

Urban Transformation as a Desiring Machine: The Role of Information Flows during Urban Transformation in Turkey's Informal Settlements

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This paper aims to demonstrate that information activates the desire flows and makes the urban transformation machine work. It focuses on understanding how urban transformation currently works as a Deleuzian machine, rather than focusing on how it is implemented. The main focus is to map the trajectory of the word flows through the narratives. First of all technical knowledge flow through media texts and official public statements take their place in the urban transformation process. Technicians and scientists inform that we need to implement the urban transformation process. Then the media starts to glorify the urban transformation process representing how beautiful the new houses are. Finally in informal neighborhoods (which are entitled as gecekondü in Turkish urban system) the word flows transform into rumor flows. These rumor flows, which are ignored during the planning process, channel desire flows, making certain spaces more or less attractive and affect the whole transformation process.

Introduction

Urban transformation has become the most dominant process of urbanization in 21st century Turkey, as well in most of the world. The primary tool to justify urban transformation motives is the risk of earthquakes through new laws to reconstruct high-risk buildings and new funds to support residents in rebuilding their houses. Urban transformation has evolved over the years to affect all cities in the country. However, the people most affected are always the inhabitants of informal settlements, who have no legal security over their homes because their only option is to go to a mass housing area that does not suit their life style. The neighborhoods of Turkey's informally constructed houses, built autonomously by their inhabitants, are known as *gecekondü*. These provide both a housing alternative for low-income residents and a creative way to easily make connections with urban life through solidarity relations with family or fellow countrymen.¹ From the 1950s to 2000s, *gecekondü* neighborhoods changed in terms of the built environment and their inhabitants. Erman,² for example, claims that the developing representation of *gecekondü* inhabitants in academic discourse can be categorized

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1. T. Şenyapılı, “Baraka”dan Gecekonduya: Ankara’da Kentsel Mekânın Dönüşümü. 1923-1960 (İstanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2004).

2. T. Erman, “The Politics of Squatter (*Gecekondü*) Studies in Turkey: The Changing Representations of Rural Migrants in the Academic Discourse,” *Urban Studies* 38, no. 7 (2001): 984.

under four major time-periods: “the 1950s and 1960s (‘the rural Other’); the 1970s and early 1980s (‘the disadvantaged Other’); the mid-1980s and mid-1990s (‘the urban poor Other(s)’ versus ‘the undeserving Other(s)’ and ‘the culturally inferior Other(s) as sub-culture’); and the late 1990s (‘the threatening Other’).” These changing representations and improvements in the physical environments of these neighborhoods triggered the appetite of contractors to develop these areas (Look for “*Gecekondu* example” in Figure 1).



Figure 1. *Derbent Gecekondu Neighborhood*

Source: Photographed by Bilge Martan during TUBITAK Research Project no: 110k404.

Urban transformation in Turkey is just too complex to be explained in terms of flows of capital. Rather, it acts as a machine including physical, political, legal, and discursive flows, as well as desire flows that interrupt and accelerate the other flows. Despite the different western terms (regeneration, transformation, renewal, renovation) to talk about reshaping cities, all such interventions are considered as “urban transformation.”³ This term encompasses all kinds of interventions by the public authorities and all kinds of spontaneous changes in urban areas. In Turkey, this process is used as a new capitalist strategy of urbanization. In every city, urban transformation projects improve the living conditions of the upper rather than lower classes. In this process, urban transformation projects not only lack any democratic, participative or social goals but also, with the assistance of the state

3. A. Ataov and S. Osmay, “Turkiye’de Kentsel Dönüşüme Yöntemsel Bir Yaklaşım,” *Metu Jfa* 24 (2007): 57-82.

apparatus, but they are trying to maximize profits for the private sector.⁴ Profit-led urban transformation tends to have only one consequence: the gentrification of low-income neighborhoods, as seen in many examples in Turkey.⁵

Essentially, words flow through different channels of media, legal texts, statements of public authority, and word of mouth is the main mechanism of urban transformation. The most striking aspect of the news narrative regarding urban transformation is that it is primarily presented as the transformation of informal neighborhoods and a process of “ending the *gecekondu*” and replacing it with mass housing. From 2005 to 2015, there were more than 7,000 “urban transformation” news items in just three newspapers. Most of these news items presented figures regarding the number of constructed housing and comments about their modernity. They also emphasized how urban transformation was essential for the cities by quoting government statements about the desirability of mega projects and the beauty of shopping centers.

Accordingly, we are constantly bombarded with advertisements, TV video clips, or newspaper articles about new transformation projects, and lectured by commentators about their necessity. Moreover, in *gecekondu* areas, urban transformation does not only happen through legal processes or urban transformation projects because any project can initiate it, such as luxury residences, large shopping malls, or transportation hubs. Negotiations with individual inhabitants are very important as they can trigger and channel rumors, which certain spaces either more or less attractive by leading desire flows. Our case study focuses on Sarıyer, a district in Istanbul located on the north side of the Bosphorus, where new roads and tunnels, and the Third Bosphorus Bridge were constructed, as well as large private investments and luxury-housing complexes.⁶ These new investments initiated a process that forced Sarıyer’s *gecekondu* inhabitants to move to new mass housing areas located on Istanbul’s periphery. This study adopts a new theoretical framework to analyze the urban transformation process in Sarıyer’s *gecekondu* neighborhoods. These word flows in media brings us to find a new toolbox to read the urban transformation process in Turkey and the concept of “desire” seems to be useful to explain how things work.

Deleuze and Guattari⁷ not only read capitalism through capital movements, but also add “desire” as a new input to these components. Desire flows are the most important input and result of the capitalist machine. They make desire asexual, remove it from individuality, and thus think together social production and desire production.⁸ Deleuzian desire is therefore used in this article as an

4. T. Kuyucu and O. Unsal, “Urban Transformation as State Led Property Transfer: An Analyses of Two Cases of Urban Renewal in Istanbul,” *Urban Studies* 47, no. 7 (2010): 1479-1499.

5. B. Şen, “Ekonomik Gelişmenin Kültürel Stratejileri: İstanbul Kent Merkezleri ve Tarihi Kentsel Alanların Yeniden Yapılandırılması,” *Planlama Dergisi* 2, no. 36 (2006).

6. M. C. Yalçın, Ç. O. Çalışkan, K. Çılgın and U. Dündar, “İstanbul Dönüşüm Coğrafyası,” in *Yeni İstanbul Çalışmaları: Sınırlar, Mücadeleler, Açılımlar* (eds.) C. B. Ayfer and Ö. Cenk. İstanbul: Metis Yayınları, 2014.

7. G. Deleuze and F. Guattari, *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia I* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983).

