation of representational space about branded housing projects and contribute to the production of social consent for private provision of these needs and, therefore, for the commodification of urban space.

## CHAPTER 9 - CONCLUSION

This research investigates the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation, and argues that commodification of urban space is deepening under neoliberal urbanisation by expanding the commodity realm while producing its enabling mechanisms. The research set its two main research objectives as investigating the main dimensions of the contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation and investigating its enabling mechanisms.

The research grounds this argument through the critical case study of branded housing projects developed in Istanbul and investigates the dynamics of contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation through a multi-layer analysis of the branded housing projects, while applying a critical perspective. In aiming for completeness, for this analysis a mixed-method-strategy was undertaken through qualitative and quantitative analyses by aiming to use qualitative and quantitative methods (Bryman, 2012, p. 637). Firstly, the research focuses on the relationship between commodification of urban space and the spatial practice experienced in branded housing projects (for objective 1). Secondly, the research focuses on the development processes of the branded housing projects in order to explore the relationship between the emergence of branded housing and neoliberal restructuring in Turkey and the discursive formation of the branded housing projects as a part of consent-building for commodification of urban space (for objective 2). (See Table 1.1 for the details.)

The case of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey (therefore, in Istanbul) presents an illuminating example for this investigation in terms of its pace and the role of the state in this restructuring in Turkey. In addition, the investigation of branded housing projects presents a valuable case as a phenomenon emerging with neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey and beyond.

For this investigation, the research proposes a theoretical framework interlinking Marxist commodification theory, Lefebvrian production of space and Gramsci's

theory of hegemony as its theoretical base. The research positions this case study on Marx's theory of commodity and commodification by acknowledging the value of commodity as coagulated labour, and investigates the commodification of urban space in relation with the dynamics of production of space (Lefebvre, 1992), production of hegemony (Gramsci, 2000) and capital accumulation through urban space (Harvey, 1985).

While Lefebvrian production of space enabled the researcher to investigate the dynamics of production of urban space in depth, Gramscian theory of hegemony enabled the researcher to include dynamics of political and civil societies in the discussion. As Kipfer argues, the two theories share a base of urban Marxism, which allows interlinking them epistemologically. This epistemological base allowed the researcher to interlink these two theories with the commodification of urban space, which is the meta-aim of this research.

The research concludes that the commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation is deepening by expanding the commodity realm into the temporal dimension (spatial experience) while producing its enabling mechanisms, and proposes the concept of hyper-commodification of urban space for commodification practices of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation.

### **9.1) Summary of the Research**

The research critically reviewed the literatures on neoliberalization and neoliberal urbanisation, commodity and commodification, the production of space together with the commodification of space, housing enclaves and branded spatial development, and located the case of branded housing projects in a global context. It presented a detailed review of neoliberalism including its historical development and contemporary practice. As a result of this discussion, the research positioned this critical case study within the framework of variegated neoliberalization. Following Castree's (2004) criticism of the ambiguity of the meaning of commodity and commodification, the research reviewed the different approaches to, and theories of, commodification as well as various areas of commodification.



The research introduced the case of branded housing projects in Istanbul along with the context of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey by discussing the development of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey extensively. The discussion included development of neoliberal urbanisation by focusing on the initial period for this development (1980-2001), the context of housing in Turkey, with its unique characteristics and processes, and the phenomenon of branded housing projects in Turkey in relation with the global increase in development of enclaves. An important point to make here is the role of the military coup in these neoliberalization processes. The neoliberal policies in Turkey were applied by the force of the military coup, suppressing opposition in various fragments of the society. The branded housing projects phenomenon as a contemporary version of housing enclaves emerged in Turkey within this context. While it presents similarities with other versions of housing enclaves developed in other countries, it also presents specific characteristics. The conceptual development of branded housing per se is an important aspect of these specific characteristics due to its embedded emergence in everyday life and media coverage in Turkey.

The research presented an analysis of the development processes of branded housing projects in Turkey by discussing the deepening of neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey in the post-2001 period, and focusing on the restructuring of public institutions (TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO) as state developers. It presented a deeper critical analysis of development processes of four selected branded housing projects to elaborate more on the development processes of branded housing projects. As part of the neoliberal restructuring process, first, the legal and regulatory framework related to urbanisation in Turkey was transformed, and a regulatory mechanism acting as an enabling mechanism for commodification of urban space was produced. The regulatory mechanism, as part of political society (Gramsci), is critical for operations of big capital in urban space, and therefore for the production of branded housing projects. It also revealed the role of political society in commodification of urban space. Second, operational institutions such as TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO were created for the practice of the neoliberal state. By transforming these public housing institutions into public developers and promoters of the construction sector, the state serves its mission to facilitate capital accumulation (Harvey, 2007, p. 7). Third, the development model is discussed as a crucial aspect of this practice of commodification. It is an explicitly profit-oriented practice; the public sector puts public assets (publicly-owned land) into the housing

market and contributes to the construction boom in Turkey. Through this practice, public land is being transformed into private property; therefore the model enables a covert way of privatisation of public land. In addition, the practice of the revenue-sharing project fosters commodification of urban space through legitimising the provision of housing units as market commodities and exclusive provision of services and facilities within their confines. This legalisation is based on the claim that these projects serve the public good by creating income for affordable housing projects that are also based on the private property. As a result, the practice exemplifies the development processes acting as one of the major enabling mechanisms for branded housing projects.

