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Islands of Otherness
Archipelago Istanbul

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Abstract

The thesis Islands of Otherness: Archipelago Istanbul intends to research how a confrontation with Otherness results in spatial manifestations within the urban fabric and architecture of Istanbul. The initial starting point lies in defining the term Otherness, as everything that is dissimilar to the Self, and how it applies to space, cities and the particular case study of Istanbul. Istanbul forms the ideal city for a study of this kind, as manifestations of Otherness and the dichotomy between the Self and the Other are prevalent, starting from its position at a geographical crossroads with inherently implied divisions to its turbulent history that leads to many shifts as to what is considered the Other. The present reality of Istanbul, with its many borderlines and edges, be they implied or physical, visible or invisible, leads to inequitable segregation. The observable examples of spatial manifestations of Otherness in Istanbul will be studied thoroughly. This thesis forms the speculative and theoretical hypothesis that the city of Istanbul is, paradoxically, de-urbanising itself in the wake of its extreme growth. What it is increasingly becoming is less a city but an ensemble of independent urban islands that form a city that resembles an archipelago. By reading these urban islands under the speculative assumption that they are, above all, consequences of Otherness, this thesis aims to answer how Otherness is spatialized, how it manifests in different spaces of Istanbul, and how it consequently affects the structure of the city.

Keywords: Istanbul, the Other, alterity, stranger, postmodern city, urban identity, urban fragmentation, morphology, urban islands

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Introduction

> "Istanbul wrote delirious into the script of the urban imaginary. "What protects us against delirium or hallucinations are not our critical powers but the structure of our space," Merleau-Ponty wrote. In the case of Istanbul, there is no protection. Delirium is order." [1]

> "Despite close affiliation, the encounter of self with the other is often fraught with difficulties. Irretrievably divided, unavoidably connected, self and other clearly engage in complex relations." [2]

The thesis *Islands of Otherness: Archipelago Istanbul* intends to research and to illuminate how the confrontation with the Other results in spatial manifestations within the urban fabric of Istanbul and within its architecture.

On an abstract and philosophical level, the question of the Other has captured the attention of thinkers for centuries. The confrontation with Otherness triggers many questions, paradoxes, and conflicts. Simplified to its most basic definition Otherness can be defined as everything that is dissimilar or opposite to the Self, forming the common characteristics of the Other, as the state of being different from and alien to

1 Conover in Doğan 2010, 13.
2 Tynan 2009.

the identity of a person or a system.[3] In the context of globalization and a postmodern world, increasingly interconnected and pluralistic, questions relating to the Other impact it to its most fundamental core, moving away from a purely intellectual and philosophical question to the reality of cities. Contemporary complex and networked cities are the sites where a multitude of Others live and coexist. Their encounter in the space of cities is unavoidable and their relationship, one that is constantly redefined, moving fluidly between functional coexistence to fearful exclusion, leaves a large and permanent imprint on its structure. As a topic of enormous impact on the city studying questions of the interrelationship of Otherness and cities becomes imperative.

Istanbul forms the ideal city for a case study of this kind, as manifestations of Alterity and the dichotomy between the Self and the Other are prevalent in its urban fabric. Looking at Istanbul from afar, it is famously located at a unique geographical intersection, at the crossroads of two continents between the east and the west. Istanbul's geographic location alone inevitably forms a line of division that implies inherent Otherness. Also, its tumultuous history Istanbul has gone through many transformations, among those the shift from the Byzantine to the Ottoman Empire and more recently the birth of the secular Republic of Turkey. What is considered the Other continuously altered, Istanbul going through periods in which it was marginalized and periods in with it was in the prime light.

Further, looking at contemporary Istanbul, a massively expanding and growing megacity, internally through the lens of Otherness, many apparent spatial manifestations of an encounter with it become visible. These spaces are located from the very core to the absolute fringes of the city. The many minorities of a once cosmopolitan city, the Other that coexisted with the Turks, gradually left in opposition to their Alterity. Their mostly historical inner city districts became ghettos of a new Other, disadvantaged rural migrants flocking to Istanbul. Those that did not settle in the forsaken core formed informal settlements on the fringes of the city, autonomous and isolated from the city. The same peripheral space is the playground of the neoliberal transformation affecting the megacity, with megaprojects and gated communities for the wealthy, fragmenting its landscape. The Other that is in its way is forced into forceful eviction and banished into mass housing projects. The same fate of expulsion affects the Other at the core, as their neighborhoods now the site of a gentrification process. Lastly, the historic center is increasingly commodified and cleansed of the Other, resembling more a theme park that a real city.

3 Miller 2008, 588-591.

As different as these spaces are, they share an affiliation with the problem of Alterity, all of them operate by a logic of detachment and can be described as "off worlds."[4] Their effect on the topography of Istanbul is extreme, alienation, exclusion, and segregation have become an integral part of the city on an unprecedented scale.

The spaces discussed above are not unique to the city of Istanbul, and they are prevalent in megacities all over the globe. The theoretical implications and spatial consequences that all of them share apply more or less to any globalized city, with local variations. However, the author selected Istanbul as the case study for this thesis as its spaces of Otherness are progressing and increasing at an immensely accelerated pace and scope. Besides, Istanbul has internal aspects in terms of its history and geography that makes its study in a relationship with Otherness even more relevant.

The thesis *Islands of Otherness: Archipelago Istanbul* forms the hypothesis that the city of Istanbul is, paradoxically de-urbanising itself in the wake of its extreme growth. What it is increasingly becoming is less a city but an ensemble of independent urban islands that form an urban morphology that resembles an archipelago. This phenomenon is likely to be further and further intensified in the future development of the city, unless its course, which is improbable, radically shifts. By reading these urban islands under the speculative assumption that they are, above all, consequences of Otherness, this thesis aims to answer how Otherness is spatialized, how it manifests in different spaces of Istanbul, and how it consequently affects the structure of the city. The thesis aims to arrive at a point of deeper understanding of Istanbul by conducting a speculative inquiry into the urban reality of Istanbul with the theme of the Other.

