





Kent Hakkı Kavramının Çok Boyutlu Analizi ve Küresel Tartışmalar Çerçevesinde Türkiye Boyutu

Yunus Emre ÖZER¹

Tulius Lillie OZER	
HIGHLIGHTS	 This study compares the concepts of "urban rights" and the "right to the city" (RC). The right to the city requires a proactive individual profile, and the RC allows urban dwellers to have a say in all city decisions. The concept of RC has been the subject of analysis concerning Türkiye and global examples.
ÖNE ÇIKANLAR	 "Kent hakkı" ve "kentsel haklar" kavramları, karşılaştırmalı biçimde incelenmiştir. Kent hakkı için özel sektörün de dâhil olduğu kente ilişkin tüm kararlarda söz sahibi olabilecek proaktif bir bireye ihtiyaç duyulduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Küresel örneklerle birlikte Türkiye açısından kent hakkı kavramı analiz edilmiştir.
ABSTRACT	A growing proportion of the world's population now lives in cities. This proportion is expected to increase in the
Urban rights, Right to the City, Türkiye	coming years. Urban congestion brings with it increasing problems. It is well known that global efforts are underway to recognize the problems faced by urban dwellers and find solutions to them. These rights, defined as urban rights, are based on human rights, and their implementation is usually the state. The concept of "the right to the city (RC)", first used by Lefebvre, examines the issue from a much broader perspective. Thus, the RC is a requirement for the transformation of cities in which city dwellers are at the center. Having inspired numerous political struggles, this study analyzed the RC in depth, both theoretically and with some practical examples. This study aims to define the concept of RC in relation to urban rights, evaluate its variables, and interpret examples of RC in the world and in Türkiye. As a result, RC requires a proactive urban dweller profile and can be used against decisions taken not only by the State but also by the private sector. Türkiye is still at the beginning of RC discussions.
ÖZ	Günümüzde dünya nüfusunun giderek artan bir oranı kentlerde yaşamaktadır. Bu oran, ilerleyen yıllarda daha da artacak gibi görünmektedir. Kentlerin kalabalıklaşması giderek artan sorunları da beraberinde getirmektedir. Aslında kentlerde yaşayanların karşılaştığı bu sorunların farkında olan ve bunlar için çözüm arayan küresel çabaların olduğu bilinmektedir. Kentli hakları ya da kentsel haklar olarak tarif edilen bu haklar insan haklarına dayanmaktadır ve uygulayıcısı genellikle devlettir. İlk olarak Lefebvre tarafından kullanılan kent hakkı kavramı ise konuya çok daha geniş bir perspektiften bakmaktadır. Buna göre kent hakkı, kentlerin değiştirilmesine yönelik bir taleptir. Kentliler ise bu değişimin tam da merkezinde yer almaktadır. Birçok siyasi mücadeleye de ilham veren kent hakkı kavramı bu çalışmada hem teorik olarak hem de uygulamadan bazı örneklerle kapsamlı bir şekilde ele alınmıştır. Bu çalışmanın amacı, kentli hakları ile ilişkili olarak kent hakkı kavramını tanımlamak, değişkenlerini değerlendirmek ve dünyada ve Türkiye'deki kent hakkı örneklerini yorumlamaktır. Sonuç olarak kent hakkının proaktif bir kentli profiline ihtiyaç duyduğu, kent hakkının sadece devletin değil özel sektörün de kente ilişkin aldığı kararlara karşı kullanılabileceği, Türkiye'nin ise kent hakkıyla ilgili tartışmalarda henüz başlangıç seviyesinde olduğu gibi sonuçlara ulaşılmıştır.
Kentli hakları, Kent hakkı, Türkiye	
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¹ Prof. Dr., Dokuz Eylül Üniversitesi İktisadi ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi, <u>yunusemre.ozer@deu.edu.tr</u>, ORCİD: 0000-0002-6503-4573





Giriş

This study aims to define the concept of RC compared with urban rights, evaluate the variables of RC, and interpret examples of RC in the world and the situation in Türkiye. The research question is whether the theoretical framework of RC is compatible with Türkiye through the basic qualitative method used in this study. The document analysis technique was used. In this context, documents were collected, interviewed, and analyzed (Sak et al., 2021, p. 228). In this context, the concept of RC is explained in detail, its differences with the idea of urban rights are presented, examples from the world related to RC are discussed, and an assessment of Türkiye is made.

Henri Lefebvre, who evaluates the city in the pre-industrial period as an œuvre, focuses on its use value (Öner and Osmanoğulları, 2017, p. 79). The city, which emerged before the industrial revolution, was later replaced by a city that changed with industrialization. In this context, the city is a work of art (œuvre), and what emerges later is a product (produit) (Yetkin et al., 2021, pp. 1067–1070). Lefebvre emphasizes the negative aspects of the capitalist economy, contending that the commercialization of cities serves to increase capital (Torkington and Riberio, 2022, p. 1062) œuvre refers to the ability to participate in the rethinking and recreation of the city, whose main purpose is to meet the needs of urban dwellers. This is in direct opposition to the city, which has a commercial value that brings with it many problems such as inequality, exclusion, and polarization. The RC, as stated by Harvey, is to participate in what exists and then to change it according to one's wishes (Udvarhelyi, 2011, p. 386; Qian and He, 2012, p. 2802). This change is a cooperative right (Amerian, 2021, p. 233). Lefebvre and Harvey were the initiators and main contributors to RC.