The research then focused on the analysis of spatial practice in branded housing projects through applying the responsive environments framework to four selected projects and discussing the use of space and spatial experience in branded housing projects according to the resident interviews. It discussed the spatial practice as a co-product of spatial pattern and urban experience and its relationship with the commodification of urban space.

As a result, the research set out the dialectical relationship between the spatial pattern and urban experience and related this with the dynamics of commodification of urban space, and particularly discussed the deepening of this commodification through the temporal dimension. The spatial pattern of the projects presents a segregated and introverted enclave pattern where both spatial and visual permeability is limited. The projects present private, exclusive and controlled provision of land uses. This level of segregation and control over spatial production allows the developer companies to package a slice of urban space as a commodity for the market, and therefore contributes to the commodification of urban space. The analysis of spatial experience concluded that such experience is directly related to the land uses provided in the projects while being highly mediated and controlled, which also fosters commodification of urban space through fetishising and alienating everyday experience.

The research also discussed the analysis of the discursive formation of the phenomenon of branded housing projects as the second enabling mechanism for commodification of urban space. The discussion included analysis of news articles by adopting Kumar's dominance-resistance model and multi-modal discourse analysis, the multi-modal

discourse analysis of print advertisements and the project catalogues, and the representational space in relation with the branded housing projects through the project resident interviews. Chapter 8 concluded with a discussion of discursive formation and representations of space and appropriation of representational space, together with social consent production. In other words, the discursive formation of the branded housing projects was analysed based on two groups and four sources: representations of space through the analyses of the news articles and promotional materials (print advertisements and project catalogues); and representational space through the analyses of the views of residents and non-residents on branded housing projects. While the news content emphasizes economic gain through the projects and frames the projects as beneficial developments for both individuals and the society, promotional materials frame projects as special places to live. The projects are idealised and normalised through these discourses. In addition, the interviewees describe the projects as safe, secure and peaceful places, and places which produce solutions to problems of everyday life. Therefore, idealisation processes for the projects are continuing through the representational space of the interviewees. The research discussed the intrinsic relationship of discursive formation of the phenomenon of branded housing projects, representations of space, representational space and production of social consent and hegemony.

As discussed so far, from a Gramscian perspective, hegemony is not merely domination of one group over another, but a lived and continuously produced experience. Social consent and production of common sense are critical for building hegemony, and hegemon groups embrace some of the values of subordinates while creating common sense. Here, consistencies between project promotional materials and interviews show the dialectic relationship between representational space and representations of space in relation with the production of common sense. It is a result of the fact that representations of space and representational space are in a dialectical relationship in the discursive formation of branded housing projects. While formulating representations of space, dominant groups embrace basic human needs (e.g. feeling safe and secure, accessing fresh air) and merge them with the commodity package. This results in appropriation of representational space about branded housing projects and contributes to production of social consent for private provision of services to meet these needs, and therefore commodification of urban space.

As the overall result, the research grounded its main argument, namely that the commodification of urban space is deepening under neoliberal urbanization, by investigating the expansion of the commodity realm into spatial experience along with spatial pattern and investigating its enabling mechanisms through development processes and the dynamics of discursive formation, and proposes the concept of hypercommodification of urban space for this contemporary commodification pattern of urban space.

## **9.2) Limitations of the Research**

The first limitation originated from the segregated character of the project areas. Most of project areas are gated, which produces a physical accessibility problem. This also resulted in problems with recruiting residents of the projects as interviewees. Recruiting interviewees by entering directly into these 43 project areas and talking with the residents in the common areas of the projects was not possible. The research overcame this using the list of 43 projects, and then applied snowball sampling. While recruiting interviewees by using personal connections, in order to avoid conflict of interest and to put some distance between the researcher and the interviewees, the researcher set another criterion, which was that the researcher would not interview any project residents known personally prior to interview. Therefore, although the researcher used personal connections while forming the sample of the project residents, none of the interviewees was a person the researcher knew before the interviews.

The second limitation is related to accessing the promotional materials, which was partially overcome. Collecting the catalogues of all 43 projects was not possible since some projects had been completed and their sales offices had closed or their promotional materials had been removed from their websites. This limitation was overcome by undertaking archival work at IFEA and collecting 6 project catalogues from the archive. In the end, 28 catalogues from the 43 projects were obtained and analysed.

The third limitation is related to the limitations of using secondary sources as comparable and reliable data. For example, some of the projects have been changed after the approval. This problem was addressed by cross checking the data from different sources. As a result, the data was collected from various sources including

reports produced by the Chamber of City Planners and Chamber of Architects, reports of public institutions, housing project documents and related data sets were cross-checked by using multiple sources. Another problem of secondary data is late publication and dissemination of building statistics in Turkey. An example of this is the still-unpublished building census which should have been published in 2010. In this case, the best possible sources were used, such as using building permit numbers instead of a still-unpublished building census.