8. G. Livesey, “Assemblage,” in *The Deleuze Dictionary*, 18-19 (ed) A. Parr. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010.

important tool for understanding how urban transformation works. For this article the definition of urban transformation in Turkey is drawn on Hillier,⁹ who maintains that planning is the art of manipulation. That is, urban transformation becomes a desired object in the mass media and begins to act like a “desiring machine”. Desire moves faster than the rules, procedures, or laws governing urban transformation.

To conclude, this study considers information as one of the most important components of the urban transformation machine. This paper aims to demonstrate that information activates the desire flows and makes the urban transformation machine work. It focuses on understanding how urban transformation currently works as a Deleuzian machine, rather than focusing on how it is implemented. The main aim of this paper is to map the trajectory of the word flows through the narratives. First of all technical knowledge flow through media texts and official public statements take their place in the urban transformation process. Technicians and scientists inform that we need to implement the urban transformation process. Then the media starts to glorify the urban transformation process representing how beautiful the new houses are. Finally this paper will focus on a *gecekondu* area to see how the words are flowing in the neighborhood itself. There I witnessed that all the word flows transform into rumor flows and touch the everyday life of every households.

The Toolbox: Machines and Planning

In discussing the question of urban transformation as the functioning of a machine, this study focuses on Deleuze and Guattari’s approach. In addition to these authors’ vision beyond the theory of the subject, pragmatically selected pairs of concepts were shaped through empirical research. The following sections present the relevant literature under three main titles: Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of desire and flow, their line in urban literature, and their discussions of the working process of word flows.

Assemblages of Desire

Philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari can be defined as a “philosophy of flow” and “assemblages”. They underline that the issue of flow-cutting is fundamentally related to the machine, for which the capitalist system functions as a machine in itself.¹⁰ Other machines connected to or interrupting this capitalist machine are also intertwined with this system. They state that the capitalist machine works through deterritorialization and reterritorialization and applies to all mechanical systems articulated to the capitalist machine.

Arguing that capitalism functions through constant decoding and recoding, Deleuze and Guattari claim that decoded flows may actually have emancipatory

9. J. Hillier, “Straddling the Post-Structuralist Abyss: Between Transcendence and Immanence,” *Planning Theory* 4, no. 3 (2005): 282.

10. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia I*, 1983.

potential. That is, being able to split from conventional regulations and habits may entail emancipation of flows of desire. However, it is exactly at this point that the functioning of capitalism materializes and, immediately after the deterritorialization movement, the capitalist system assigns new codes that reterritorialize the decoded flow. They claim that the capitalism reaches its limits and moves them; it places them in a more remote place.¹¹

Assemblage is a very useful concept to understand the perspective of Deleuze and Guattari. This concept can be considered a kind of heterogeneous association or a multitude. That is, an assemblage is not a homogenized arrangement but an expression of an arrangement formed by differences. An assemblage includes human or non-human, organic or inorganic, technical or natural heterogeneous elements.¹² For example, Deleuze and Guattari¹³ state that the book itself is an assemblage. The assemblage in question can accommodate differences and change continuously, even though it is not an enclosed system that can relate to the outside. When we think of cities in this sense, they are assemblages formed by different people, animals, buildings, genders, and spatial arrangements with multiple uses and so on. That is, “the cities are the conglomerates consisting of people, networks, organizations, as well as buildings and streets and pipelines of various infrastructural components and energy flows.”¹⁴

Here, assemblage is used to make Deleuze and Guattari’s conceptualization of desire easier to understand. Another closely-associated concept, rhizome, has proved useful when considering specifically how flows of words move. Rhizome is part of the smooth space, denoting a system where root and stem cannot be separated; a system that challenges the tree-like hierarchic structure. Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts of smooth and striated spaces are relevant here. They emphasize that the smooth space consists of points remaining between the lines whereas the striated space consists of lines remaining between points.¹⁵ Thus, while there are many paths and possibilities to follow in the smooth space, the flow direction is always predetermined in the striated space. When we look at the conceptual couple of smooth and striated areas, we see that they are always together. Similarly, Patton¹⁶ claims that the nomadic space is marked only by its transient and fluidity characteristics, such as smooth sand dunes in the desert, whereas the settled space is marked with striated lines and paths between striated closures.

One of the most basic questions in the use of philosophy in this discussion on urban transformation concerns the innovative perspectives of Deleuze and Guattari on desire. Desire flows can be thought of as the operators of all machines, including the capitalist machine and the urban transformation machine which is

11. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kapitalizm ve Şizofreni 2 - Kapma Aygıtı* (İstanbul: Bağlam Yayınları, 1993), 97.

12. B. Anderson and C. McFarlane, “Assemblage and Geography,” *Area* 43, no. 2 (2011): 124.

13. Deleuze and Guattari, “Introduction: Rhizome,” in *Capitalism and Schizophrenia II: A Thousand Plateaus*, 1987.

14. M. DeLanda, *New Philosophy of Society: Assemblage Theory and Social Complexity* (London: Continuum, 2006), 6.

15. Deleuze and Guattari, “Introduction: Rhizome,” 1987, 480–481.

16. P. Patton, “Deleuze and Democracy,” *Contemporary Political Theory* 4, no. 4 (2005): 60.

focused on in this paper. For Deleuze,¹⁷ desire is not a predetermined phenomenon but a result of an outside encounter. In the “D for Desire” part of *Abecedaire*, Deleuze explains that you can desire a cluster not only one thing.¹⁸ Thus, desire is neither a deficiency, nor feeling that demands a deficiency; rather, this flow proceeds within a certain cluster.

This perspective thus goes beyond the Lacanian view that desire is a deficiency: in Deleuze and Guattari’s perspective, desire is a flow that is simultaneously asexual and spreads to all aspects of life. Moreover, it becomes the main driving force of the capitalist machine. In this philosophy, desire flows are transformed into a production process. Deleuze and Guattari¹⁹ explain this functioning mechanism in three basic steps: “connective synthesis of production”, “disjunctive synthesis of recording”, and “conjunctive synthesis of consumption”. The first synthesis can be understood as a simple mechanism of binding or associating while the second is a more complex process that basically constitutes a wide smooth space. This surface marks the “body whiteout organs (BwO)”, the surface where, after the first binding synthesis has been made, recording starts with the rupture of this bond for some reason. The third synthesis is a generator of “subjects”. However, the idea of subject here denotes a formation of multiple subjects that allow contingencies and choices rather than a fixed, unchangeable subject. Holland²⁰ describes this situation as ‘some’ subjectivity, i.e. a sequence of subjective situations experienced, without necessarily having to reach a summit in a fixed subject with a specific identity”. This subjectivation also entails territorialization.