The *off worlds* of Istanbul, which this thesis reads as consequences of Otherness, are vastly studied individually and comparatively in the literature and research about the city of Istanbul. Commonly they are referred to as consequences of the forces of globalization, neoliberalism and a commodification of the city. Some of the literature about these spaces hints towards the notion of the Other as being something that is crucial in describing their formation and their functioning. This is usually limited to examples of gated communities, inner city slums or peripheral settlements of migrants, being the spaces where the idea of the Other can be found most clearly. However, these studies remain individual to a specific space and do not elaborate and explore the relationship of them with the abstract notion of Otherness more deeply. It remains subtle. This thesis, differing from the previous research that was consulted

4 Davis 2009, 118.

during its making, studies these spaces collectively focusing on their shared connection to the concept of Otherness as the main driving force behind their detachment and their islandness.

To elaborate this hypothesis, the thesis *Islands of Otherness: Archipelago Istanbul* is structured into three main chapters.

Chapter I, *Being Other,* will introduce the theoretical and abstract framework of Otherness that this thesis will be built up upon. As the topic of Otherness is vast and crosses many disciplines, only a short overview for understanding the implication Otherness on the city will be provided. First, a selection of definitions of Otherness will be presented, focusing mainly on Emmanuel Levinas and his distinction of an absolute and relative Other. Next, the term Other will be discussed on the scale of globalization and its implications in postmodernity will be explained mostly in the light of the thought of two philosophers - Lyotard's theory of meta-narratives and Bauman's liquid modernity, both clarifying the structuring and border-making processes happening in the duality of Self and Other. Further, the implications of Otherness on the formation of identity, a recurring theme in the context of postmodernity, will be discussed. Conclusively, in the first step toward spatial notions of Otherness, the figure of the Stranger and its spatial dimension will be introduced. The sum of the ideas in this chapter provides a basis for understanding Otherness and for applying it in the context of cities.

Chapter II, *Islands of Otherness*, will apply these theoretical ideas to the city, demonstrating their concrete urban manifestations and will illuminate them with examples unique to Istanbul. After introducing the city of Istanbul shortly with its relevant parameters to the subject of the thesis, the spatial and geographical dimension of Otherness will be explored. Different aspects of this will be introduced, starting with the observation that cities are inherently systems of spatial Othering. The focus then shifts to internal aspects of Otherness in the city, discussing its topography and a transformed center-fringe dichotomy. Further, the possible internal borders and their formation, leading to spaces of Alterity in the city, are discussed. Finally, the relationship that the Self and the Other develop in the city and their spatial consequences are reviewed.

Chapter III, *From Islands to Archipelago*, will look at the islands analyzed in chapter II as a collective. The ordering mechanism inherent in the Ottoman past of Istanbul,

in the concept of Mahalle, will be analyzed, followed by a study of the reordering taking place in the present of Istanbul. Three examples of an urban reordering in Istanbul will be demonstrated to illuminate the formation of the new morphology of an archipelago. The examples of urban renewal projects, processes of gentrification and mass housing developments, look at the transformed relationship of Self and Other and their homogenized redistribution in the urban fabric. Conclusively, the transformed morphology of the city, now functioning as an archipelago, will be connected to related studies, ending with an open question on its connection to the idea of the camp by Agamben.

This thesis uses qualitative methods to illuminate the theoretical framework in which the paradoxical process of Istanbul's de-urbanization happens and how it connects to conceptions of Otherness. The method of literature review and analysis of a variety of interdisciplinary texts, mostly theories from outside the field of architecture, are used to find an interpretative framework to explain an architecturally defined phenomenon. This is aided by an in-depth literature research of contemporary urban developments of Istanbul. In addition, a field research of three months was conducted in the summer of 2015 to attain a closer and more real perspective on the discussed topics.

The thesis does not have a quantitative background or intention. It uses relevant empirical sources but is based on a speculative analysis of them, to develop a general conceptual framework. Also, the author does not speak Turkish, making certain sources unavailable to him and possibly leaving out certain aspects. The genuine depth of the topic of Otherness is outside the scope of this thesis as its aim is to apply basic principles of it to urbanism and the city of Istanbul in particular. Istanbul is explored through the lens of Otherness, focusing it on Istanbul's contemporary form, leaving out its historic examples. The thesis, therefore, does not claim to be fully conclusive as its scope is limited.

I

Being Other

1.1. Introduction

> "Few issues have expressed as powerful a hold over the thought of this century as that of "The Other." It is difficult to think of a second theme, even one that might be of more substantial significance, that has provoked as widespread an interest as this one; it is difficult to think of a second theme that so sharply marks off the present (...) To be sure the problem of the other has at times been accorded a prominent place in ethics and anthropology, in legal and political philosophy. But the problem of the other has certainly never penetrated as deeply as today into the foundations of philosophical thought – the question of the other cannot be separated from the most primordial questions raised by modern thought." [5]

As the German philosopher Michael Theunissen states in the introduction of his influential book *The Other*, solely studying issues of Otherness, "a systematic and detailed study of diverse treatments of the theme in our century,"[6] the question of Alterity has been on the forefront of western thought since its inception. Its importance persists and even increased today, making it a significant contemporary issue, not only of intellectual, academic and philosophical discourse, but affecting every aspect of life in a very concrete way. Alterity is being studied more and more, and being applied to fields seemingly unrelated to it, as in the case of this thesis urbanism and architecture. In today's fragmented world, shattered by the many disasters of the twentieth century,

5 Theunissen 1986, 1.
6 Fred R. Dallmayr 1986, xi.

and resulting in the loss of a common and unifying identity have made questions of Self and Other highly prevalent. An encounter with Otherness and themes related to the Other are unavoidable which is why this thesis studies them and apply them to cities.