The RC is about transforming the city. The issue of changing the city should be addressed inclusively. It is about transforming the city into an egalitarian living environment without increasing rents or commoditizing urban space. This process is expected to be collective. The collectivity of a city influences many social events. From this perspective, this article aims to analyze the RC not only in the form described by theory but also through examples from practice, both in the world in general and in Türkiye in particular.

Like the concept of the RC, the concept of urban rights is often used interchangeably and sometimes confused. Therefore, it would be appropriate to first clarify these concepts. Following the theoretical explanations, an assessment of notable occurrences around the globe concerning RC will be presented, and the subject will be presented in terms of the current situation in Türkiye. This paper also provides an interpretation of the future. In addition to supporting other studies, this study aims to be of high quality that can be used in future RC discussions.



1. Conceptual Framework: "Urban Rights" and "The Right to City"

It is important to explain how the concepts are used in the framework of the study. This section describes the concepts of urban rights and RC in detail. At the end of this section, the differences between urban rights and RC will be analyzed.

1.1. Urban rights

Urban rights are the right of people to live in cities in a healthy and quality manner. These rights cover the relationship between urban dwellers, their environment, and other urban dwellers. In other words, these are the rights of urban dwellers to be treated with dignity in their homes. Demands such as health, infrastructure, participation, and nondiscrimination fall within the scope of urban rights (Akdemir, 2020, pp. 150–154). It includes equal access to infrastructure, water, and housing (Alacadağlı, 2021, p. 23). To put it another way, the basic goal of urban rights is to give urban dwellers a life worth human dignity. For example, issues such as healthy and clean cities, adequate public services, crime-free cities, and participation are considered to be within the scope of urban rights (Koçak and Bektaş, 2019, pp. 105–109. Urban rights are also important for the efficiency of local services and local democracy. The level of implementation of urban rights is seen as an indicator of success for local governments (Karasu, 2008, pp. 39–41).

Urban rights apply to everyone living in the city, are non-discriminatory, fall within the scope of solidarity rights, and urban residents are responsible for the implementation of these rights (Karasu, 2008, p. 38). From this perspective, urban rights, in addition to increasing participation at the local level, providing socioeconomic opportunities, and democratic control, also have content that imposes responsibilities on urban dwellers. It is also said that the sum of these rights and responsibilities constitutes the citizenship law (Parlak, 2018, p. 26-32). In this way, urban rights have a quality that grants rights and imposes responsibilities on urban dwellers. Thus, in practice, urban rights are expected to provide a situation in which they protect the city and are not indifferent to urban problems. Therefore, urban rights aim to provide urban dwellers with an urban consciousness and culture (Özbey and Özel, 2015, pp. 39–40).

Urban rights are viewed as a subset of human rights, as well as the rights of urban dwellers to environmental values as a whole. (Pektaş and Akın, 2010, p. 23). International organizations and texts define and explain these rights as a whole. The international organizations that have made efforts on urban rights are the Council of Europe and the United Nations, while the European Urban Charter I and II, the European Charter of Local Self-Government, and HABITAT summits, etc. are shown as the main texts (Korkut and Öner, 2021). In terms of urban rights, the European Urban Charter is a starting point (Akdemir, 2020, pp. 150–154). The Council of Europe considers the European Urban Charter to be within the scope of human rights (Sezik, 2019, p. 705). The European Urban Charter, the best-known urban rights text, emphasizes the rights that urban dwellers should have due to their presence in the city but does not express



a radical discourse or demand for change toward the capitalist system (Kuran, 2019, p. 100). This is the crux of the distinction between urban rights and the RC.

1.2. The right to the city

According to Henri Lefebvre, the RC is the most important of all rights (Ertan, 2008, p. 137). He adds right to œuvre, right to participate, and to right to appropriation, which are completely different from the right to property (Lefebvre, 2015, p. 151; Huchzermeyer, 2014, p. 44). According to Lefebvre, the right to the city is not only a superior right but also a right that can be enjoyed by all living in the city (Jabareen, 2014, pp. 135–136).

Lefebvre uses RC in singular form. He does not use the term "cities" in its plural form. Lefebvre is looking for a city that has not yet been created. Therefore, it is assumed that he uses the RC in singular expressions. It has been argued that many texts include rights that can be exercised in cities, but these are plural rights and partial in nature, whereas Lefebvre advocates a more holistic approach (Marcuse, 2010, p. 88). In a way, it is a stance against the discourse of globalization or global cities that is brought about by capitalism. He also states that the RC is not a legal regulation but is seen as a place where the situation in the city is transformed, where capitalism is not directed, and where urban dwellers participate in the city (Althorpe and Horak, 2023, p. 19). Perhaps Lefebvre sees the reconstruction of old cities as an empty exercise. He stated that the city should be transformed and regenerated to build a transformed and renewed urban existence. (Kuymulu, 2013, p. 926). In other words, according to Lefebvre (2004, p. 158), the RC is not about a return to traditional cities but a right to a transformed and renewed urban life.