Deleuze and Guattari in Urban Studies

Although Deleuze and Guattari’s concepts are useful for understanding daily life and the functioning of the capitalist machine, very few academics have used them in an empirical study, still less in urban studies. In the urban studies literature, researchers drawing on Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy, fall into two basic groups. The first consists of people led by Ian Buchanan,²¹ who consider space and Deleuze and Guattari’s philosophy together. In *Deleuze and Space*,²² the concepts of territoriality, actual and virtual,²³ assemblage, and smooth and striated spaces²⁴ are used to understand today’s city. Members of this group argue about

17. Deleuze and C. Parnet, *Dialogues, Dialogues* (Paris: Flammarion, 1977).

18. P.-A. Boutang, Deleuze and Parnet, *L’Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze* (Paris: Video ed. Montparnasse, 1996).

19. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia I*, 1983.

20. E. Holland, *Deleuze ve Guattari’nin Anti-Oedipus’u: Şizoanalize Giriş* (İstanbul: Otonom Felsefe Yayınları, 2006), 80.

21. I. Buchanan and G. Lambert, *Deleuze and Space, Deleuze Connections* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005).

22. Ibid.

23. DeLanda, “Space: Extensive and Intensive, Actual and Virtual,” in *Deleuze and Space* (eds.) Buchanan and Lambert. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

24. T. Lorraine, “Ahab and Becoming-Whale: The Nomadic Subject in Smooch Space,” in *Deleuze and Space* (eds.) Buchanan and Lambert. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005.

how the concepts of city and space originate and often compare them with other thinkers.

Members of the second group examine city and planning issues from the perspective of Deleuzian concepts. Their studies can be considered in two subcategories. Thrift,²⁵ McFarlane,²⁶ Dovey²⁷ and Farias²⁸ work on assemblages. Dovey²⁹ claims that informal practices are rhizomic in contrast with the tree-like strictures of urban regulation and planning. That is, they involve minor adaptations and tactics in contrast to the major strategies of master planning and informal network connectivity in contrast to hierarchical control. Discussions about urban transformation in *gecekondur* neighborhoods remind us of the duality between the smooth and striated spaces.

In the second sub-category, Hillier³⁰ discusses planning theory in relation to the philosophies of Lacan and later Deleuze and Guattari. Hillier particularly emphasizes and adds to the relationship between desire, needs, and demands by exploring the importance of desire in planning, which opens up the discussion of the relationship between actors and power. Hillier,³¹ who argues that planning could be done in a more direct democratic way by working in more detail, has recently brought up the idea of unplanned planning. Like Hillier, Gunder³² also pays attention to the place of desire within the planning discipline, noting that it is about fantasizing about the city of the future. Coming from a Lacanian perspective and using Lefebvre's arguments about the city, Gunder³³ concludes that planning actually homogenizes the fantasies and visions of the future of the city and shapes the whole city within the vision of the privileged class.

The theoretical framework of the present study is situated in the abovementioned second sub-category since it examines desire flows in the city, the axes of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, and the subjectivation associated with them from the point of view of urban transformation.

25. N. Thrift, *Spatial Formations* (London: Sage, 1996).

26. C. McFarlane, "The City as Assemblage: Dwelling and Urban Space," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29 (2011): 649-671.

27. K. Dovey, "Informal Urbanism and Complex Adaptive Assemblage," *International Development Planning Review* 34, no. 4 (2012): 349-369; Dovey and R. King, "Informal Urbanism and the Taste for Slums," *Tourism Geographies* 14, no. 2 (2012): 275-293.

28. I. Farias and T. Bender, *Urban Assemblages: How Actor-Network Theory Changes Urban Studies* (USA Canada: Routledge, 2010).

29. Dovey, "Informal Urbanism and Complex Adaptive Assemblage," (2012).

30. Hillier, "Agonizing Over Consensus: Why Habermasian Ideals Cannot Be Real," *Planning Theory* 2, no. 37 (2003): 37-61.

31. Hillier, "Planning for Not Having a Plan," *Planning Theory & Practice* 18, no. 4 (2017): 668-675.

32. M. Gunder, "Passionate Planning for the Others' Desire: An Agonistic Response to the Dark Side of Planning," *Progress in Planning* 60 (2003): 235-319.

33. Gunder, "Production of Desirous Space: Mere Fantasies of the Utopian City?" *Planning Theory* 4, no. 2 (2005): 174.

Word Flows

Subjectivation as Deleuze and Guattari put it, is one the most useful discussions of their philosophy for this study for reading urban transformation in Istanbul. As Wood³⁴ emphasizes, Deleuze and Guattari argue that capitalism works with two different surplus values: one is quantitative surplus value in the Marxist sense while the other is qualitative and subjectivative surplus value. This subjectivative surplus value appears particularly through word flows and therefore through the media.

Regarding the specific place of the media and information in planning, Gunder³⁵ argues that the planning process plays a central role to support contemporary neoliberal ideology while the popular media is crucial for this ideological construction. Gunder³⁶ claims that planning is inherently ideological while ideology forms our chosen and dominant belief or values. These beliefs and values constitute what people want and choose. Thus, ideology in the planning process “reflects the dominant ideology of the time, which in much of the world continues to be defined by the evolving capitalist market.”³⁷ He gives the example of Auckland, which is being promoted to turn into a “super city”; this fantasy organizes the beliefs of the community through the media.³⁸

On the subject of rumors, Wright³⁹ argues that the accuracy of the content of gossip does not matter. Furthermore, once a rumor arises it starts circulating in the community on the basis of the adage “there is no smoke without fire”. Rumor thus constitutes a “corridor of power”. Wright⁴⁰ also argues that, although rumor is considered false information by definition, it can contain both truth and falsehood. He therefore emphasizes that the importance of a rumor lies in “when” it emerged rather than “what” it is.

Methodology

In this paper, Deleuze and Guattari’s schizoanalytical method is used, to map how word flows and desire flows operate during urban transformation. The aim of schizoanalysis is to see and show the recoding process of the decoded flows. Deleuze and Guattari emphasize that all investments are social investment: There are no desiring-machines that exist outside the social machines that they form on a large scale; and no social machines without the desiring-machines that inhabit

34. S. Wood, “Desiring Docklands: Deleuze and Urban Planning Discourse,” *Planning Theory* 8, no. 2 (2009): 204.

35. Gunder, “A Metapsychological Exploration of the Role of Popular Media in Engineering Public Belief on Planning Issues,” *Planning Theory* 10, no. 4 (2011): 333.

36. Gunder, “Planning as the Ideology of (Neoliberal) Space,” *Planning Theory* 9, no. 4 (2010): 299.

37. Ibid, 309.

38. Gunder, “A Metapsychological Exploration of the Role of Popular Media in Engineering Public Belief on Planning Issues,” (2011), 334.