### **9.3) Contributions of the Research**

The research aims to contribute to theory, methodology, empirical knowledge and practice. The research contributes to theory firstly by introducing the concept of *hyper-commodification of urban space*, and through its theoretical framework interlinking commodity (Marx, Harvey), production of space (Lefebvre), social consent and common sense (Gramsci).

Secondly, the research aims to contribute to methodology by proposing a mixed method strategy bringing Kumar's dominance-resistance model and multi-modal discourse analysis from communication studies together with spatial analysis. This is a methodological contribution that goes beyond the complementary use of qualitative and quantitative methods in the social sciences by adding on another layer: spatial analysis.

Thirdly, the research aims to contribute to empirical knowledge by investigating the dynamics of contemporary commodification of urban space, and by providing a detailed analysis of new actors and partnerships which have emerged in neoliberal urbanization in Turkey, with path-dependent characteristics, in addition to providing a detailed analysis of branded housing projects as an emerging version of housing enclaves. Lastly, the research aims to contribute to practice by exposing the widely idealised and normalised conditions of branded housing projects (in Turkey) to critical discussion, and by presenting a spatial analysis of these contemporary living environments (project areas).

### ***9.3.1) Theoretical Contribution - Proposing Hyper-commodification of Urban Space as a Concept***

The discussions in previous chapters argued that the investigation of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation requires a multifaceted approach to the dynamics of production of urban space. As proposed in Chapter 3, Kipfer (2002, p. 119) proposes a possible theoretical opening through reflecting on Lefebvre's production of space and Gramsci's theory of hegemony, which provided a theoretical base for developing such a multifaceted approach for this research. This approach was adopted and expanded for analysing dynamics of contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation. According to Kipfer (2002, p. 126), as discussed in Chapter 3, Lefebvre and Gramsci's approaches to hegemony are "different but complementary". For both authors production of hegemony is the key for a capitalist system, which is produced through the "links between popular culture and 'relations of force' among socio-political forces (Gramsci) and the connections between everyday life, the state, capital and dominant knowledge (Lefebvre)" (Kipfer, 2002, pp. 126–127). While Gramsci's approach focuses on historical and spatial dynamics of political society and civil society, Lefebvre's approach focuses on dynamics of commodification and contradictions of everyday life. Both of them discuss cultural phenomena, common sense and everyday life while accepting power as a social relationship (Kipfer, 2002, p. 127).

According to Lefebvre (1992, p. 31), every society produces its own space while "[s]ocial space is a (social) product" (Lefebvre, 1992, p. 26). Lefebvre's (1992) conceptual triad for production of space was discussed in Chapter 3, as spatial practices, representations of space and representational space. In this triad, spatial practice refers to the physical form and daily routine. Therefore, spatial practice as a concept provides a theoretical tool to investigate the physical space (urban form, urban and architectural elements of urban space) and its relationship with spatial experience (daily routine and practice). Spatial practice is crucial for the survival of capitalist relationships, as Lefebvre (1992) relates it with dynamics of production and reproduction of capitalist relations. Following this theoretical path, the research investigated the deepening of commodification of urban space through spatial practice by spatial pattern and temporal dimension.

Representations of space refers to defined frameworks by dominant groups such as experts. Lefebvre (1992, p. 42) points out that “[r]epresentations of space are certainly abstract, but they also play a part in social and political practice”. This is the space which the experts interpret with their various frames and then re-produce. Therefore, it is a product of reframing of the urban reality according to the lenses of actors engaging in the production processes. Representational space, on the other hand, refers to the space of symbols and imaginations. It is the lived and experienced space of users. Representational space as the space of meaning production is the space for historic formations, memories, signs, symbols, codes, experiences, and so on. Lefebvre (1992, p. 44) questions the relationship between representations of space and representational space. According to Lefebvre this relationship is multifaceted and open to manipulation. Through the dialectic relationship between the representational space and representations of space, appropriation of representational space presents a critical position for production of common sense, and therefore, social consent (Gramsci). The uncritical acceptance of *normalised* urban spaces is the key for investigating the dynamics of production of urban spaces, and the acceptance of commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation.

Therefore, this relationship of representational space and representations of space links this theoretical opening with the theory of hegemony of Gramsci through the dynamics of production of social consent. According to Gramsci, civil society is “the sum of social activities and institutions which are not directly part of the government, the judiciary or the representative bodies (police, armed forces)” (Forgacs, 2000, p. 420), as discussed in Chapter 3. According to the Gramscian theory of hegemony “[the ruling power] must be able to reach into the minds and lives of its subordinates” (Jones, 2006, p. 4) and transform their “interests and desires” (Jones, 2006, p. 4). The power of hegemonic groups is based on their ability to gain consent of their subordinates. Chandler (2011) argues that hegemony “represents not only political and economic control, but also the ability of the dominant class to project its own way of seeing the world so that those who are subordinated by it accept it as ‘common sense’ and ‘natural’”. This acceptance “involves willing and active consent” (Chandler, 2011). As a result, appropriation of representational space is a critical moment for producing social consent, which links these two theoretical approaches in terms of production of urban space and dynamics of its commodification. When representational space is

appropriated, common sense can be shaped, and therefore social consent can be produced in favour of the groups appropriating the representational space.

Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 3, the civil society is one side of the theory of hegemony of Gramsci, while the second side is the political society. Political society corresponds to “a sphere of ‘domination’, the organ or instrument of the oppression of one class by another” (Forgacs, 2000, p. 429). Political society plays a critical role in production of space, as Lefebvre (2009) points out through representational space. Enacted laws and regulations are part of the production processes of urban space, which are part of political society from a Gramscian perspective.

The research followed this approach of interlinking the two theories considering the potential of producing a comprehensive analytical framework for investigating the dynamics of the production of space under neoliberal urbanisation, while particularly focusing on their relationship with commodification of urban space. Focusing on commodification of urban space, which is the ultimate aim of this research, requires adding another layer to such an analysis framework, which is the commodification theory.

Theories and concepts related to commodification were discussed in Chapter 2 in detail. This research investigated the commodification of urban space through the relationship of the use value and the exchange value while acknowledging the *value* as coagulated labour-time (Marx), which is the key for Marxist analysis of commodification. Marx (2000) defines primitive accumulation as the starting accumulation for capitalist production. Primitive accumulation is a form of capital accumulation which is done by commodification of something which is not a commodity in the market initially. Therefore, it is a critical concept for investigating the dynamics of commodification (of urban space). More recently, Harvey (2003) has interpreted this concept and re-defined it as accumulation by dispossession: Harvey (2003) argues that primitive accumulation in Marx’s conceptualisation is the accumulation for the beginning of capitalism; however, primitive accumulation is a continuing process. Primitive accumulation/accumulation by dispossession is realised through transforming something that previously had only use value into a commodity that has exchange value in the market.



This re-conceptualisation resonates with Prudham's moments of commodification. As discussed in Chapter 2, Prudham (2009) defines commodification as "interlinked processes whereby: production for use is systematically displaced by production for exchange; social consumption and reproduction increasingly relies on purchased commodities; new classes of goods and services are made available in the commodity-form; and money plays an increasing role in mediating exchange as a common currency of value" (Prudham, 2009, p. 215). Prudham (2009) also defines two moments for commodification as stretching (market expansion) and deepening (increase in the provision of goods and services as commodities). Therefore, the deepening moment of commodification is a moment of primitive accumulation/accumulation by dispossession by converting something into commodity in the market.

Taking account of primitive accumulation/accumulation by dispossession as a continuous process for commodification and deepening moment of commodification as a moment for realising this accumulation, the research added this to its analysis framework as another layer (in addition to Lefebvre's and Gramsci's approaches) in order to investigate contemporary commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanisation.

Firstly, this research focused on deepening of commodification of urban space through investigating the spatial practice (Lefebvre) for primitive accumulation/accumulation via dispossession practices. The research accomplished this by analysing spatial practice of branded housing projects. Secondly, the research investigated the multifaceted relationship among political society (Gramsci), civil society (Gramsci), representations of space (Lefebvre) and representational space (Lefebvre) and conceptualised these as the enabling mechanisms of commodification of urban space. The research accomplished this by analysing development processes of selected branded housing projects and discursive formation of the phenomenon of branded housing through media content and experiences of people. According to the results of these analyses, the research concludes that commodification of urban space under neoliberal urbanization presents a deepening moment for practices of primitive accumulation/accumulation by dispossession in urban space, while producing its enabling mechanisms. As a result, the research re-conceptualised this as hyper-commodification of urban space.

In the literature, the usage of hyper-commodification corresponds to various meanings including hyper-commodification of culture, hyper-commodification in terms of high-tech capital, and hyper-commodification in sports studies. Epstein (1996) reviews the uses of *hyper-* in 20<sup>th</sup> century post-modern philosophy, (quantum) science and literature in terms of “transition from modernism to post-modernism”. He concludes that usage of the prefix hyper- changes its meaning from *super* to *pseudo*, and it combines the meaning of both.

“Unlike the prefixes “over-” and “su[pe]r-,” it designates not simply a heightened degree of the property it qualifies, but a superlative degree which exceeds a certain limit. (The same meaning is found in words like “hypertonia,” “hypertrophy, ” “hyperinflation, ” “hyperbole” . . .) This excess is such an abundant surplus of the quality in question that in crossing the limit it turns into its own antithesis, reveals its own illusionary nature. The meaning of “hyper, ” therefore, is a combination of two meanings: “super” and “pseudo.” “Hyper” is such a “super” that through excess and transgression undermines its own reality and reveals itself as “pseudo.” By negation of a thesis, the revolutionary antithesis grows into “super” but finally exposes its own derivative and simulative character.” (Epstein, 1996)

One of the examples Epstein (1996) uses here is Baudrillard's hyper-reality, which is a representation of reality which eventually replaces it. According to Baudrillard:

“there are three levels of simulation, where the first level is an obvious copy of reality and the second level is a copy so good that it blurs the boundaries between reality and representation. The third level is one which produces a reality of its own without being based upon any particular bit of the real world. . . . It is this third level of simulation, where the model comes before the constructed world, that Baudrillard calls the hyperreal.” (Lane, 2000, p. 30)

Pakulski (2009) uses hyper- as the intensification within his proposal of four aspects in searching for the answer to the questions: “Can the idea of ‘postmodernity’ be given any sociological content? Can we give a satisfying account of the processes that drive ‘post-modernization’?” (Pakulski, 2009, p. 273):

“These processes are not new. In fact, the sources of postmodern social dynamics are firmly anchored in processes constitutive of modern society. What is new is **the intensity of those processes (‘hyper-’)** combined with their specific interaction across the time-space and sectoral boundaries.” (Pakulski, 2009, p. 274) (bold emphasis added)

Hyper-commodification as a concept is one of the three pillars of Crook, Pakulsky and Water’s (1992) attempt to systemise post-modernism (or with their conceptualisation of post-modernization which the authors define as “a continuous process of ‘reversals (hence the prefix ‘post’) through acceleration’ of the core processes of modernization” (Pakulski, 2009, p. 260)). According to Crook, Pakulsky and Water (1992):

“... the principal trends of modern society described by classic social theorists - social differentiation (Durkheim), commodification (Marx) and rationalisation (Weber) - are still at work, but it is exactly from their **intensification** that postmodern society emerges. In **expanding themselves, the process of social differentiation, commodification and rationalization tend to cancel out their own effects, instead of mutually reinforcing each other. And once the apex is reached, each one of them transforms into its opposite.** For example, de-differentiation springs from hyper-differentiation, de-rationalization emerges from hyper-rationalization, **de-commodification evolves from hyper-commodification.**” (Martinelli, 2005, p. 86) (bold emphasis added)

In this sense, after reaching the limits, *hyper-* becomes *de-*, and by reaching the limit of hyper-commodification, the boundary between what is a commodity and what is not is blurred (Pakulski, 2009, p. 260), and in this context, this reversal is defined as de-commodification.

The conceptualisation of hyper-commodification in post-modernism discussions poses more questions than answers, including the limit where hyper commodification turns to be de-commodification and how the boundaries of being commodity and non-commodity are blurred.

Another use of the term of hyper-commodification is Walsh and Giulianotti's (2006) conceptualisation of commodification in the sport industry: "By 'hyper-commodification' we are referring to both the substantive increase in the range and number of goods that are bought and sold as well as the intensification of market understandings and attitudes towards sport itself" (Walsh and Giulianotti, 2006, p. 14). Walsh and Giulianotti (2006, p. 1) argue that "[e]lite sport is now, more clearly than ever before, a commodity – a commercial enterprise governed by the laws of supply and demand".

Walsh and Giulianotti (2006, p. 14) propose four features for their definition of hyper commodification in sport: "the transformation of clubs and systems into corporations, the emergence of large numbers of highly paid sportspeople [professionalization of players and athletes], the advent of large scale advertising and merchandising in sport and finally the 'venalisation' of the *ethos* of sport". While the first three features are clear enough, the last feature requires more explanation. The venalisation of the ethos of the sport is defined by the authors as the dominance of money as motivation for sport rather than sentimental reasons. This is not limited to players' or athletes' motivations, but market rhetoric has become dominant in sport (e.g. calling sport an 'industry' or calling teams a 'franchise').

Therefore, the use of the term hyper-commodification by Walsh and Giulianotti (2006) has different connotations than the aforementioned ones. Walsh and Giulianotti's (2006) conceptualisation refers to the expansion of the commodity realm and market dynamics into other dimensions including discourses and motivations.

Usher (2012), on the other hand, discusses the hyper-commodification of culture in relation with his argument about lifelong learning. The author defines hyper-commodification of culture in relation with Baudrillard's sign value, fast capitalism, cyber communication, consumption and hyper-reality. According to Usher (2012, p. 723):

“The culture industry spreading out from the realm of production to the realm of culture commodifies the latter. The boundaries between high culture, popular culture, the market and everyday life become blurred (Lash 1990 ; Featherstone 1991 ; Harvey 1989 ). With the proliferation and

accelerated circulation of signs, ... there is a hyper-commodification and 'mediatization' of culture. Thus, as fast capitalism grows ever more competitive, culture is turned into commodity signs."

From this perspective, the culture industry expands the commodity realm into the realm of culture. This is defined as the "hyper commodification of culture by signs and simulations" (Usher, 2012, p. 727), while defining hyper-commodification as "the practices of consuming the signifying images of culture" (Usher, 2012, p. 727).

In Usher's (2012) usage as well, the concept of hyper-commodification refers to an expansion of the commodification realm into other dimensions.