Lefebvre's approach to RC requires a re-evaluation of existing urban problems. The city has become a commodity, and even the content of the RC is accepted as an opposition to the powerful, that is, an opposition to those who benefit from urban rent, or more precisely, an opposition to capitalism. Lefebvre notes that urban spaces can be reorganized according to the desires of urban dwellers. In other words, according to Lefebvre, the RC has the right to recreate the city. (Kuran, 2019, pp. 98–100). To expand on this, a very brief and clear definition of the RC is "to participate in what exists, but then to modify it according to our desires" (van der Graaf, 2020, p. 3). Similarly, Harvey sees the RC as a means of building, participating, and living in a new city (Shillington, 2013, p. 105). While Don Mitchell's version of the RC emphasizes citizen engagement, Harvey defines it as the freedom to create and recreate cities and ourselves (Rosati, 2019, p. 256). According to Harvey, the RC is both a phrase and a political ideal (Becker et al., 2020, p. 1095). According to Lefebvre, the slogan can widen the scope of demands for social change (Marcuse, 2010, p. 87). As Harvey puts it, "RC" means having the power to radically change urbanization. Also, according to Harvey (2008), there is a relationship between capitalism and urbanization, as urbanization is based on surplus products (Harvey, 2008, p. 2).



It is argued here that the RC refers to changes in the organization of the urban system rather than to the rights of urban dwellers. RC is seen not only as a planning or legal problem but also as a political and economic problem. Lefebvre and Harvey assess the role of urbanization in ensuring the continuation of capitalism and argue that capitalism can be reproduced through urbanization (Dinçer, 2016, pp. 75–78). Lefebvre states that urban space can be organized according to capital, and for this reason, the RC is the ability of people living in a city to change the city. Furthermore, the RC is based on the organization of urban life according to use value rather than economic value. Therefore, the relationship between urbanization and capital should be well understood for the RC (Dinçer, 2016, pp. 79-83).

A decent public space, according to the RC, is one that brings together different groups and helps to promote harmony and belonging to the space (American, 2021, p. 233). For Lefebvre, the RC includes rights such as the right to live and work in urban spaces, in addition to having adequate urban spaces. It is an approach in which the main role in urban politics belongs to urban dwellers. Harvey, on the other hand, questions the use of urban goods and sees the city as a necessary place for capitalism. (Misgav and Fenster, 2018, p. 20). Moreover, as Lefebvre noted, the RC calls for a radical reconstruction of social, political, and economic connections within and beyond the city. It highlights the decentralization of decision-making processes and focuses on the production of urban space (Purcell, 2002, p. 101). In other words, the RC seeks to restructure power dynamics in urban space construction and shift control away from the state toward urban dwellers (Arefin and Rashid, 2021, p. 147). Lefebvre's definition of the RC aims at achieving a new urban life that eliminates social inequalities. This is the transformation on which the RC is based. In summary, according to Lefebvre, the RC is a reformed and revitalized right to urban life. The transformation and change described above form the basis of the RC.

Harvey considers the RC a collective right. It includes not only the ability to use and access what exists in the city but also, as mentioned above, the ability to change it. Harvey sees the RC as a solution to the impact of neoliberalism on cities (Korkut and Öner, 2021, pp. 917-918). As previously stated, the major goal of the RC is to transfer power over urban space and city decisions from the state and capital groups to the city's citizens, as well as the right to modify the city. It is also contended that the RC will spark an urban revolution. Perhaps it is for this reason that both Lefebvre and Harvey regard the RC as a universal and collective right (Kartal and Gençtürk, 2022, pp. 65-73 and Güler, 2011, p. 52). Moreover, according to another perspective, although the RC is accepted as a collective right, it should be open to everyone, including those living in rural areas and not only those living in cities (Fabula and Timar, 2018, pp. 52-53). Harvey argued that the RC should also include managing the dominance of cities over rural areas (Harvey, 2008, p. 6). Decisions about rural areas are now made in urban areas.

In addition to the conceptual explanations of the proposed RC, it is also necessary to mention some obstacles that stand in its way. One of these obstacles is the situation of disadvantaged people. Spatial justice, social exclusion, and diversity are three major impediments to the realization of the RC (Domaradzka, 2022, p. 182). In this context, Harvey argued that efforts



should be made to ensure that all groups who feel excluded from urban life can exercise their right to the city (Wang et al., 2022, p. 2). This demonstrates that disadvantaged populations have an RC. However, in practice, in places where a large part of society is in low-income groups, individuals may be excluded from civil organizations, which is problematic for participation in urban decision-making (Güler, 2011, p. 69). In this regard, the proposed RC is based on inclusiveness.

RC is seen as a need for a better quality of life (Batal, 2016, p. 28). The right to a city is now being compared to human rights. Human rights refer to scenarios that the state must fulfill. The concept of the RC refers to a systemic transformation in which urban dwellers have the authority to decide (Yetkin et al., 2021, p. 1071). In other words, unlike urban rights, the RC is not a concept that can be restricted to the provision of decent services and opportunities for involvement. The RC is a design position that is subject to change.

Let us now consider the link between urban rights and the right to the city. Urban rights are based on international texts, and the state is the enforcer. It imposes mutual responsibility on both the state and the individual. Concerning the city, the state has no obligation, but the RC is seen as a demand. It has even been suggested that urban rights attempt to rationalize the RC (Öner and Osmanoğulları, 2017, pp. 83–86). This criticism should be considered. Because the RC incorporates radical speech, it is possible to argue that it is intended to bring the situation to a place where it can be more applicable or rational. However, we should not ignore the possibility that these two concepts may become disconnected.