39. S. Wright, *What Everybody Knows: Protocols of Rumour* (Northeastwestsouth.net, 2008).

40. Ibid.

them on a small scale.⁴¹ Thus, the methodology of this study is used to find out how the streams running desiring machines are coded, broken, or decoded.

Two basic techniques inspired by Deleuze and Guattari should be mentioned: data collection and data analysis. Deleuze and Guattari applied a method that we may describe as “handiwork” by borrowing the term “bricolage” from Levi-Strauss.⁴² Considering it in terms of cultural studies, bricolage is the installation or interpretation of objects, forms, expressions, or relationships that are not directly related by recombining them.

Cultural anthropologist Levi-Strauss described bricolage as societies being able to find new solutions for new situations by combining existing tools in different forms. During this study, many verbal and visual materials from many different platforms are gathered. These comprised more than 7,000 news reports in 3 major Turkish national papers (Sözcü, Zaman, and Milliyet), TV advertisements, media and government statements, and legal documents.

The important part of the data of the research comes from over five years of participant observations made by the researcher in *gecekondu* neighborhoods threatened by urban transformation. These observations made it easier to identify the most important word flow channels and rumors that emerged before, during, and after the urban transformation. These rumors were divided into themes that gave clues as to which households moved from informal neighborhoods to mass housing should be selected. The households to be interviewed in depth were selected according to this analysis. The *gecekondu* neighborhoods that experienced relocation constituted a geographic cluster in terms of being subject to similar urban transformation projects.

More than 300 households had to move due to the projects in this cluster. A large portion moved to other places after receiving a certain demolition fee whereas some moved to the offered public housing before moving on again from there. According to the former *gecekondu* headman, Şükrü, who is now the director of the informal neighborhoods, there were no more than 100 households in each housing group. In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 inhabitants from 3 different *gecekondu* neighborhoods in Sarıyer, of whom 12 moved to the new mass housing areas located on Istanbul’s periphery (Kagthane, Kartal, and Guzeltepe). Every participant was interviewed more than once to deepen the conversation and obtain more details about their current daily lives. A different place was chosen for every session (their homes, their favorite spots in the area, their workplaces) to observe better how they are living.

During this analysis, the focus was on forms of expression. The aim was not to find the hidden meaning behind what is said but to try to understand how that word works. In this sense, the analysis proceeded in a relational manner. Foucault tells us “not to go to the heart of a thought or meaning that will emerge; but, from the discourse itself, its emergence and regularity, towards the external conditions of its likelihood, which leads to the random sequence of events and determine the boundaries of this should be directed.”⁴³ The aim is to identify how a discourse

41. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia I*, 1983, 354.

42. Ibid.

43. M. Foucault, *Söylemin Düzeni* (İstanbul: Hil Yayınları, 1987), 52.

triggers desire flows by connecting with other events and discourses and how it operates the desired machine. Thus, when looking at how a discourse works, it is important to look at what is not said, as well as what is said.⁴⁴ This study uses a qualitative data analysis methodology. I try to show how word flows and discourses become striation machines in the process of urban transformation. The superimposition of these data showed us the circulation of “words” from the citywide narratives to the mouths and actions of *gecekondü* inhabitants.

Technical and Legal Knowledge Flows

According to Deleuze and Guattari,⁴⁵ the capitalist machine continually dislocates currents to draw surplus value. Technical and legal knowledge operate together continuously during this transformation and are constantly interrupting currents and providing new ones. They also incite fear and despair, or capture desire flows. This process creates the surplus value and put the urban transformation machine work.

Laws

Laws lead to the transfer of property and powers from one person to another, to the restriction of its limits. While all the legal arrangements have not emerged within the framework of the urban transformation law itself, they are facts that determine the state of the rhizome that we now call urban transformation. Legal processes also work as a kind of striating machine, in which the state has a close relationship with the striated place.⁴⁶

In 2005, public discussions on an urban transformation law for Istanbul started when the Chamber of City Planners (CCP) held a press conference regarding the Draft Law for Urban Transformation, in which they suggested that the draft law could create new problems (CCP, April 2005). In June 2005, the Law on Renovating, Conserving and Actively Using Dilapidated Historical and Cultural Immovable Assets was implemented. Although its name seems unrelated to urban transformation, it became known as the first law that proposed urban transformation for historic neighborhoods.

During these debates, changes in the law governing TOKI (Turkey’s State Housing Development Administration) were not reported in Turkey’s mass media. Instead, news reports about TOKI mostly emphasized urban transformation and the quality or number of houses built by the administration (14.02.2006, Zaman Gazetesi; 19.04.2008, Milliyet Gazetesi).

Ploger⁴⁷ argues that urbanism has been seen as a tool to shape order, prevent epidemics and revolution, and produce morally virtuous families while planning is

44. Deleuze, *Foucault* (Istanbul: Norgunk, 2013).

45. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kapitalizm ve Şizofreni - 1: Anti-Ödipus* (İstanbul: BS Yayınları, 2012), 318.

46. Patton, “Deleuze and Democracy,” (2005).

47. J. Ploger, “Foucault’s Dispositif and The City,” *Planning Theory* 7, no. 1 (2008): 62.

a normalization apparatus. Turkey's urban transformation law can also be viewed as a normalization apparatus like Ploger's⁴⁸ description of the planning process. In the first stage, urban transformation focused more on poor neighborhoods and was presented as a process to "get rid of" informal houses. For example, a 2007 news article in the daily *Milliyet* (17.03.2007) noted "Illicit buildings will become 'normal' with the law of urban transformation". Thus, the urban transformation law became a new tool to govern *gecekondu* inhabitants.

In contrast to the reaction to earlier laws, society and the media reacted positively to the Law for Transforming Areas of Disaster Risk, passed in 2012. Kadir Topbas (Mayor of Istanbul) made a press statement regarding the new law during the opening of the ruling AKP's (Justice and Development Party) Bahçesehir Municipality Office. (1.03.2007, *Zaman*) In the daily *Zaman*, news reports appeared just before parliamentary debates on the Law of Urban Transformation regarding families who "were saved from *gecekondu* life" by moving into TOKI mass housing projects as a result of urban transformation in the period. (30.06.2012, *Milliyet*) Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan then used a speech to give a very specific starting date for the urban transformation (5.10.2012).

The information about these laws provided in the media aimed to mobilize society regarding urban transformation. As Wright⁴⁹ emphasized whether truthful or not, rumors about the laws created great excitement, which made it easier for desires to flow in the direction of urban transformation.

