

Abstract submitted by Haris Tsavdaroglou

Title:

The battle for the common space and the right to the city in Istanbul: from the creative city to the rebel city and vice versa

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The last years the discussion on urban commons is articulated with the so-called “new enclosures” and revolves mainly around Marxist geographers’ approaches that focus on the “accumulation by dispossession” and conceptualize commons as a new version of the “right to the city”. However, until now, there are few attempts that seek in an intersectional and postcolonial way to articulate the spatialities of commons with the intersected systems of oppression, and at the same time to surpass the divisions between North-South and West-East.

Istanbul, an emerging global city which is located in between West and East, constitutes an ideal case for the examination of the conflicts on the right to the city and the common space with intersectional and postcolonial way. The creative class rhetoric and the gentrification policies seek to enforce the competitiveness of the city. Furthermore, the islamic version of neoliberalism, the gender enclosures and the oppression of ethnic minorities compose the environment that usurps and encloses the common space. Against the above policies, a multitude of urban social movements have been emerged the last decades, with the most emblematic case the Gezi park social uprising in June 2013. The very important characteristic is that the rebel common space does not just limited in the protection of one of the last green urban areas and the confrontation with the neoliberal urban policies but it modifies and troubles the established divisions in the fields of gender, class, race and culture.

For the purposes of the paper the social data carried out from both qualitative and quantitative processes; a methodological tool, which is applied for the determination of these dynamic characteristics approved by participatory militant research, ethnographic analysis, interviews and collection of articles of local press and web pages.

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