Furthermore, urban rights are generally understood as the rights of those who live in the city, and in this respect, they are different from the RC (Kartal and Gençtürk, 2022, p. 78). It has been emphasized that urban rights need to be accessed because of their legal dimension and because they are part of human rights. RC is not only an issue of access in the legal sense but also that the expression of the right should not be explained only in the legal sense because of the political dimension of the RC (Kaymaz, 2021, pp. 779–780). In general, urban rights are related to access to existing services, constitute a set of rights and are based on a legal text. Similar to the above interpretation, scholars have even claimed that urban rights conceal the contradictions of capitalism. There is a contradiction between the RC and urban rights, and this conflict is based on the labor–capital conflict (Öner and Osmanoğulları, 2017, p. 75). Essentially, the RC does not require a legal text. Urban rights, on the other hand, generally suggest that there is a legal text and that urban dwellers are waiting for its implementation. Legal texts usually regulate access to services. As a result, urban rights are a set of rights, but the RC calls for transforming a city based on urban dwellers.

Property rights are another problem that divides RC from urban rights. As is well known, property rights hold an important place in human rights and therefore in urban rights. The RC, on the other hand, is the restructuring of power relations based on property by and for urban dwellers in accordance with the right to property while also protecting the poor (Kaymaz,



2021, p. 781). It is known that one of the basic human rights is the right to property. However, from a critical standpoint, the RC rejects property rights in favor of the right to use space, granting all urban dwellers the ability to modify urban space.

It can be seen that the concepts of urban rights and the RC are confusing and can even be used in the same sense; however, they have different meanings. It is claimed that the RC is linked to political conflicts. It is not a ready-made right like human rights, but rather is requested through "cries" (Kaymaz, 2021, pp. 761–776).

2. The Rights of Appropriation and Participation

It is well known that Lefebvre recognizes the city as a work in progress, co-created by the city's inhabitants, and defines the right to the city as including the right to participation and appropriation (Kuymulu, 2013, pp. 925–937 and Shillington, 2013, p. 105).

Appropriation is clearly distinguished from property rights (Mitchell, 2003, p. 18). Appropriation, in the most general terms, is the ability of urban dwellers to use the city fully and completely in their daily life experiences by rejecting individual ownership (Purcell, 2003, pp. 577–578). Lefebvre stated that private property is not given much importance and that the right to appropriation means the full participation of urban dwellers in urban spaces in their daily lives. In this context, urban dwellers have sub-parameters such as living, working, and occupying the city (Jabareen, 2014, p. 137). Appropriation is the sharing, use, ownership, and valuation of space based on its use value (Rahbari and Sharepour, 2015, pp. 227–29). Thus, appropriation can be defined as urban residents' access to and use of urban space (He, 2015, p. 674). According to these definitions, private property is rejected within the framework of the right to appropriation, and the emphasis is placed on the value of space and the total use of urban space.

This full and complete use needs to be explained in more detail. Full and complete participation in the use of urban space in everyday life (appropriation) is defined as an interactive process of transforming meaningless space into meaningful space. This right implies participation in both built and unbuilt spaces and full participation in urban spaces in everyday life (Amerian, 2021, p. 238, Turok and Scheba, 2019, p. 496, Purcell, 2002, p. 103). On the basis of these explanations and Lefebvre's interpretation of the RC as a future city, it is clear that the right to appropriation entails the construction of a future city.

By interpreting the right to appropriation as residence in the same place rather than in patterns such as fellow citizenship, the right to appropriation is open to use by various people, including urbanites and foreigners. Therefore, appropriation is a situation in which urban space is used, lived, worked, and occupy urban space (Vacchelli and Peyrefitte, 2018, pp. 12–13). This shows the inclusive line that Lefebvre described when defining the RC.

In summary, the right to appropriation within the RC corresponds to the full and complete use of the city without exclusion. In this regard, it is vital to discuss the right to participation, which is considered complementary to the right to appropriation. The question of inclusiveness,



which is often mentioned in relation to the right to participation, will also be discussed in this context.

Regarding the right to participation, it is the capacity and potential of urbanites to redefine and modify urban space within the context of the RC (He, 2015, p. 674). Within this context, Lefebvre's right to participation refers to the right of urban dwellers to make decisions about urban space (Manouchehri and Burns, 2021, p. 366). In other words, urban dwellers are involved in all decisions concerning the creation of urban space (Jabareen, 2014, p. 137). Examples of relevant topics for participation in urban space formation include issues such as zoning, urban design, and water. Therefore, participation should work with the cooperation of all citizens, and equal participation rights should be ensured (Shillington, 2013, p. 105). In brief, participation involves citizens participating in decision-making processes related to urban spaces. This decision may be under the control of the state, such as a policy decision, or under the patronage of capital, such as an investment decision (Purcell, 2003, pp. 577–578). However, participation is rarely properly implemented and is usually only advisory (Purcell, 2013, p. 150). Therefore, this perspective on participation should be broadly interpreted. In fact, from this perspective, decision-making should not only be understood as participation in decisions taken at different levels of local government or public administration. Therefore, actions against the investment decisions of capital circles concerning the city should also be considered within the framework of the RC. Therefore, decisions such as the zoning of public land or urban forests, private sector investment decisions, and privatization can also be considered within the scope of the RC.

The right to participation is defined as involvement that reproduces the city rather than repeating the city's current dynamics (Kuymulu, 2013, p. 926). Decision-making, building, and living in the space are all examples of participation (Rahbari and Sharepour, 2015, pp. 227-29). In other words, participation implies that everyone is involved in the decision-making processes that define urban spaces and social situations. This type of participation can result in appropriation, which can then shift control over urban life to citizens (Arefin and Rashid, 2021, pp. 147–148).