As a starting point of this chapter, definitions of terms related to Self and Other will be given and the context of the situation of the contemporary world will be briefly described, namely globalization and how it makes the question of Alterity increasingly relevant. Then the theoretical framework of postmodernity and liquid modernity that applies to this age will be introduced and how processes of ordering affect the Other and how it in return impacts the formation of identity. In a subsequent step, a particular type of a sociological form of the Other, Simmel's Stranger, will be introduced. Its implications in the context of pre-modernity to postmodernity are studied briefly.

1.2. Definitions of Otherness

The terms that are used in a discourse on Otherness will be introduced and reflected on briefly in this chapter. Otherness is a highly paradoxical and widely discussed topic in philosophy, which has led to many conflicting definitions and concepts. To simplify to the extreme, Otherness represents everything that is "wholly divergent from, and as a corollary, constitutive of the self."[7] Another way to describe the term is the simple definition of Alterity found in the Oxford English Dictionary, defining it as "the state of being other, or being different; otherness."[8] Generally, Otherness and Alterity are used in this simplistic manner, despite their real conceptual depth, to represent everything that is excluded, repressed, suppressed or concealed, stemming from "a dichotomy between those who occupy the position of the 'essential' and the 'universal' and those who are defined and reduced by their difference or divergence from the norm."[9]

However, Otherness cannot be simplified as a relationship that leads to exclusion or marginalization, and it has to be studied and analyzed in depth as a complex inter-subject relationship, consisting of multiple layers. A look at a small selection of the many studies conducted on this complex subject show how paradoxical and conflicting the possible answers to the problem of Alterity can be. In a very short overview,

7 Tynan 2009.
8 Oxford English Dictionary, s.v. "alterity", accessed June 23, 2016.
9 Bordo in Peel 2008, 2.

this chapter wants to introduce how this subject has been viewed from different perspectives. A detailed discourse on this question, albeit highly interesting, is outside the reach of this thesis, only a general introduction necessary to understand the further spatial implications of the hypothesis is provided.

One basic way to start looking at the problem of Alterity is to differentiate and make a distinction between difference and Otherness, the first "belonging to the realm of fact" and the second "belonging to the realm of discourse," taking account of a subject.[10] Therefore Otherness can be seen as the "result of a discursive process by which a dominant in-group (Us, the Self) constructs one or many dominated out-groups (them, other) by stigmatizing a difference – real or imagined – presented as a negation of identity and thus a motive for potential discrimination."[11] In this process, Othering allows the establishment of the hierarchical groups of *us and them*. What this definition presupposes is that the marginalized group of the Other is seen purely as a result of it being opposed to the identity of the group of what is the Self. The Other is not considered to be an independent entity and is completely reliant on the Self.

This very general way of looking at Otherness does not offer the option for the Other to be seen as independent from the Self. If the Other is denied this possibility of being independent and is always encountered on terms of the Self, it is "merely a satellite of the same—and, therefore, is not really other at all."[12] Many thinkers have disagreed with this conception of Otherness and have suggested looking at it as the "the chiastic relationship of alterity and similitude."[13]

The two terms Otherness and Alterity are often grouped together and used for explaining the same phenomena, with almost no distinction between their definitions. The philosopher Brian Treanor suggest that we have to distinguish the terms Otherness and Alterity, and additionally uses the concept of similitude to clarify the difference between these two. He sees Otherness as having two elements – similitude and Alterity. Similitude is the part of the Other that is somehow recognizable or common to the Self and can be understood in connection with it. Alterity is the part of the Other that is completely alien and not understandable on the basis of the Self. Therefore to Treanor, Otherness is always a relationship between those two aspects, he doesn't see the possibility for either the similitude or the Alterity of the Other to exist independently and in pure form, they always exist simultaneously, as "Alterity and similitude are always encountered together as aspects of otherness, the otherness in

10 Staszak 2009, 44.
11 Ibid.
12 Treanor 2006, 5.
13 Ibid., 229.

ourselves or the otherness of the other."[14] He goes one step further from the previous definition, by allowing the Other to have an element distinct from the Self, but the Otherness of the Other is still not seen as possibly being absolute.[15]

The consequential next step in these definitions is the possibility of the Other to lose its similitude and become a form of absolute Otherness, one that only consists of its Alterity. The philosopher Emmanuel Levinas offer a radical way of looking at the problem of Otherness. In his book *Totality and Infinity,* published in 1961, he presents the notion of *absolute Alterity*, a notion that has profoundly influenced ethical thought. What made his ideas unique, demonstrated in a simplified manner, is his concern to act against the process of subsuming the Other to the Same, and against "a regime under which the cardinal sin was to 'totalize' the other, to speak of the other in a reductive, essentializing way that made it the other of the same."[16] For him, the Other has to be encountered not on terms of the Self, as in the previous definitions, but solely on terms of the Other itself. He sees Otherness as total, absolute and transcendent, as an "other with an alterity constitutive of the very content of the other."[17] He enforces a view that there is no in-between when looking at Otherness. It can be either absolute, free from the influence of the Self, or it is not absolute, dependent on the Self. Further elaborated, "the self and the other must be distinct in order to protect the otherness of the other from being violated by the thematization of the same."[18]

Levinas notion of absolute Alterity is preoccupied with the pure Alterity of the Other, the Otherness that is entirely independent of the Self. Some other thinkers, while not denying the possibility of an absolute Alterity of the Other, are more interested in what Self and Other share in common.

The philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, while recognizing and acknowledging the Alterity of the Other, emphasizes the element of surprise that the Other offers to the Self to uncover hidden aspects of its nature. He writes we can "win from the speech of the other something more and perhaps different that one puts into it."[19] His general philosophy is based on the subject, therefore it discusses the Other from the point of view and its effect on this subject, but by focusing on this element of surprise that the Alterity of the Other carries Merleau-Ponty stays away from thinking of the Other as "domesticated by the subject's horizons of significance."[20] He gives the example of the Alterity of a text, but also this functions the same way for the difference of persons, to illuminate what he means by this type of encounter:

14 Treanor 2006, 230.
15 Ibid., 231-232.
16 Watkin 2007, 50.
17 Levinas in Treanor 2006, 244.
18 Derrida in Treanor 2006, 211.
19 Yeo in Reynolds 2002, 65.
20 Reynolds 2002, 66.