Earthquake Risks

Information about earthquake risks also played a role, especially in the initial stages of urban transformation. According to these earthquake risk rumors, *gecekondu* residents had to be moved from their homes and districts. It was no coincidence that Turkey's construction sector started to grow during the aftermath of the 1999 Izmit earthquake.

48. Ploger, "Foucault's Dispositif and The City," (2008).

49. Wright, *What Everybody Knows: Protocols of Rumour*, 2008.



Figure 2. *An Earthquake Scenario like a Horror Film*
 Source: Milliyet Gazetesi. 15.08.2008.

This rumor may be traced back to a statement in 2004 in Milliyet by Kadir Topbas, who had been Mayor of Istanbul for only 5 months: “I will demolish them [*gecekondu* houses]. Let them [*gecekondu* inhabitants] call me evil”. He declared that the authorities were preparing to empty Istanbul’s city center and build new residential areas, such as Bahçeşehir,⁵⁰ to “save” Istanbul, which was supposedly overwhelmed by illegal buildings (Milliyet, 06.09.2004).

In the early 2000s, in parallel with the timeline of these statements, word flows regarding earthquakes were dominated by technical information and usually involved statements by architects, public officials, and engineers. After 2006, however, contractors joined them.

The mass media reports highlighted public safety and risk to make a point about the deadliness of earthquakes and the risks created by them. This process, also supported by images, tended to create a significant perception of threat (see Figure 2).

Turkey’s newspapers then began reporting that an “Earthquake-Centered Urban Transformation” was being initiated in Istanbul’s old *gecekondu* neighborhood of Zeytinburnu Sümer (18.08.2009, Zaman). As Agaoglu (2010), put it, Istanbul could be demolished, not by an earthquake, but by construction firms. This example clearly demonstrates how highly technical information, such as seismicity or poor construction quality, can become a rumor.

50. Bahçeşehir, which means “garden city”, is a large gated community on the periphery of Istanbul; the majority of its inhabitants are upper-middle class.



Figure 3. Urban Transformation in the Country of Earthquakes

Source: Zaman, 9.07.2012.

After the Law for the Transformation of Areas at Risk of Disaster was approved on 31 May 2012, more striking news about earthquake risks started to appear in the media, with newspapers increasingly arguing that urban transformation was the only solution. The report whose image is shown in Figure 3 emphasized especially that urban transformation not only concerns refurbishing buildings but also involves issues of society and environment. In the image used in the news article in Figure 3, which references Da Vinci's Vitruvian Man, a human silhouette covered with windows seems to relate to the urban transformation of the "ideal human". This picture can be correlated with Ploger's⁵¹ statement about planning as an apparatus of normalization.

Hillier⁵² argues that striation implies ordering, categorization, and regulation. Earthquake rumors establish a new thinking system through the flows of words that ultimately striate the entire city by stigmatizing some buildings or some districts as risky. Designating these areas in this way forces their inhabitants out to peripheral areas of the city into newly-built housing communities.

51. Ploger, "Foucault's Dispositif and The City," (2008).

52. Hillier, "Encountering Gilles Deleuze in Another Place," *European Planning Studies* 19, no. 5 (2011): 883.

In Istanbul's case, the displacement axis created by the urban transformation machine was established in two ways thanks to the seismicity discourses. Deleuze and Guattari claim that everything works wildly in capitalism: "This is because the capitalist machine supports decoded and outof-deconstructed flows, decodes them much more and makes them much more out-of-country."⁵³ The capitalist system relocalizes decoded flows immediately and assigns new codes to these flows. In the process of urban transformation, these new codes are included in the new lifestyle of mass housing areas.

Glorification of the Process

The urban transformation not only produces buildings but also new urban lifestyles and forms of information. These forms of information, created by a bombardment of knowledge and information, or new lifestyles, whose images will be shown thereafter, have an important place in Deleuze's⁵⁴ conception of dreams: "A dream is a terrifying desire for power. All of us are more or less victims of other people's dreams. Even worse, even though the one whose dream you are caught in is the sweetest, most beautiful girl in the world, she may become a monster – not with her soul, but via her dreams. Keep away from others' dreams, because if you are trapped in the dream of the Other, you are f***." Information flows during urban transformation provide us with many dreams that do not belong to anyone. These dreams may be a flat, a luxury residence with a garden, a mega-city covered with mega projects, or a town surrounded by shopping malls.

Deleuze⁵⁵ claims that we desire not an object but the assemblage created by this object. Thus, desire is a state of flow. This process creates an assemblage, including newly-built high-rise mass housing apartments, where you can buy what you need from a big shopping mall or you need a car to drive to the city center. Consequently, *gecekondu* inhabitants are permitted to choose something from this assemblage and they can desire to have an apartment in these mass housing communities.

In 2008, the chief executive of the culture corporation owned by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality wrote an opinion column in Zaman newspaper with the headline, "Is it urban transformation or cultural transformation?" He claimed that the main purpose is to build a homogenous rather than heterogeneous society, and added that urban transformation aims for us to dream together about the common future. This emphasis on homogeneity shows us the main paradigm of the process, which is to restrict the diversity of lifestyles. Accordingly, the picture of Istanbul illustrating report (Figure 4) does not show the usual historical part of Istanbul but the skyscrapers of Zincirlikuyu district. In parallel with the modernization desire in the article, the skyscrapers are the main feature of the picture.

53. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kapitalizm ve Şizofreni - 1: Anti-Ödipus*, 1993, 492.

54. Deleuze, *İki Konferans: Yaratma Eylemi Nedir? Müzikal Zaman* (İstanbul: Norgunk Yayınları, 2003), 30.

55. Boutang, Deleuze, and Parnet, *L'Abécédaire de Gilles Deleuze*, 1996.



Figure 4. *“Is it Urban Transformation or Cultural Transformation?”*
Source: Zaman Newspaper. 6.07.2008.

The most significant commercial film in this area is a Garanti Bank advertisement about housing loan opportunities. The leading character in the advertisement is a young shepherd in the countryside with his goats. An explosion causes some bricks to fall down to build a new multi-story house in front of the boy. When the shepherd looks through the window of the new building, he sees himself in the apartment. At the end of the advertisement, we discover that this modern, multi-story house is the dream of that child.



Figure 5. *Shepherd Boy and his Reflection Living in New Apartment*
Source: Garanti Bank Ad. 2008.

Gunder⁵⁶ argues that the communication media is used in the construction of society's accepted standards and lifeworld-constituting habits.

The advertisement we see in Figure 5 may be one of the best examples of these accepted standards because it highlights the attractiveness of the mass-housing life style, built by transforming the old way of life. At the end of the advertisement, a voice announces that Garanti Bank can give housing loans to make all these dreams come true. The advertisement thus shows us that the best way to make all dreams come true is to take housing loans, and this connection between dreams and debt can also be seen in the case of *gecekondu* neighborhoods. Standardized life styles in the standardized newly-built neighborhoods are the end products of this urban transformation machine. In Deleuzian terms, urban transformation striates the urban space, homogenizing urban life.