For participation, which is one of the most important elements of the concept of the RC, it is underlined that all elements of society, including the excluded segments in the process of shaping society, should take a common stance and struggle; the environment should not be a commodity; environmental values should be respected; and people should own the city they live in and own the problems (Kuran, 2019, p. 100–104). Criticism at this point is that two extremely important issues for the RC (participation/appropriation) cannot be realized, especially for groups such as women and minorities, and discrimination is seen in some communities. It has even been said that Lefebvre himself did not pay enough attention to gender and that it is an issue that he rarely pays attention to in everyday life (Rahbari and



Sharepour, 2015, pp. 227-29). This issue can be the subject of future studies on gender equality.

It would be useful to conclude the explanations of right to appropriation and participation using examples. Concerning the right to participation, which means that citizens are at the center of all decisions concerning the production of urban space, the example given by Purcell is the investment to be made in the city of Seattle because of the possibility of affecting urban space. It is stated by Lefebvre that it is not meant that decisions are made entirely by urban dwellers, but that their role at this point is essential. The second is the right to appropriation. This principle involves the right of urban dwellers to enter, occupy, and use public spaces. Appropriation grant city residents the right to fully utilize urban space in their daily lives. The objection against this approach is that urban space is subject to private ownership and use. (Purcell, 2002, p. 102–103). As an example of this, in many parts of the world and even in Türkiye, criticisms and protests regarding the use of space in areas such as shopping malls or beaches that serve private use can be voiced.

We stated that the process aims at change through radical discourse, expressing a transition from a situation in which the state is at the center to one in which urban dwellers are at the center when explaining the right to appropriation and participation, which are among the most fundamental elements of the RC. This is a very unusual discourse, and naturally, it has inspired many social and political movements. The next section analyzes the effects of RC.

3. Political Struggle and Social Justice

Cities have been portrayed as a political battleground between unsustainable economic growth and sustainable human development (de Sá et al., 2019, p. 61). According to Lefebvre, urban people have a right to social, economic, and cultural opportunities in the city, and social, political, and economic connections must be substantially reformed (Chau et al., 2018, p. 5). As pointed out by French philosophers, the RC ensures that no one is excluded from the benefits of city life. As a result, various social movements have been inspired by the concept of the RC (Setiawan, 2020, pp. 1-21). In other words, the RC lies at the heart of many social movements founded on equality and rights. Concerns such as increasing inequality, income distribution, and a lack of equitable opportunities in cities have enhanced the rhetoric of the RC because of the discourse on global cities.

The RC describes the situation in which people living in a city can change and organize the city by having common access to what the city produces. Lefebvre's objection to a one-size-fits-all model of urbanization is considered to have led to the emergence of many social movements (Başarmak, 2020, pp. 219–225). Lefebvre defined the RC as a cry and desire for cities that have deteriorated and lost their naturalness. The struggle of urban dwellers who do not accept this degradation and rupture will bring about the RC. Harvey also sees RC as a tool for capitalism to reclaim cities. According to Harvey, this can be achieved through social movements (Tataroğlu, 2012, pp. 5–6). As can be seen, it is natural that the RC provides an inspiration for social movements. Especially today, the reactions of groups that cannot participate in the



decisions made about cities, the reactions shown when investment decisions made by capital affect the environment, and the reactions to discrimination because of the heterogeneous structure in cities can be considered in this context. Specifically, actions such as the commercialization of public spaces, the impact of city cameras on private life, unemployment, demands for justice for groups such as immigrants, opposition to globalization, and institutional democratization can be considered within the framework of the RC. It is also argued that the RC, defined as a cry and a demand, will reveal the responses of all sections of society. These reactions can come from marginalized groups, such as the homeless and the poor, as well as from artists, intellectuals, etc., from middle- and upper-income groups who do not fully reflect their potential despite being integrated into the city (Domaradzka, 2018, pp. 611-612).

These social efforts can also lead to political awareness or the formation of organizations. According to Lefebvre, the RC is crucial for creating political consciousness and is connected to city protection and city-inhabitant concerns. According to Alver, the RC is viewed as a shared right that requires collaboration (Alver, 2014, p. 217). Social and political actions that fall under the purview of the RC should be viewed as affecting one another. As a result, the RC, as a common right, can unveil cooperative social and political forces. Individuals who reside in a city are, in some ways, obligated to respond by their rights to the city. Of course, there are certain thorny issues in the interaction between the RC and social movements. Issues such as the mobilization of moral values and emotions, homophobia, the emergence of nationalism, fundamentalism, or sports fanaticism, for example, may impede the realization of the RC (Domaradzka, 2018, p. 613). Indeed, the RC is an equitable and cooperative concept that seeks to include or attain inclusion in the city. As a result, the aforementioned issues that may negatively affect the city should not be considered as social movements within the RC.

As indicated above, the RC is frequently addressed in the implementation of social justice at the urban level (Udvarhelyi, 2011, p. 385). In other words, the RC is concerned with maintaining social fairness while leaving the city's future to its citizens. The RC applies to both the right to change and access the existing (Metlioğlu, 2021). From this perspective, it attempts to ensure justice in the city while also changing the city. Ensuring social fairness in the city can indeed be achieved through battle. Many of the aforementioned urban issues are consistent with the liberal order within the context of the RC. Therefore, it is compatible with the RC to say that the situation to be referred to as ensuring justice will be realized through a struggle against the problems caused by the liberal order.