> "My relation to a book begins with the easy familiarity of the worlds of our language, of ideas that are part of our makeup, in the same way that my perception of the other is at first sight perception of the gestures and behaviors belonging to the "human species". But if the book really teaches me something, if the other person is really another, at a certain stage I must be surprised, disoriented. If we are to meet not just through what we have in common, but in what is different between us – which presupposes a transformation of myself of the other as well – then our differences can no longer be opaque qualities. The must become meaning."[21]

Merleau-Ponty's point is that experiencing the mere difference of the Other by the subject is not a genuine and pure experience of Alterity. Only when this difference carries the weight of meaning, it is turned into something that "presupposes a transformation of myself and the other as well,"[22] which is, for him, the true experience Alterity offers to us.

After this very short overview over different ways of looking at Alterity, one is reminded of the difficulty and dynamism that the term of Alterity entails:

> "This is not an easy resolution, nor is it comfortable or safe. Rather, it is a dynamic tension, wherein the push and pull of the two arms of the chiasmus never come to a final, comfortable rest—one that requires us to constantly adjust and reevaluate as we feel our way across uncertain ground."[23]

1.3. Globalized Otherness

To have a better understanding of how Otherness is pronounced and prevalent in today's world, and how it impacts life, the context in which it is studied has to be defined. Many aspects of life are increasingly marked by the phenomenon of globalization, from economics and politics to social life and cultural life, changes that are happening at an unprecedented pace and have become one of the key features of the actuality of the world. Globalization compresses time and space, and "is best thought of as a series of transformative processes through which the world is becoming increasingly interconnected and our consciousness of the world as a single place is heightened."[24]

Globalization has influenced the world since the inception of the last century. Today these changes are happening with more and more complexity and intensity.

21 Merleau-Ponty in Reynolds 2002, 73.
22 Ibid.
23 Treanor 2006, 229.
24 Rumford 2013, 14.

This development is attributed to extreme changes in the availability and capability of technological innovations, for example telecommunications and transportation networks. A world with shrinking dimensions is confronted with seemingly less and less transnational borders, a massive increase in global migration, the flow of information and goods.[25] In a progressively smaller world, events that happen far away are more likely to impact the daily life of individuals and to destabilize the world. This can be seen consequently as the effect of globalization on the general process of "'disembedding' and 'detraditionalisation' of older patterns of life."[26] Kinnvall further notes that "this de-territorialization of time and space (...) affects daily life; in a world of diminishing territorial barriers, the search for constant time- and space-bound identities has become a way to cope with the effects of modern life."[27]

Simultaneously, shifts in political systems have also impacted the sense of Self and the identity of people everywhere. Old structures, hierarchies and relational ties that used to unify and order groups of people and nations have been diminished or have disappeared altogether. As the world becomes more and more globalized, a variety of local cultures appear. The forces of globalization cause a restructuring of the world. All these transformations of society put together make an encounter with the Other and Otherness much more likely. This more pronounced encounter with Alterity in a globalized world leads to the emergence of new identities, clashing with previous conceptions of Self and Other and causing many uncertainties, new and complex feelings relating to Otherness emerge. Understanding its manifestations in society and the questions it raises becomes a persistent and highly important topic of today's complex world.

1.4. Otherness and Postmodernity

The process of globalization and the shifts in identity that are inherent in it can be analyzed under the light of the theories of the philosopher Francois Lyotard. His book *The Postmodern Condition,* published in 1979, described these massive shifts in society and grouped them under a new moment in cultural history that he recognized as *postmodernism*. Postmodernity is a highly complex term, that has many, and often, conflicting definitions. The key aspect of postmodernism for Lyotard however, and one of the focuses of his book, is the new skepticism towards what he termed

25 See Castells 2010.
26 Rattansi and Phoenix 2005, 99.
27 Kinnvall 2004, 743.

metanarratives. The abolishment of the metanarrative provides the essential contrast of postmodernity in comparison with modernity. The way postmodernity and modernity differ is by the "decline of the unifying and legitimating power of the grand narratives,"[28] that used to function as controlling mechanism in modernity. Lyotard understands metanarratives as pre-made ideological stories, determined by the dominant force. The metanarrative creates an identity that defines whole societies with the goal to transcend, to provide and guarantee knowledge and meaning. One example of this is the narrative of capitalism, the way it forms a belief that it will lead to prosperity for all, or religious systems that define the cultural and political life of a country, or the embrace of Marxism as the savior of humanity. Following this logic, history can be seen as a collection and string of grand narratives. The metanarratives are stories that strive and attempt to summarize the events, history, meaning and the current state of the world. The metanarratives always provide a premade identity, that the majority of people subscribe to and that offers them a sense of belonging and specific criteria about how to act. What is Self and what is Other is clearly defined by the metanarrative, a search for identity, or even merely questioning it, was not as prevalent as it is today. These usually superficial and simplifying narratives are seen in postmodernity as unsuitable and obsolete for the functioning of today's world, they operate under the assumption of universal truth, claiming to have an *objective* story. With the collapse of the metanarrative in postmodernity an "internal erosion"[29] is caused, their credibility and the belief in them dissolves, as "the narrative function is losing its functors, its great hero, its great danger, its great voyages, its great goals."[30]