Information Flows in the Case of Gecekondu Neighborhoods: De- Reterritorialization

News about urban transformation in the media constitutes a mechanism that works like the desiring machines, as described above. The support of important leaders for urban transformation and the emphasis on the beauty of this process in the media play important roles in reshaping beliefs and desires, as Gunder⁵⁷ points out. These streams of information reshape desires, turning them into rumors of destruction in informal neighborhoods. It is impossible to see directly what news is reflected. Therefore, this section shows how the results of the dream about urban transformation are reflected in the lives of the residents. These rumor flows have produced many results, especially following the rumor of destruction and after relocation. We observe how two basic movements operate in *gecekondu* neighborhoods with all these information and rumors flows: deterritorialization and reterritorialization.

Deterritorialization

Deterritorialization takes place through both unfavorable representation of *gecekondu* houses in news reports and incrimination of those involved in urban transformation negotiations. One of the most important deterritorialization axes is the process that is constantly repeated through demolition rumors.

56. Gunder, "A Metapsychological Exploration of the Role of Popular Media in Engineering Public Belief on Planning Issues," (2011), 326.

57. Ibid.

“Gecekondu Houses are Bad”

The representation of *gecekondu* houses that is reshaped in parallel with urban transformation portrays them from the viewpoint of the authorities, i.e., as a space that must be cleared and rebuilt. Most news articles refer to demolition and the mass housing areas to which people move. The representations of *gecekondu* houses emphasize the “difficulties” created by those that oppose demolitions and the “happiness” of those that have moved to mass housing areas. In this context, the intention is to ensure that residents of *gecekondu* houses, having been marginalized through these discourses, are then shifted to mass housing areas through the implementation of these projects.

First, that the way *gecekondu* neighborhoods emerged autonomously through inhabitants building their own houses while originally having only fragile links with the state is reminiscent of Deleuze’s smooth space. Meanwhile, grasping mechanisms constantly try to grasp *gecekondu* houses. Components of these grasping processes include illegal building amnesties, planning for popular neighborhoods, the introduction of public authority institutions such as headmen, and various agreements reached with *gecekondu* inhabitants. The constant redefinition of a *gecekondu* house, in particular its being represented by the government and media as illegal, are major moves regarding grasping. *Gecekondu* houses are treated in news reports and official statements as inherently problematic. Thus, we can examine the question of *gecekondu* houses are observed on two basic axes: one is a discourse developed on the theme of the *gecekondu* as unmodern in contrast to the beauty of mass housing areas; the other is discussions focusing on the question of ownership.

The discourse on the theme of *gecekondu* neighborhoods being unmodern or is most prominently illustrated by the statements of then Prime Minister Tayyip Erdoğan. The earliest example from our scanning period (2005-2015) is a news report about a 2006 press statement in which Erdoğan asks journalists not to dramatize demolitions of *gecekondu* houses (13.04.2006, Zaman). The same year, in a Milliyet newspaper article reporting Erdoğan’s statements, reference is made to illegal buildings on the shores of the Bosphorus, but the focus is on *gecekondu*s rather than villas. 19.10.2003, Milliyet). Erdoğan’s comment, quoted in the article, is remarkable: “Here is what I ask mayors to do: you must pitilessly demolish all illegal buildings.”

In a Milliyet article on rent support for *gecekondu* occupants, the image used suggests dense urbanization in those “unwanted *gecekondu* neighborhoods” where people are presented as living in very ‘difficult’ conditions. Forcing a *gecekondu* neighborhood to relocate to a mass housing area while simultaneously dispersing it, results in residents being squeezed into new mass housing areas on Istanbul’s periphery. Urban transformation thus deterritorializes these informal spaces before reterritorializing them in new mass housing areas on the periphery. Here, the theoretical narrative of Deleuze and Guattari contains an important observation connected with an analysis of capitalism. They argue that capitalism manages to survive thanks to its strategy of spreading from the center to the periphery: “At a constantly widening scale the reproduction of the internal limits of capitalism has

various consequences: it ensures increased wages in the center and improvement of life while displacing the most pitiless forms of exploitation from center to periphery but at the same time multiplying the over-exploitation ghettos in the center itself.”⁵⁸ In relation to the functioning of the urban transformation machine, in particular, a significant finding is the dispersion of *gecekondu* neighborhoods from the center to the periphery.

Demolition Rumors

Since their establishment, Istanbul’s informal neighborhoods have lived with the ever-present possibility of demolition. In this sense, rumors of demolition are not new for them; rather, it is a machine that they have been familiar with for more than 50 years. These rumors allow people to build a very complex style of communication.

In his article on how rumor works, Wright⁵⁹ emphasizes that rumors strengthen solidarity and a sense of community. We see this in *gecekondu* residents supporting each other during demolition stories and keeping watch to prevent demolition teams entering their neighborhood. Stronger solidarity and a sense of community also make rumors spread faster in the community. However, rumor spreads in a rhizome-like formation rather than linear fashion; information usually diffuses through multiple sources with different interpretations. This rhizome-like operation seems applicable to the *gecekondu* neighborhoods, where social relationships are also rhizome-like.

Even before the revelation of a specific project that affects *gecekondu* neighborhoods, urban transformation enters there as a “rumor of demolition”. We call this process a “rumor flow” because no one is completely sure about where or how many demolitions will take place. Even today, statements by different interviewees about the demolition of different numbers of buildings are important indicators of this uncertainty.

In the case of Fatih Sultan Mehmet neighborhood (FSM), a rumor started that 300 buildings would be demolished for a road project. However, the municipality reduced this to 260 after various negotiations, and eventually only 35 buildings were demolished. An administrator in Sarıyer Municipality, Sükrü Muhtar⁶⁰ described a road project for Baltalimanı. He stated that 60 buildings received notices of demolition in 2004-2005 although it was previously estimated that far more buildings would be demolished. An investigation was conducted after an expert was appointed in 2005, which led to a “pro-people” report. Nevertheless, about 260 houses were demolished immediately after this in the presence of 5,000 police officers. A year later, the court cancelled the plan, so the number of buildings due to be demolished remained unclear even after the buildings had been demolished.

58. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kapitalizm ve Şizofreni - 1: Anti-Ödipus*, 2012, 492.