Finally, the RC seeks to transform both the liberal democratic concept of citizenship and capitalist social relations (Purcell, 2002, p. 103). Citizenship is linked to membership in a political community; thus, Lefebvre uses the term citadin (urban dweller) to refer to those who live in the city. In this way, the concept of citadin has become a concept that includes concepts such as "dweller" (Purcell, 2002, p. 102). According to Lefebvre, belonging to a



political community is not explained by concepts such as citizenship. It is also argued that citizenship should be redefined by bringing together the concepts of urban dweller and citizens, as the RC does (Purcell, 2003, pp. 576-577). For this reason, the RC also challenges the concept of citizenship, which is widely discussed in the social sciences, and takes it to another level.

4. Global Examples of RC

Debates on the transformation of cities against the will of city inhabitants have been recurrent in recent times. The problems of rebuilding the city, of complete participation in the urban space instead of individual ownership, and of inclusiveness arising from urban rent, which are at the core of the RC, are common problems in today's cities. At this point, the expectation that the state should not be the sole decision-maker and that decision-making processes should be transferred from the state to the people within the framework of RC is also often discussed. The RC calls for a much more radical solution to these problems, which are attempted to be addressed through approaches such as governance.

At this point, it is useful to briefly highlight the concept of governance. According to the UNDP definition, governance is "the system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and private sector. It is the way a society organizes itself to make and implement decisions—achieving mutual understanding, agreement and action" (United Nations Development Programme). The concept of governance is much debated and criticized concept. Despite the benefits it brings, it is not possible to see it as a completely successful model. RC, on the other hand, takes a different perspective on governance discussions, accepting that urban dwellers are a natural part of all processes, whether organized or not. It is more accurate to see these two concepts as adding value to each other rather than as competitors. Likewise, the same applies to the debate on sustainable development.

Starting with the United Nations (UN), it would be useful to mention some of the efforts under the UN umbrella on RC. For example, the 2010 report "The Right to the City: Bridging The Urban Divide" contains important findings and messages on RC. For example, it discusses issues such as more efforts are needed to implement RC; governance institutions need to be reviewed; the past has caused too much social exclusion and deprivation; urban inequalities should not only be addressed economically; space should be rationally planned; cities should play a role in reducing urban poverty; cities should bring people together around their thoughts and ideas; and migrants should not be neglected (UN HABITAT, The Right To The City, 2010).

The New Urban Agenda of Habitat III (2016), as a confirmation and supplement to the previous documents, accepts the emergence of inclusive, nondiscriminatory, equitable, safe, resilient, and sustainable cities as a common vision. It goes further to emphasize the implementation of these principles, defined as the right to a city by national and local governments. Although the RC is not explicitly stated in legal laws, organizations such as the UN have incorporated it



into their constitutions. Indeed, problems such as inclusion and nondiscrimination regarding the RC already lie within the ambit of fundamental human rights and are consistent with the core ideals of the UN. However, it does not adequately express the essential issues of the RC, such as urban space transformation, denial of ownership, occupation, and full participation in urban space.

For a more detailed discussion of this issue, it is necessary to refer to the report "Policy Paper 1: The Right to the City and Cities for All". In this text, RC is seen as an active issue and a new perspective for Sustainable Development Goals. First, it states that the RC will contribute to the implementation of the concept of human rights. It has even been mentioned that there is a legal basis in Brazil and Ecuador. However, recalling the previous discussions, the RC does not require the concept of human rights or the support of a legal text. However, the report states that all actors should work together with the RC. The report also states that RC should apply to any place defined as a city. Again, according to the report, the RC has three pillars. These include spatially equitable resource distribution, political agency, and social, economic, and cultural diversity. In this framework, RC consists of issues such as the equitable distribution of a city's resources, providing good living conditions for its inhabitants, ensuring that all elements in the city can exercise their RC, and respecting all differences (Habitat III Policy Papers, 2016).

International organizations strive to ensure that issues such as discrimination are not barriers to RC. The Global Platform for the Right to the City (GPR2C) is one such platform. This organization aims to represent the voices of groups suffering from discrimination and marginalization (Global Platform for the Right to the City). RC offers an inclusive perspective. In today's economic and social system, efforts to include such groups in the system are extremely valuable.

It is necessary to evaluate the protests in Rio de Janeiro, a city that included the RC in its legal regulations in 2001. In 2016, Rio hosted the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup. The high cost of these events, human rights violations during the process, and discourses of exclusion have led to many protests. In fact, this is an example of a reaction against state and capital investments. Similar protests have been organized not only in Rio but also in many other Olympic host countries.

The Abahlali-based Mjondolo movement began in South Africa. It often used the discourse of the RC. They demanded the expropriation of private land and the construction of houses for public use. This discourse is compatible with the RC approach, which rejects private property. occupations and roadblocks may be viewed as part of the RC. However, it is interesting to note that the issue that triggered this movement was the decision to remove some slum areas before the 2010 FIFA World Cup in South Africa (Cities Territories Governance). The fact that the Abahlali-based Mjondolo movement is protesting against the decisions of an international sports organization's management must be seen in the context of the Rio 2020 Olympics.



Indeed, the unifying denominator of both events may be the masses' rebellion against global capital and national states' decisions within the context of the RC.

The RC Alliance, founded in 2007, focuses not only on having the RC but also on the right of urban dwellers to transform and shape the city and implement a human rights agenda. This community aims to create democratic, equitable, and sustainable cities by preventing gentrification and displacement. In particular, they want to prevent housing from becoming a commodity by emphasizing a just housing system (Right to the City). The RC Alliance is compatible with the theoretical approach of the RC because it opposes the inclusive role of the RC concept and the commodification of urban spaces. Their approach to city design also aims to prevent possible rent increases through urban planning and to leave the process to the initiative of urban dwellers in an inclusive way.