In postmodernity, with the loss of the meta narratives, we are confronted with a situation of uncertainty and paralogy. Now, in a globalized world, in the light of the loss of the metanarratives, identity becomes unclear. What remains is a fragmented, disordered and chaotic world of multiplicity that has lost its organizing identity and structure. Individuals feel left alone, without the security and support provided by grand narratives, they are confronted with a shift in the Self and with an unclear position towards Otherness. This, however, has not made the prevalence, search, and forming of identities, no matter how small, less forceful, it became harder. What has replaced the authoritarian and universalizing narratives is a multitude of diverse small narratives, "localized representations of restricted domains, none of which has a claim to universal truth status."[31] The small narratives have a clear connection to the question of Alterity and are distinct from the metanarrative that tried to eliminate Alterity. Anything that can be categorized as unknown or somehow different or foreign to the

28 Lyotard 1984, 38.

29 Ibid., 39.

30 Ibid., XXIV, and see Malpas 2003, chap. The Postmodern Condition.

31 Oxford Reference, s.v. "grand narrative," accessed June 20, 2016. (https://goo.gl/NUHWuU)

story the Self narrates through the metanarrative is a form of threat to the status of it. In postmodernism, Alterity finds its expression in the realm of small narratives, whereas each of them strives to exist individually, no longer unified and controlled by the grand narrative.

In the formation of identity, the Other plays a crucial role. The Self, helped by the metanarrative, was provided with a clear opposite. This opposite in return, helps define the role and identity of the Self. Today however, with the small narratives, the identity of the Self, is encountered with a problem, since it lacks a clear Other to help define itself. Paradoxically, this happens under the pretense of an implied global culture, that proves itself to be shallow under the light of even basic questioning - the global village is more of a technical metaphor than a cultural one. The increase in interaction does not in fact create a common global culture, rather it creates different reception of globalized cultural phenomena in different local contexts.[32] The coexistence of these groups of small narratives leads to a world, not anymore unified by a metanarrative, but rather unified by a lack of identity and by the question of Otherness.

Zygmunt Bauman, interested in how identity remains a problem and is transformed in postmodernity, references Douglas Kellner in his statement that "far from identity disappearing in contemporary society, it is rather reconstructed and redefined [...] identity today becomes a freely chosen game, a theatrical presentation of the self [...] when one radically shifts identity at will, one might lose control."[33]

1.5. Othering and Order

The loss of metanarratives in postmodernity elaborated by Lyotard can be put into the context of Zygmunt Bauman's theory of liquid modernity. Bauman is a leading thinker of modernity and postmodernity, preoccupied with the understanding of political, social and cultural changes in western society. His work describes the distinction of the terms liquid and solid modernity under the light of an *ordering* process. According to him, individuals, even in the most mundane activities, have a natural tendency to order, as this is how they establish a form of sense about their life. This process of ordering manifests in the form of boundaries, be they virtual or actual. Through his analysis, Bauman states that the will to order exists universally in both solid and liquid

32 Nowicki 2012, 329.
33 Kellner in Bauman 1996, 18.

modernity, its manifestations, however, are different. He describes further:

> "Modernity appears to be a continuous yet ultimately inconclusive drive towards rational order free from contingency, accidents, things that can get 'out of hand'. It is to maintain such an artificial order, forever precarious and always stopping short of its ideal, that modernity needed enormous quantities of energy the animate sources could not possibly supply."[34]

This description of solid modernity by Bauman mirrors Lyotard's concept of the metanarratives as the driving force during modernity. The way both ideas correlate is in their controlling and imposing method of structuring. For Bauman, both the modern and postmodern world are characterized by constant changes and therefore chaos, ambivalence, uncertainty, and contingency. The way in which in which they differ is in how order is established. Bauman uses this process of ordering to distinguish solid and liquid modernity and describes it with two different terms – structuring and structure. Structuring is "the passive, reproductive, orientational one," and structure "the active ordering one, which involves the elimination of some alternatives and making others more probable."[35] Further, Bauman describes the distinction between solid and liquid modernity in the following way:

> "(…) in the liquid modern world, the solidity of things and human bonds is resented as a threat. This is the big difference between the solid stage of modernity and the liquid state of modernity. Not many years ago, the major concern of still solid or nostalgically solid modernity was: the centre does not hold. I would suggest that liquid modernity has changed so that it resents the centre as such. In the cacophony of sounds and the hubbub of sights—a kaleidoscope of constant change—there is no centre around which things could condense, solidify and settle."[36]

Solid modernity, attempting to manage the disorder of the world, creates and imposes solid boundaries, with the goal to "make the world predictable and therefore manageable."[37] In the current postmodern state of mind, the disorder and ambivalence that solid modernity wants to wipe away is embraced and emphasized, boundaries are transcended, there can not be a "final, ultimate underlying structure of everything"[38] anymore. Solid Modernity, with its universalistic goal and metanarratives, is thus replaced with a process that "splits the truth, the standard and ideal into already deconstructed and about to be deconstructed (...) It braces itself for a life without truths, standards and ideals."[39]

In modernity, the Other often was the victim of marginalization, as is represented a

34 Bauman in Lee 2005, 65.
35 Bauman in Marotta 2002, 37.
36 Bauman, 2007, 122.
37 Bauman in Marotta 2002,40.
38 Kilminister and Varcoe in Marotta 2002, 38.
39 Bauman in Marotta 2002, 40.

symbol of chaos and a danger to the solid boundaries that the Self has imposed, and stood in opposition to modernity and its "production of order."[40] As these boundaries turn liquid and the Other as the figure of ambivalence is embraced, it loses its position as a hazard to the ordering mechanisms, which are not universally governing anymore. In theory, this leads to the Other to be much less likely to be oppressed. This state of mind creates a new process of making and remaking identity. It potentially leads to a world with a multiplicity of coexisting identities, but a look at the actual reality of the world offers a different view, one that is diametrical to it. Even as the metanarratives are being demolished, there is a longing for them, be it in the ideology of states or individuals' minds. Paradoxically, this is prevalent despite the world functioning on very different principles, namely ones of liquid modernity. Nonetheless, Marotta points out that Bauman, in his analysis of liquid modernity, observes a tendency towards active and imposing structure, that has not vanished, but rather has become "decentralized, diffused and localized within neo-tribalism [and] transferred into a postmodern privatization of ambivalence."[41] What becomes clear is that postmodernity is characterized by a new mechanism for the formation of identities, founded on the plural, as the modern conception of identity as a "coherent, unified and stable identity seems to be a burden, a constraint, a restriction of liberty of choice."[42]