Goldman, Papsan and Kersey (2003) approach this from a different perspective and discuss the sign value, advertisement, speed, capital and globalisation, and hyper-commodity in terms of "commercial representations of Global High-Tech Capital". The authors discuss advertising as a part of "the cultural economy of signs". According to this conceptualisation, advertising aims to cultivate and circulate a sign value that is called branding. In other words, these authors re-define branding as sign values. Within this discussion, Goldman et al. (2003) define hyper-commodity as:

"What do we mean by a hyper-commodity world? Commodity circuits operating at continuously higher velocities. We've adopted the term to designate higher and higher levels of market integration where commodities are subdivided over and over again, circulate more quickly and with (supposedly) less friction, and hence -- supposedly -- with higher margins." (Goldman et al., 2003)

In this sense, the authors discuss hypercommodity and hyper-commodification in terms of Global High-Tech Capital:

"Globalization can be viewed as a function of attempts to unify the world through the structures of markets. The most obvious multinational effort at such unification is the Common Market which has pursued the strategy of nation-states giving up monetary sovereignty in order to gain market clout within world markets. The unification of markets also occurs at the level of

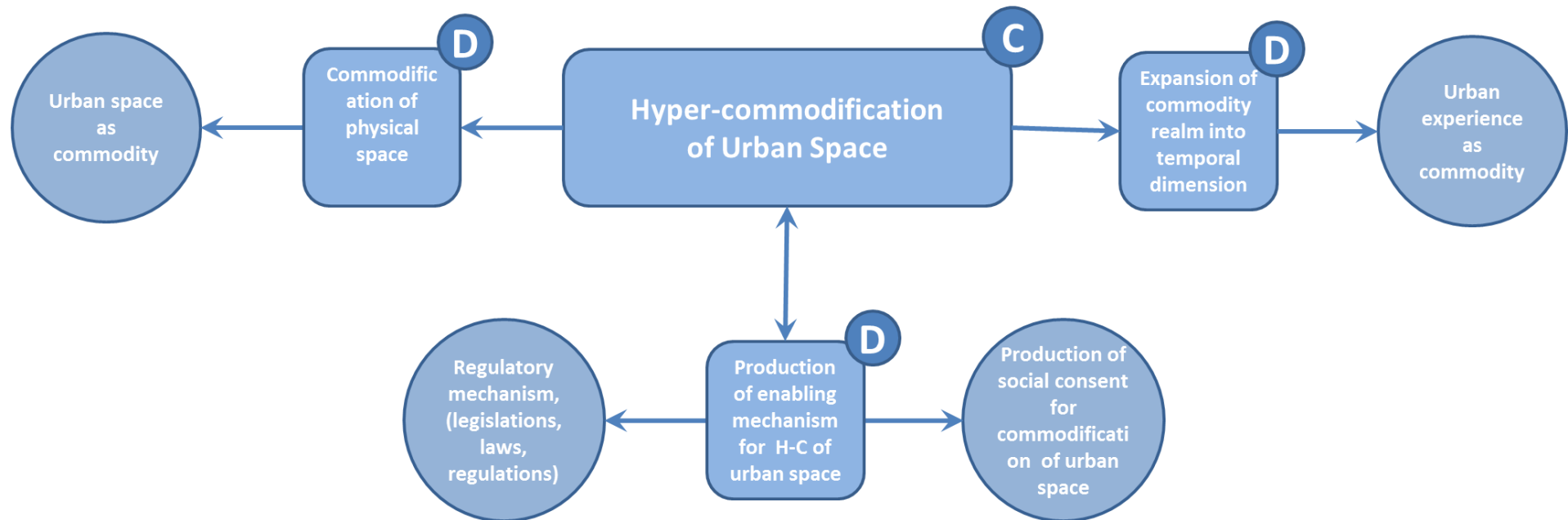
hypercommodification. Representative of this is the so-called B-to-B sector, with startup companies such as VerticalOne that ‘plans to be the company that aggregates highly personal account information (bank accounts, bills, frequent flyer miles, and so forth) into one service, which is then resold to branded sites, be they commerce sites (like brokerages) or content plays (like Intuit.com). ...’ (Red Herring, May 27, 1999) ” (Goldman et al., 2003)

To sum up, for Goldman et al. (2003) hyper-commodity and hyper-commodification are commodity and commodification in a hyper-world whose characteristics include speed, subdivision and creation of new commodities (by repackaging data or introducing fungible products).