As can be seen from some examples from around the world, investment decisions forced not only by the state but also by global capital, the costs of international sports organizations, and housing demands are considered within the framework of demands for RC. Following these examples, RC will be analyzed from a general to a specific perspective by evaluating the RC issue in Türkiye in particular.

5. The RC in Türkiye

Although the 2014 HABITAT III National Report for Turkey does not explicitly address the RC, it does address issues such as urban regeneration, inclusiveness, and city councils (Turkey Habitat-III National Report). Similarly, the Republic of Turkey's National Report on the Implementation of the New Urban Agenda also emphasizes inclusiveness (Republic of Turkey, 2021). In addition to these reports, it is necessary to analyze the debates on RC in Türkiye.

In Türkiye, the most important regulation in which urban dwellers are seen as stakeholders is citizenship regulation in Law No. 5393 (Belediye Kanunu). "Citizenship law" is seen as a means to participate in local government (Pektaş and Akın, 2010, p. 38). Living in a place is considered sufficient to obtain fellow citizen status. This is because fellow citizenship is based on residence (Çamur, 2017, p. 119). However, although the law of fellow citizenship is an important and widely studied subject in legislation, its significance has not yet been fully understood. When asked about the level of knowledge of fellow citizens regarding the law of fellow citizenship, a high percentage of respondents answered that they were not informed (Usta and Bilgi, 2017, p. 234-237). The term "everyone" in the law of fellow citizenship is inclusive in terms of participation, which is also in line with the RC approach. In this sense, the expectation of inclusiveness brought about by the RC is fulfilled. However, an analysis of the content of the regulation shows that Citizens' Law regulates the relationship between rights and obligations. Moreover, issues such as unilateral information by municipalities and the granting of subsidies are far from the approach of the RC. In Türkiye, the expansion and restriction of participation mentioned in Citizens' Law are at the initiative of mayors.



Continuing with local governments, it would be beneficial to evaluate the relationship between city councils and the RC. The city council (kent konseyi) is another way to become involved in local government. However, this does not contribute to modifying the urban environment that the RC experiences. Participation in the city council mainly involves communicating with urban dwellers demands and delivering ideas to the municipal council. This is hardly the kind of participation that places urban dwellers at the core of transformation, as the RC envisions. There are many studies in the literature on city councils, among which the rate of people who stated that they have no information about city councils in general or the city council of the place where they live in particular is more than half (Usta and Bilgi, 2017, pp. 234-237). However, city councils should aim to develop civic awareness (Terzi and Koçak, 2014, p. 141). This issue is also included in the legislation. Citizenship awareness is an important variable for city governance participation. It is considered to ensure the participation of urban citizens in city administration (Parlak, 2018, p. 22). Urban consciousness is based on the notion that people living in a city respect each other and feel a sense of belonging and responsibility toward the city in which they live. This requires individuals' participation in solving the problems of the city (Şahnagil and Güler, 2019, pp. 94–103). The RC means acting with this awareness. Unfortunately, the lack of awareness on this issue in Türkiye is obvious. Therefore, it is unfair to expect city councils to eliminate this shortcoming on their own. Therefore, in the current situation, it is not possible to establish a relationship between municipalities and RCs in the country. Finally, although there are some successful examples in Türkiye, such as the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality City Council, city councils in general are far from the RC concept, as they mostly organize social and cultural activities.

Another issue that both local and central governments in Türkiye are concerned about and are responsible for is urban transformation. Urban transformation is a tool to transform urban spaces. For this reason, this issue should be evaluated in discussions on the RC. In Türkiye, it is mostly used to reduce disaster risks. However, it is vital to remember that the administration, rather than the inhabitants, has the authority to change the city. It can be seen that urban dwellers who are affected by urban transformation do not have much say in the matter. However, the RC also opposes the commodification of cities. In contrast, it is often mentioned in the literature (for example Okat and ince, 2021 and Özer, 2021) that urban transformation projects lead to an increase in rents in practice. Therefore, RC cannot be realized in urban transformation processes.

In Türkiye, due to the urban transformation of old slum areas by municipalities and TOKİ, the inhabitants of these areas are seen as "undesirable" and displaced. There is an opinion that urban transformation projects in many places in Türkiye, especially Istanbul, do not contribute to the reproduction of space, as Lefebvre stated, but rather to the production of new problems (Erdi, 2019). For example, such organizations have been observed in Sulukule (Lelandis, 2014). It is noted that most of the urban regeneration projects mentioned were carried out without public consultation, that the public found out about them only after they had been carried



out, and that the public found out about them through the media (Lelandis, 2013, pp. 822-823).

It is emphasized that urban transformation practices in examples such as Dikmen Valley, are damaging the common identity of society and that people are resisting its protection. This is also related to the rights of individuals to participate in decision-making in cities within the framework of RC, as expressed by Lefebvre. In the Dikmen Valley, it is assumed that ordinary people are organized and may correspond to the differentiated groups in Lefebvre's narrative. In Dikmen Valley and similar examples, although initially supported by some NGOs or political structures, it is said that the people realized their organization and developed a unique understanding of RC emerged (Erdi, 2019).

Lefebvre's understanding of RC includes the idea that no one can be removed from urban reality. Indeed, it is argued that while some urban dwellers in Istanbul have protested against the neoliberal transformation of the city, others have tried to protect their social values more covertly (Lelandis, 2014).