1.6. Otherness and Identity

"You are always a different person."[43]

The state of liquid modernity, with its flexible structuring and its openness to ambivalence, has enabled the possibility of a multitude of identities and states of Otherness to coexist. Bauman writes:

> "I propose that while it is true that identity 'continues to be the problem' this is not 'the problem it was throughout modernity'. Indeed, if the modern 'problem of identity' was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the postmodern 'problem of identity' is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open."[44]

In an interdependent relationship between the identities of the Self and the Other, the Self's identity is usually constructed in opposition to the Other. The Other has the function to aid the process of ordering and structuring. By its difference to the Self, it reinforces the identity of the same. The derivation of the identity of the Self from what

40 Bauman in Marotta 2002, 38.
41 Marotta 2002, 41.
42 Bauman in Nowicki, 2013, 32. (Translated by Author)
43 Nietzsche 1974, 246.
44 Bauman 1996, 18.

is the Other is more likely to happen in the age of meta narratives. Hall introduces the notion of the *enlightenment subject*, one that "was based on a conception of the human person as a fully centered, unified individual, […] whose 'center' consisted of an inner core."[45] This subject lived in a clearly demarcated world, split into distinct groups and hierarchies. Looking at today, we have to consider the state of liquid modernity, with its small narratives, that lead to fragmented identities, or, what Hall calls the *decentered* and *postmodern subject*[46] that is hard to define and grasp. This subject, faced with an infinite number of Others, has to continually reexamine and reconsider its identity, creating a sense of uncertainty and disorientation. Bauman writes:

> "One thinks of identity whenever one is not sure of where one belongs; what is, one is not sure how to place oneself among the evident variety of behavioural styles and patterns, and how to make sure that people around would accept this placement as right or proper, so that both sides would know how to go on in each other's presence. Identity is a name given to the escape sought from that uncertainty."[47]

The quest for identity in the postmodern world becomes a form of relief, a way to avoid the uncertainty that the fragmented identities carry. Giddens calls this phenomenon *ontological security*. This ontological security, similar to the meta narrative that Lyotard describes for modernity, is a way to enforce a discourse that states that the identity that is being supplied is the proper one and that it rests on solid ground. Ontological security is a "person's fundamental sense of safety in the world (...) [and] becomes necessary in order for a person to maintain a sense of psychological well-being and avoid existential anxiety."[48] Identity, by offering people a way to behave and act, reduces the loss of stability in the face unpredictable events and becomes an "anxiety-controlling mechanism […] in reaction to disruptive change by reestablishing a previous identity or formulating a new one."[49]

The desire for a stable identity and a narrative that gives structure to life is still present. This however is not possible anymore. What identity is now is a "process of becoming" rather than a "fixed, natural state of being."[50] Another influence of globalization on the transformation of identity is how the reaction towards Otherness transformed. The omnipresence of the Other is a threat to ontological security, leading to intensified feelings of uncertainty, which consequently leads to feelings of fear or hatred by the Self in reaction to the Other. Kinnvall explains the impact of this process on identity with the psychoanalytic words of Julia Kristeva. The fear and hatred directed towards the Other have one of their roots in "the enemy in ourselves," or the "hidden face of

45 Hall 1995, 597.
46 Ibid., 277.
47 Bauman 1996, 19.
48 Giddens in Kinnvall 2004, 746.
49 Kinnvall 2004, 746.
50 Ibid., 748.

identity."[51] She argues that, psychologically, one part of the Self, has been "internalized as an 'enemy' in the past, fueling our imagination in times of opposition or conflict."[52] Now, in a globalized world, with a constant encounter with Otherness, the internalized enemy materializes as what Kristeva calls an abject, a state in which the distinction of what is the Other and what is the Self falls apart. It is neither an object nor a subject. The *abject-other* reinforces a stable identity and it "becomes a means to securitize subjectivity as it reduces anxiety and increases ontological security."[53] This in return strengthens the differences that exist between the Self and the Other, with the Self representing its identity as superior.

1.7. The Stranger as the Other

1.7.1. The Simmelian Stranger

> "(…) distance means that he, who is close by, is far, and strangeness means that he, who also is far, is actually near."[54]

The theoretical foundation about Alterity and Otherness discussed in the previous chapters is highly abstract and philosophical. To take the next step from this theoretical foundation towards applying Alterity to urbanism, and to show how is is applicable to its spaces, the idea of Otherness has to be related to a concrete figure that leads to a actual confrontation with it in cities - *the Stranger* - the "paradigmatic figure for contemporary society."[55]

Georg Simmel, an influential figure of sociological thought in the early 20th century, introduced the figure of the stranger in his seminal book *Soziologie*, published in 1908. In Simmel's definition of the stranger, from his modernist point of view, he is a "potential wanderer," a person that "comes today and stays tomorrow."[56] His definition differs from pre-modern conceptions of the stranger, who was someone that "comes today and goes tomorrow."[57] The archetype for the pre-modern stranger is traveling merchants, that visit from far away lands to sell their goods. In general, pre-modern societies are spatially restricted and mostly self-sufficient, unlike the way globalized society and cities are structured today. This spatial isolation requires the inhabitants of these settlements to rely on people outside of their circle to supply goods that are outside of their social groups' limited reach. The figure of the merchant supplants this

51 Kristeva in Hermans and Dimaggio 2007, 40.
52 Ibid., 40.
53 Kinnvall 2004, 753.
54 Simmel 1950, 402.
55 Marotta 2005, 2.
56 Simmel 1950, 402.
57 Ibid., 402.