59. Wright, “What Everybody Knows: Protocols of Rumour,” (2008).

60. Muhtar is an elected local authority of a neighborhood in Turkey.

Demolition has been a part of daily life for *gecekondu* residents since the 1950s, when they first built their houses. However, newspaper articles show that the first encounter of Sariyer's *gecekondu* neighborhoods with urban transformation after 2005 was demolitions in Derbent neighborhood. In the article "Demolition War in Sariyer" (24.03.2006, Milliyet), it was reported that only one building was demolished as part of the urban transformation. This was met by a violent response from neighborhood residents, who built barricades following rumors that their homes would be demolished.

After 2010, a debate emerged in the media about "on-site transformation" in urban transformation. According to the article, *gecekondu* residents could stay in their own location rather than pay for a new house during the process. Supporting this, one of our interviewees, Ayse (Guzeltepe Neighborhood), stated that there had long been rumors about demolition in Baltalimanı. Similarly, Mehmet (Ugurmumcu Neighborhood) said he had known about the rumors of demolition in FSM since his youth. However, residents were unconcerned because "they will always say there will be a demolition, but they will never demolish it". This attitude made it easier for 35 buildings to be demolished in FSM.

Waiting a long time for a demolition is an exhausting process for residents. Such households in middle and lower-income groups give up repainting their houses or dealing with other issues in the neighborhood as soon as rumors of demolition start. The most important characteristic of *gecekondu*-type housing is that they are not constructed completely at once but are turned into livable, usable, pleasant houses through incremental modifications over the years. Therefore, the sustainability of *gecekondu* houses and their neighborhoods depends on constant small repairs and refurbishments. Disruption of this process, whether in the household or neighborhood, makes places unusable over time. Thus, the transformation of information flows into informal neighborhoods into rumors of destruction has been one of the most important reasons for accelerating the relocation process. The process of bargaining and moving starts in those neighborhoods where there have long been rumors that certain districts will be demolished.

"Who Received How Much?"

Rumors about who received how much money or who got the better house continue after demolition. This process, which works through various assumptions where everyone introduces different information for circulation, is a simple product of another ability of rumor: the ability to cause arguments. Wright⁶¹ emphasizes that rumors may have a political role in playing people off against each other. The rumors that emerge when demolitions start, such as the person whose home gets demolished first will receive more money or the person who leaves will gain more, divide *gecekondu* residents.

Ahmet (Guzeltepe) stated that they learned that early negotiators were given more money whereas late ones were given less. Conversely, Tekin (Kagithane)

61. Wright, "What Everybody Knows: Protocols of Rumour," (2008).

claimed that his family had an advantageous negotiation because they left very late. According to Sükürü Muhtar, people whose houses were in danger started negotiations even before their houses were demolished. Thus, who received what or agreed to leave when always included dubious information. Tekin (Kağıthane) said that he knew Istinye Park (a shopping mall)⁶² compensated the residents' costs. Therefore, they saw Istinye Park as responsible for the buildings demolished by the construction of a school and mentioned the underlying agreements.

In these new mass-housing communities, everyone thinks that they had the most beneficial negotiation. In the *gecekondu*, due to their solidarity relations and close friendships, residents could act together to solve a shared problem, borrow money from neighbors, socialize in the each other's gardens, and even look after neighbors' children.⁶³ However, mass housing caused these activities to be lost because of relationship breakdowns. Halil (Guzeltepe) said that his neighbor sued him twice because he tried to raise money without any receipt to solve problems in the new building. He recalled that raising money for this kind of activity was very common in the *gecekondu*, when everybody would show solidarity. Fatma (Kağıthane) said that when she was sick for a fortnight nobody came to visit her. In the *gecekondu*, they had always looked after each other, but here in this new building, even the old neighbors have doubts about each other. Regarding new activities, Halil (Guzeltepe) had registered for a saz class (a Turkish musical instrument) while Cem (Guzeltepe) passed most of his time in Beyoğlu while spending a lot of money. Such changes have had major impacts on the residents' everyday life. Without their previous solidarity networks, they have lost the ability to act outside of the capitalist system and are forced to adapt to the mass-housing life style.

Reterritorialization: "We are not the Same Gecekondu Inhabitants Anymore"

Even once the process has been completed and certain households have been moved from the *gecekondu*, different rumors flow in the new neighborhood. These rumors start to disrupt and change the networks built over many years. In the interviews, ex-*gecekondu* inhabitants complain about "not being in their old neighborhood", "there being no such neighborly relations as in their old neighborhood", and "having to acquire new habits". This change has entailed a new subjectivation, which is discussed in this section under several categories.

First, in mass-housing buildings, various components are repetitive and standardized, from the landscape to the location of the buildings, even to the design of individual apartments. Although one may think that these layouts and forms are justified by reducing costs, they are also designs that produce uniform daily life patterns.

62. For further information about the Istinye Park case, see Yalçın, Çalışkan, Çilgin and Dündar, "İstanbul Dönüşüm Coğrafyası," (2014).

63. G. Aksümer and H. Yücel, "Immaterial Dimensions of the Right to the City: The Case of Istanbul's Derbent Neighbourhood in the UrbanTransformation Process," *Planning Journal* 1 (2018): 76-89.

For example, in the entrances to the new mass-housing buildings in Kağıthane, Güzeltepe, and Uğurmumcu, there are large numbers of mail boxes, posted apartment building rules, announcements about unpaid charges, and warnings like “Do not sit on stairs!” and “Keep the building clean!”

Fatma (Kağıthane) complained that the apartment balcony is too small for storing things, so that they are not able to store as much foodstuff from their village as before. The issue of foodstuff was brought up in one way or another in all the interviews, and it was said that the building of a store was being discussed. In addition, residents complained that, because it is forbidden to close in the balconies with PVC windows, residents cannot use them as cellars as they had in the *gecekondu*.

Secondly, the factors mentioned above changed relations between neighbors changed. Halil, for example, told us that his neighbor sued him for collecting donations without issuing receipts.

“One of the occupants of the building sued me twice. I tried to collaborate with the others here... That person, that I do not want to name, was my close neighbor in our old neighborhood”.

Halil added that the traditional method of collecting donations had worked well on many occasions in the *gecekondu*. However, people no longer trusted each other in the new buildings.

Both Cem and Halil complained that none of their neighbors was sufficiently “urban”, which created difficulties in communicating with them. As Halil put it, “They have come from the suburbs of Istanbul, from the marginal parts of the city, where they used to live in their own way without much contact with the outside world. They continue to live here combining their rural or small-town culture with that of the big city”. He felt that, as they failed to become real city-dwellers, they were unable to adapt themselves to the formal nature of relationships of an apartment building.