The RC requires citizens to be involved in all decisions affecting the city. These decisions are not limited to those of public administration. Decisions made by the capital may also be challenged by the RC. In the cities of Türkiye, especially in metropolies with high population density, serious investments in capital and public administration are taking place. It is necessary to draw attention to large-scale investments that involve changing urban spaces, such as housing and hotels in coastal areas, changes in zoning plans, and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) processes, which are important stages of capital investments. In all these cases, urban residents are not as part of the process as they should have been. While discussing the RC, Harvey emphasized the dominance of urban areas over rural areas and suggested that this issue should be included in the RC's content (Harvey, 2008, p. 6). In Türkiye, rural spaces have been transformed by investments in tourism, construction, and mining sectors. The most important development in rural transformation occurs in Trabzon Uzungöl. Following the recent forest fires in Türkiye in recent years, concerns about the zoning of burned areas. The 2024 landslide in the Erzincan mining area is a case in point. There have been protests against these issues. It is debatable whether these protests are examples of RC in the full sense. However, it should not be forgotten that these investments are being made against the will of those who are organizing the protests and are therefore affected by the process. In addition, as in the case of urban transformation, protests may initially be owned by some groups; however, as in the case of the villagers of Bergama, protests may also develop as a process that is identified with the people. In these processes, individuals' demands and expectations often remain unfulfilled. In summary, in Türkiye, demands and actions for changing urban spaces usually come from the administration or the capital, and urban dwellers do not have much influence in this process. The reactions of urban dwellers are often inconclusive. Considering all these issues together, we find ourselves far from the basic RC approach.



One solution to the problem areas in the context of the above issues is a strong and organized social structure. Therefore, it would be useful to examine the status of NGOs in relation to RC. Of the active associations in Türkiye, 1.54% are planning, urbanization, and development associations, and 1.51% are rights and advocacy associations. Professional and solidarity associations account for 37.99% (T.C. İçişleri Bakanlığı, Sivil Toplumla İlişkiler Genel Müdürlüğü). To gain support from civil society organizations, especially at the local level, existing obstacles should be minimized and their capacities should be increased (Öner and Şen, 2020, p. 586). Although the data are not detailed, most solidarity associations are fellowship associations. Fellowship associations are an important mechanism for overcoming the problems that people who have experienced migration may face during the urbanization process and for ensuring adaptation. In contrast, fellowship associations are explained to make urbanization more difficult (Özkiraz and Acungil, 2012, pp. 254-255). As far as our topic is concerned, it cannot be said that associations of fellow citizens that operate based on solidarity contribute to the rights of the city. However, there is no detailed information on the activities of the abovementioned rights-seeking associations. Therefore, using these data, it is difficult to conclude that a city has an organized social structure. As explained above, in Lefebvre's RC approach, the absence of exclusion and discrimination is desired. However, it is often argued that community associations form a community within themselves and delay integration with the city. This can lead to the passivization of the urban dwellers who, in the RC approach, have a role to play in urban problems and the design of urban spaces and to a decrease in their level of awareness in Türkiye.

In Türkiye, it is necessary to evaluate social movements within the context of the RC as a major area of political science. As mentioned above, it is not common for Türkiye to assume the responsibility of being an organized society or an individual urban dweller. In contrast, my observation is that social movements in Türkiye tend to take the form of reactive actions, that is, actions that develop reactively after events have occurred. However, the RC emphasizes that the main element is the urban dwellers, that the main element in decision-making should be urban dwellers, and the power of urban dwellers to change the city. In short, the RC demands continuous collective consciousness, not reactive consciousness. Therefore, it seems difficult to evaluate most social movements in Türkiye within the context of the RC.

In conclusion, there is a lack of awareness of the RC in the Türkiye, both by public administration and citizens. The idea of having the right to make decisions and change the city in matters concerning the city, rather than being affected by the decisions made, is not something that can be easily realized in today's urban policy at the local level. To address urban problems from the perspective of the RC, there is a need for an urban profile that is more questioning, that acts with a sense of responsibility, that analyses the impact of both public administration and capital investment decisions on the city, that takes an active role in issues that change and affect the city, and that is aware of the inequalities that will result from gentrification through rent increases in urban space.



Conclusion

The result is that the RC theory and the situation in Türkiye are not compatible. For this reason, it is hoped that the recommendations to be made for Türkiye will provide guidance. In Türkiye, local governments are defined as administrative units closest to the people. In addition, the planning of urban areas is the primary responsibility of local governments. However, these planning processes should be carried out using a participatory approach. The preparation of zoning and strategic plans by local governments without the participation of urban dwellers is fundamentally at odds with RC. In addition, it is observed that city councils, which are one of the most important powers in the hands of local governments, are neither similar to participation in the neoliberal narrative nor to participation in the RC approach, but rather a structure that conducts social and cultural activities.

It is clear that urban regeneration practices in Türkiye have not been carried out with the knowledge of those affected. In this way, it is the opposite of the RC approach, which recognizes that urban residents play a fundamental role in shaping urban space. It is therefore inevitable that urban renewal practices will lead to increased rents. Therefore, it should not be forgotten that urban dwellers constitute the primary element in both the formation of urban plans and urban regeneration practices. We should see this as a necessity not only to achieve the RC target but also to ensure transparent administration.

Finally, the issue of awareness is extremely important. It is very difficult for a person to become interested without knowledge. For this reason, to achieve the RC target and ensure a transparent approach to administration, it is necessary to inform urban dwellers about every administrative issue, using all the possibilities offered by technology. Of course, the issues on which urban dwellers should be informed are not only related to public administration but also to investments by the private sector. This is the only way to create a situation that RC expects and wishes to see.

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