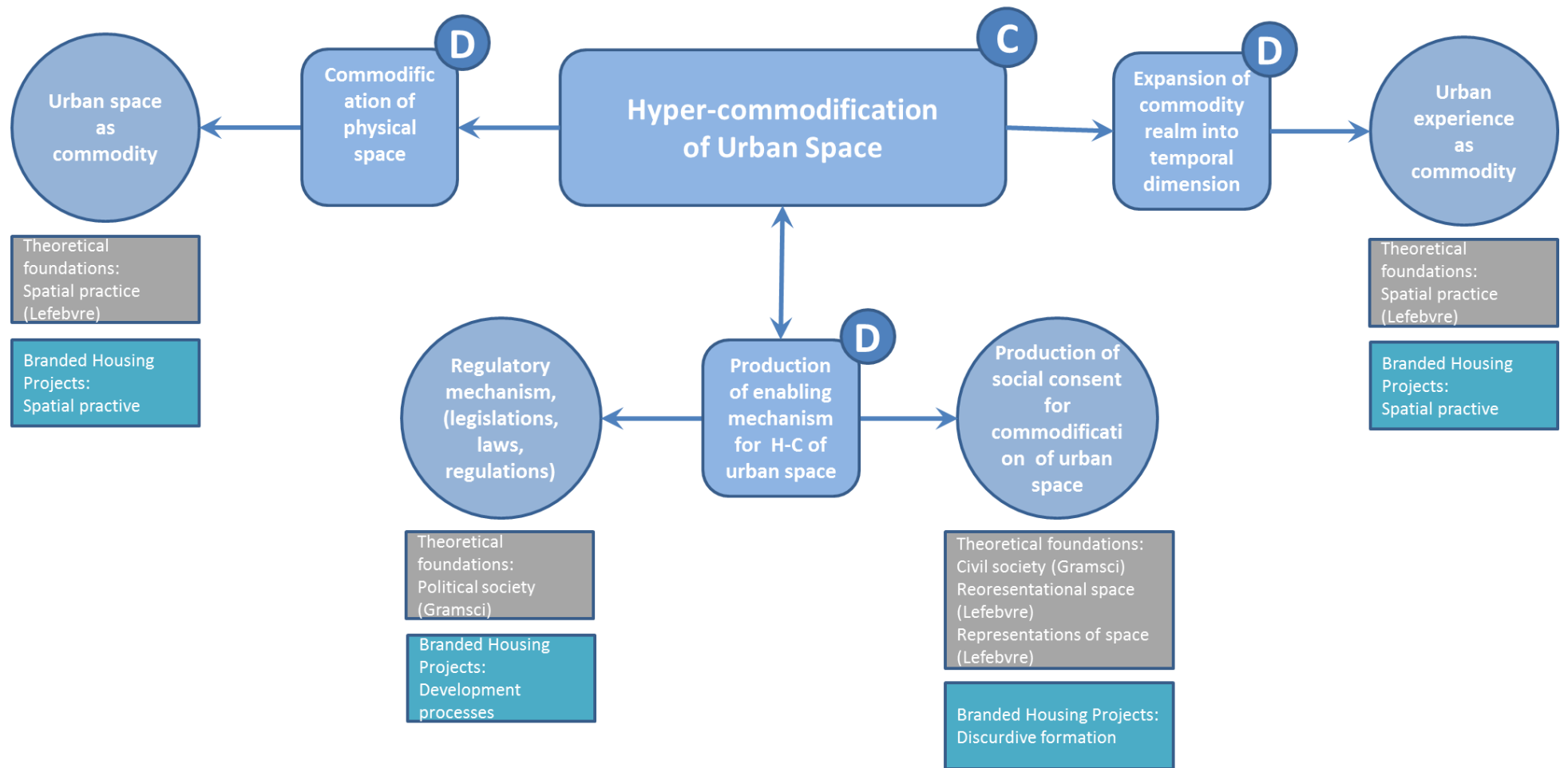
### **Hyper-commodification of Urban Space**

The use of the prefix *hyper* in the conceptualisation of this research is based on the definition of the prefix through more than three dimensions (Collins, 2016). The research concludes that the contemporary commodification of urban space is deepening by expanding the commodity realm into the temporal dimension along with its spatial pattern, while simultaneously producing its enabling mechanisms (regulatory mechanism and discursive formation).

As discussed in previous chapters, this deepening of commodification of urban space is multi-dimensional, including dialectical relationships of spatial practice, representations of space and representational space together with cultural hegemony. In the process of deepening, the production of enabling mechanisms plays a crucial role. On one hand, the regulatory mechanisms are created to realise the practice of commodification. On the other hand, social consent for commodification of urban space is produced by production of common sense for commodified forms of spatial practice and experience through appropriation of representational space and representations of space. This results in *a multi-dimensional commodification of urban space or hyper-commodification of urban space*. (Figure 9.1 and Figure 9.2 demonstrate the building blocks of the concept.)



**Figure 9.1 Conceptualisation of hyper-commodification of urban space with its conceptual dimensions (Source: The author)**



**Figure 9.2 Conceptualisation of hyper-commodification of urban space with its theoretical foundations and analytical framework**

**(Source: The author)**



### ***9.3.2) Methodological Contribution***

The research aims to contribute to methodology by proposing a mixed method strategy bringing together methods from communication studies, social research and spatial analysis. This is a methodological contribution that goes beyond complementary use of qualitative and quantitative methods in social sciences by adding on another layer: spatial analysis. This additional layer is critical for research aiming to investigate a multifaceted phenomenon which also includes spatial aspects. In order to investigate this multifaceted phenomenon, the research applied a mixed-method strategy through qualitative and quantitative analyses of development processes, discursive formation and spatial practice of the branded housing projects as a critical case study. This research applied a mixed-method strategy aiming for completeness, given “that a more complete answer to a research question or set of research questions can be achieved by including both quantitative and qualitative methods” (Bryman, 2012, p. 637). The main methodological contribution of the research is therefore its bringing together of critical discourse analysis, spatial analysis and interview analysis in order to reach completeness.