role, as he is their only connection to items origination from outside.[58]

The role the merchant plays in society is one that is defined through *distance*, in every sense of the word, be it social, cultural, physical or spatial. The way Simmel sees the stranger is with the category of distance mutated and transformed. The dynamic between the host and the stranger shifts radically once the stranger loses some of the attributes labeled under distance, for example when he settles in or near a fixed social group and doesn't leave it again. His position and meaning transform. Simmel sees this new form of stranger in a positive light. The fact that he has settled does not imply he will stay, the stranger remains his potential to leave again, despite of his now permanent position in society he is not an "owner of soil -- soil not only in the physical, but also in the figurative sense of a life-substance which is fixed."[59] The stranger is however "fixed within a particular spatial group, or within a group whose boundaries are similar to spatial boundaries."[60] The way in which his position is set is by not being a part of this group from the start, but still offers qualities to it, qualities that could not have been part of it before his arrival.

1.7.2. The Postmodern Stranger

Simmel's conception of the stranger, which he applied to modernity, doesn't withstand the scrutiny of looking at it through the eyes of the contemporary social, economic and cultural conditions of the world. The notion of the stranger has transformed, Simmel's definition of it "no longer mirrors contemporary urban life."[61] Within the global economy, with its massive effects ranging from rapid urbanization processes and widespread transnational migration, the proximity and visibility of phenomena of Otherness, and of the figure of the stranger, have massively increased. We have to see the stranger now in a postmodern and pluralistic context, as a figure characterized by "mobility and multiple identities."[62] This increased visibility of manifestations of Otherness in postmodern society makes studying the term of the stranger even more relevant as it goes through a transformation of Simmel's modernistic concept, or as Turner puts it, "whereas the problem of the stranger within a Simmelian world still had a scarcity value, in the global village all participants are likely to be strangers."[63] Simmel's exact definition of the stranger may no longer apply, but the idea of the stranger itself is more important than ever.

58 Simmel 1950, 403.
59 Ibid., 403.
60 Ibid., 402.
61 Marotta 2012, 676.
62 Ibid., 677.
63 Turner in Rumford 2013, 11.

In the context of postmodernity or liquid modernity, the stranger has become "in an urban, functionally differentiated setting (...) either invisible or omnipresent."[64] The classic notion of the stranger by Simmel requires solid modernity to be determining the governing parameters to be able to exist. In liquid modernity, induced by the loss of the governing metanarrative, Simmel's stranger cannot exist anymore. For him to exist, there must be a clear distinction between who is the stranger and who is the host, which was a parameter of solid modernity.[65]

The postmodern stranger, as Bauman defines him, is quite like Simmel's stranger, both near and far. Everyone is aware of the stranger's existence, otherwise he would disappear in a faceless crowd.[66] However, the spatial distance that for Simmel is so characteristic of the stranger is now massively reduced, changing the relationship of Self and Other. This observation does not imply that the stranger disappears in postmodernity, what happens is that he becomes the norm, he is not an exception anymore, or as Ulrich Beck writes, postmodernity, driven by globalizing forces, "generalises the category of the stranger to one whose central characteristics is universal strangeness."[67] Further reiterated, that this new notion of strangeness leads to a ambiguity as to who is the stranger and who is not, as from the point of view from the Other the Self might appear to be the stranger.[68]

1.7.3. The Stranger as the Absolute Other

Returning to the definition of Simmel's stranger, he discusses one aspect of the stranger that is still relevant to today's world. If one looks at the stranger as undergoing a process of Othering, to use Bauman's terminology, there is a point when the relationship of the stranger with the host mutates further and further. This can go so far that it reaches the point where the "unifying basis"[69] between the stranger and the host changes. For Simmel this unifying basis groups together any trait, feature or characteristic that defines the relationship between the host and the stranger. These traits can be elements like nationality, gender, class, ethnicity, religion, skin color, economic status or occupation, among other things. These markers of difference can initiate acts of marginalization or exclusion. Consequently, taken to its most extreme form, the unifying basis between the stranger and the host disappears altogether. Simmel gives the example in which the host denies the stranger its most basic humanity, after being stripped of everything,

64 Marotta 2000, 129.
65 Beck 1996, 386.
66 Marotta 2000, 122-123.
67 Beck in Marotta 2012, 677-678.
68 Rumford 2013, 54.
69 Simmel 1950, 406.

after all common attributes disappear, even the shared human nature between them gets denied. It is this "sort of 'strangeness' in which this very connection on the basis of a general quality embracing the parties is precluded."[70]

Simmel, considers this aspect of the stranger to be the exception, something that very rarely occurs. To him, the example of the relationship between the Greeks and the Barbarians is typical here. Simmel describes this relationship as one in which "general attributes, felt to be specifically and purely human, (...) are disallowed to the other."[71] As was demonstrated in the chapter on Simmel's stranger, he connotes the spatial configuration, the feeling of the stranger being both close and far, between host and stranger, or, between Self and Other, as generally positive. In this example, however, it leads to tension and a negative view. The way in which this makes the relationships between the two interesting is that this tension eventually leads to a relationship with the Otherness of that stranger into one of *non-relation*.[72] Consequently, "denying the other their humanity it effectively negates their existence."[73] This kind of stranger links to Giorgio Agamben's concept of the figure of *Homo Sacer*, a term borrowed from classic roman law. He describes the figure of Homo Sacer the following way:

> "Homo sacer has been excluded from the religious community and from all political life: he cannot participate in the rites of his gens, nor [...] can he perform any juridically valid act. What is more, his entire existence is reduced to a bare life stripped of every right by virtue of the fact that anyone can kill him without committing homicide; he can save himself only in perpetual flight or a foreign land."[74]

Agamben uses this figure to describe how bare life, is produced in a state of exception, enacted by the state to preserve their rule of law and execute their sovereign power. The results can be summarized simply as legalizing the illegal, as Homo Sacer is excluded from any political or legal order, his life is in total control of the state, with no way to escape it and at constant threat, without anyone being held responsible for it. Agamben's analysis suggests that Homo Sacer, not just historically but even now, can be a necessary element for maintaining the juridical order of those "who decides on the state of exception."[75]

70 Simmel in Marotta 2012, 680.
71 Simmel 1950, 407.
72 Ibid., 407.
73 Marotta 2012, 680.
74 Agamben 1998, 183.
75 Schmitt in Agamben 2005, 1 and see Mills 2008, chap. 3.