This process of separation between neighbors made families become smaller and smaller, and withdraw into themselves. Deleuze and Guattari emphasize that the family is a microcosm adapted to express that over which one has no control.⁶⁴ That is, the family appears to be a major reterritorializing institution in the mass-housing life style. More specifically, we found it significant that interviewees referred to their nuclear families as a closed group. Consequently, neighbors – even from the same native town or village, or even cousins or elderly people living in the same house – tended to be excluded from this microcosm.

Thirdly, the residents have now found new jobs and acquired new habits. Yet, there is a wish to escape back to the old neighborhood. As Halil noted, “This place suffocates me incredibly. You can’t believe it! I live in my house as in a hotel room now”. Halil took up sport as a way of escaping from this place and joined a saz (traditional musical instrument) course. Similarly, Cem (Güzeltepe) said that he spends his leisure time in courses because he feels depressed in the new neighborhood, which lacks anywhere to chat with other people.

64. Deleuze and Guattari, *Kapitalizm ve Şizofreni - 1: Anti-Ödipus*, 2012, 351.

Tekin admitted almost never spending time in his new housing area despite liking it very much. Instead, he goes back to Sarıyer to meet his old friends from the *gecekondu*s, spend time in coffee houses there, and attend events, association activities, meetings, etc. He finds that the new neighborhood has become a disciplined area with rules and prohibitions that force him to escape as soon as he can.

Mehmet (Uğurmumcu, FSM) made similar comments. Although he likes his new place very much, it is “boring” in many respects. To live in a created “tube” and travel between home, work, and social life by car exacerbates his sense of being locked in. To avoid spending the bulk of his time commuting, he moved to a studio flat in center of the city to have more time for himself.

Fourthly, for those that live in a mass-housing area, time is more divided and more planned: work in the morning, dinner in the evening, spending time with children, leisure time activities at the weekend. Time is more segmented and more linear. This span of time is also largely predetermined and resistant to the introduction of new things. During our fieldwork in the mass-housing area, we could only meet interviewees if we gave them plenty of notice, and then had to call them 2 or 3 times.

These comments about time bring to mind the rhizome concept, defined by Deleuze and Guattari⁶⁵ as a non-hierarchical form of organization. We believe this is a diagram that can be applied to various aspects of life. House time can be considered in two different types: time spent in a *gecekondu* consists of small segments that are more circular and improvised, without a feeling of linear progress. In contrast, in a mass-housing area, the perception of time requires constantly running farther and farther for fear of missing one thing or another – i.e. a linear perception of time.

Discussion

This article emphasizes that urban transformation does not happen only through legal edicts or capital projects, but may also be led by the emotions created in citizens by words and images. Word flows are not merely tools to read the situation; rather, the mechanism of urban transformation works via these word flows themselves. Thus, in presented study, word flows in urban transformation appeared at different levels, from the scale of Istanbul to the scale of *gecekondu* neighborhoods. We found that the machine is indeed working through arguments that appeal to emotions, such as fear, desire, and excitement.

The flows created by urban transformation are sometimes in the form of advertisements, laws, or even rumors and words. The machine reveals a mechanism that produces and operates through these flows. The urban transformation machine is thus a desiring machine, related to the flows produced and operated by it. That is, rather than operate in the presence of demands or existing desires, the machine itself acts by creating desires and interrupting

65. Deleuze and Guattari, *Anti Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia I*, 1983.

existing desires. Urban transformation does not work by demolishing and building new buildings, but by having new dreams. The process is carried out as a kind of deterritorialization and reterritorialization. Deterritorialization occurs not only by constantly making new spatial arrangements from one space to another but also by channeling flows, of which the most important related to urban transformation are words and images. These flows perform the shift from technical knowledge to information, on the one hand, while drawing desire flows towards new paths on the other.

From our examination of the legal framework, the risk of earthquakes, the glorification of urban transformation, and the de-re-territorialization of informal houses we identified three kinds of movements: the first incites fear and despair; the second leads desire flows through the newly-built mass-housing areas; the third is word of mouth, which significantly influences decisionmaking processes. The first of these movements – horrifying earthquake scenarios, photos of collapsed buildings, and negative representations of *gecekondus* – have triggered fear in the society. The specific argument emphasizing the unhealthy nature of *gecekondus* has marginalized them while praising the mass-housing areas being constructed on the city's periphery.

Secondly, the new residence typologies we encountered in the advertisement, emphasize how beautiful urban transformation is while the context denies *gecekondu* residents any option other than mass housing. These factors “incite” the machine and send *gecekondu* owners to the urban periphery. These two movements activating urban transformation rely on word and image flows to create knowledge about the process. We therefore argue that knowledge is spread like rhizomes, and interacts with other knowledge, movements, people, or inanimate things to become information. The news reports, advertisements, and public speeches of officials channel information and oblige people to participate in the process of urban transformation.

In the third movement, the interpretation of a law or a transformation project creates various speculations so that rumors of “destruction” spread through *gecekondu* neighborhoods. Simultaneously, the media, and even the public authorities, manage the process through a bombardment of such information. In addition to snippets of information, such as what project will be implemented where or which neighborhood will be demolished, many rumors circulate about when the Law of Urban Transformation will come into force. This circulation significantly influences the transformation process.

Rumors of demolition are strengthened by claims, such as a “modern” flat or “good money” will replace the demolished house. These can be traced back to rumors after the demolition about who received how much money, which destroys relationships between neighbors. This breakdown also impacts the urban transformation mechanism, which has the power to change the life style of old *gecekondu* inhabitants. Solidarity networks are dissolved, old socializing habits disappear, and the inhabitants are forced to adapt to a new life style.

Conclusions

In conclusion, alternative solutions may benefit many agencies in terms of promoting participation and reducing conflict of interest among different actors such as government, communities or professionals. After all, the research mainly shows that any actor does not look for a transparent process.

First of all we encounter the bombardment-like circulation of words that makes urban transformation ambiguous as a process. This ambiguity creates an insecure atmosphere for citizens that push them to accept the only option offered by the authorities. Meanwhile, the media and public authorities help to create a very attractive environment for the new mass-housing areas.

The standardized life styles in the new standardized neighborhoods are the end products of the urban transformation machine. In Deleuzian terms, urban transformation striates urban space and urban life. In our case of Istanbul, the process cannot be explained simply as neoliberal urbanization or in terms of the profit motive of capital holders.

New settlements are deprived areas in comparison with old gecekondu neighborhoods. Inhabitants are suffering from not to be socialized anymore.

Rather, this process expresses a very domineering imposition of a unique life style that is homogenizing urban life in Turkey. This imposition ruins the established social networks which are very important to survive in a large metropolitan city like Istanbul. Ruined social relations do not only create emotional stress on inhabitants but also to loose the solidarity/support mechanism may have impact on financial situation of the households. Loosing its job or divorce is not rare after this kind of urban transformation process.

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