### ***9.3.3) Contribution to Empirical Knowledge***

Firstly, the research identified a gap in the commodification literature following Williams’ (2002) criticism that the commodification literature requires more evidence-based research. Therefore, the research focuses on branded housing projects as a case study while aiming to produce tangible results to investigate contemporary commodification of urban space. By following the analytical framework discussed so far, the research produced empirical knowledge about development processes, spatial practice and discursive formation of branded housing projects while investigating the dynamics of contemporary commodification of urban space and its enabling mechanisms. Application of this multi-layered framework entailed working on a variety of research subjects. The findings from the analysis of development processes revealed the role of neoliberal restructuring in the expansion of the commodity realm into urban space. The research, firstly, discussed neoliberal urbanisation in Turkey and related this with development of branded housing projects as an example of commodified forms of production of urban space. Through this analysis, the research presented details of a regulatory framework which fosters deepening of

commodification of urban space. In addition, the spatial analysis provided detailed findings about the level of segregation in branded housing projects which fosters commodification by allowing developers to package slices of urban tissue. It provides empirical knowledge about the practice of commodifying the access rights to key urban infrastructure, which contributes to commodification of urban space through expanding the commodity realm into spatial practice. Moreover, the research presented empirical knowledge about the discourses and their relationship with production of social consent for commodification of urban space. This included discussions of representations of space and civil society, as well as of appropriation of representational space and production of social consent. These analyses showed that social consent for commodified forms of production of urban space is produced through various channels.

Secondly, the research aims to contribute to the literature by presenting Turkey as an example of variegated neoliberalization. The research acknowledges that there is not one neoliberalism, but different versions of neoliberalism in the world, and aims to present Turkey case as one of the variegated neoliberalisms following this perspective. While Chapter 2 presents a review of neoliberalism literature, Chapter 5 presents a comprehensive picture of development of neoliberal restructuring and urbanisation in Turkey as a contribution to this literature.

As discussed in Chapter 2, neoliberalization is introduced to the existing institutional frameworks, embedded in those frameworks while transforming the frameworks simultaneously, and produced variegated versions of actually existing neoliberalism(s). This exemplifies the importance of path-dependency in shaping variations of actually existing neoliberalism(s). The neoliberal practice in Turkey presents similarities with practices in Latin American countries such as Chile regarding the impact of a military coup at the beginning of a neoliberal programme (Chapter 2). In addition, public institutions such as TOKI and Emlak Konut GYO have been empowered and act as main actors of production of urban space. This empowerment of state institutions and their role in the practice of neoliberal urbanization in Turkey (as discussed in Chapter 2 and 5) has similarities with neoliberal practices in China in terms of the state's role in this transformation (which is discussed briefly in Chapter 2). As well as these similarities, the path dependent characteristics of Turkey present differences from neoliberal restructuring processes in some Western examples. To illustrate, Turkey has no rented social / public housing supply; therefore, privatisation of social / public

housing was never the case in Turkey. However, Turkey case presents instead an example of privatisation of public land through private housing provision (e.g. branded housing projects), which contributes to the literature as a particular example of such a practice.

#### ***9.3.4) Contribution to Practice***

The research aims to contribute to practice by presenting a detailed analysis of branded housing projects, about which a common sense of an idealised living environment has been produced, from a critical perspective. The research aims to draw this critical picture of a widely accepted phenomenon to challenge such idealisation and normalisation of this commodified form of housing provision.

The research also aims to contribute to practice by pointing out possible risks posed by expansion of commodification for spatial experience, and by expansion of segregated living areas for welfare and wellbeing of the public, considering the exclusive provision of social services and facilities, and the deprivation that is likely to result for vulnerable groups in society.

Following the criticism, the research also suggests that remit of TOKI, as a central mass housing institution, can be restructured in order to produce more socially just and sustainable outcomes. The institution is criticised by scholars for being overly-central, ignoring the localities and local actors (as discussed in Chapter 6). The research responds to this criticism with two recommendations: Firstly, central accumulation of power and excluding / by-passing local actors can be overcome by devolving some authorities of the institute to the local authorities. This can contribute to production of more socially just outcomes by activating local democratic control mechanisms. Secondly, ignoring localities contributes to segregation of branded housing projects by replicating similar design schemas in any locality. Reflecting on localities while producing housing projects would improve design quality and contribute to production of more sustainable outcomes.

#### **9.4) Further Research**

This research identifies two topics for further research. Firstly, research on the views of non-residents about branded housing projects will contribute to the exploration of the dynamics of hyper-commodification of urban space by exploring in depth the production of social consent through discursive formation of branded housing projects. This research applied a scoping study for such a piece of research and presented relevant initial findings. These initial findings demonstrate the approaches of people to such commodified environments only briefly.

Secondly, as discussed, branded housing projects are only one version of housing enclaves that are emerging in numerous countries in parallel with neoliberal urbanization. Therefore, further comparative research is needed to explore similarities and differences between the dynamics of commodification of urban space in different spatial contexts. Comparative research on housing enclaves will also contribute to the housing literature by providing findings from various contexts. Considering the rise of enclaves in Asian cities and the increase in luxury condo developments in western global cities such as London and New York, the results produced from a comparison between these contexts could be a valuable contribution to exploring the contemporary dynamics of urbanization.

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