1.8. Conclusion

The chapter *Being Other* introduced Alterity by pointing out and clarifying its importance in today's age, referencing the process of globalization and the way in which it brings the topic of Otherness to the forefront. To understand the importance of Otherness, it is reviewed in the theoretical framework of postmodernity, marked by a loss of grand narratives, always offering a clear idea of what is the Other and its substitution by small narratives, exposing the Self to a more persistent and inconclusive form of Otherness. Further, this analysis is continued in the light of Bauman's idea of a process of ordering, in both modernity and postmodernity, and explains the reception of ambivalence, how it affects Otherness in its embrace or negation, and how the process and formation of identity react to it. The examination of the interconnected relationship of Otherness and identity, in a world of fragmented identities, clarifies how the quest for it provides ontological security to individuals and therefore how it becomes more relevant given the omnipresence of Otherness. Following this, the terms necessary to understand Alterity, by giving a review of a selection of possible definitions and conceptions of it, are briefly studied. Putting all of this together, in a step towards the next chapter, in which spatial Alterity will be explored, the Figure of the stranger, the clearest and most concrete manifestation of Otherness in urban environments, is introduced. The concept of the stranger epitomizes ideas of Otherness in a spatial way, defined by Simmel in very spatial and geographical terms. Conclusively, the figure of Homo Sacer, as the absolute Other in the form of the stranger is introduced, to demonstrate the many possible configurations of the stranger.

The above chapter is a necessary introduction to understanding and become more sensible to the topic of otherness. By introducing the spatial notion of distance a in the definition of the stranger and how it mutates in the context of a postmodern, globalized world, this chapter provides a background to further the further elaboration of concrete spatial manifestations of Alterity in cities in the following chapter.

II

Islands of Otherness

2.1. Introduction

> "People suddenly experience themselves living in a very strange world and being confronted with all kind of strangeness. They don't recognize anymore the city they are living in, maybe even the street because of all kind of globalizations happening into those areas; People feel to have no place in this new context, and feel frightened by the new situation of un-excludability of the strange-other."[76]

After the theoretical overview of the subject of Alterity and Otherness and what it implies, the way in which Alterity has spatial consequences and results in manifestations in urbanism and architecture will be illuminated, always exemplified by spaces located in Istanbul. Since this is a vast topic, that applies to all global cities to some degree, this thesis will focus only on the theoretical principles and will apply them to only one specific case study, which is the city of Istanbul. The case study helps with grasping the theoretical implications with concrete examples.

This chapter will first explain how Otherness is a geographical and spatial issue with

76 Beck 2010.

inherent spatial consequences resulting in urban structures that affect the entire city. In this exploration, the focus is on certain spatial patterns in cities that construct and maintain Alterity in both physical and nonphysical ways to some extent. The clearest and most thoroughly researched examples of spatialized alterity are usually found outside of cities, mostly in peripheral regions, for example prisons or refugee camps. In this thesis, the view shifts to the realm of globalized cities. Spaces of Alterity inside these cities are found in varying degrees, they can be subversive or very obvious, but they all highly affect the city, fragmenting the city into islands.

Contemporary global cities are the space for the cohabitation of a variety of diverse and distinct groups of Others, all of them formulating their individual identity. In the space of the global city, where borders and boundaries transform and seemingly disappear more and more every day, these groups of Others are forced to exist in increasing proximity as it becomes an unavoidable factor of being a part of megacities. Looking at the reality of these cities, the coexistence of these groups with their conflicting values creates new spatially proximate inequalities, that “produce promiscuous geographies of dwelling in place in which the categories of Self and Other, here and there, past and present, constantly solicit one another.”[77] What the two categories of Self and Other and their relationship represent in the global city, is nothing less that the binary code that lies at their core.

2.2. Localizing Otherness in Istanbul

> “The inhabitants of Istanbul have always remained ‘strangers’ to the city, unable to comprehend its repository of secrets.”[78]

Before the factors of spaces of Otherness are discussed, the city of Istanbul will be introduced and sketched briefly, giving only a highly condensed summary of its vast and complex history and focusing mostly on the city in its contemporary form since 1923. This short introduction acts as a reference point to the city of Istanbul and to the individual spaces in the city that will be elaborated more in depth as a part of the theoretical chapters that will follow.

The city of Istanbul is located at a unique geographical position, at the western end of Turkey, between the continents of Asia and Europe. It is enclosed by the Marmara Sea

77 Jacobs 1996, 5.
78 Oncu 2007, 256.

on its southern shore and the Black Sea on its northern shore. Istanbul is ceaselessly divided by the Bosphorus strait that connects those two bodies of water. The city's fabric is roughly structured into two parts, its Asian and European side, with the European part being further (partly) cut into two distinct halves by the Golden Horn, the *Haliç*, a characteristically shaped waterway branching off from the Bosphorus strait towards the west of Istanbul. The golden Horn structures the European part of Istanbul into the historic peninsula south of it, with *Sarayburnu* at its tip, today a tourist epicenter of the city, and into the greater European part of Istanbul north of it, with the famous districts of Galata and Beyoğlu located at its southern end, forming one of Istanbul's modern cultural centers.[79]

Figure 1. Istanbul's location and municipal boundaries

Figure 2. Historic Peninsula, the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus

Istanbul is not the capital city of the Republic of Turkey, but it nonetheless forms the main economic and cultural center of the country and is by far its largest city, boasting a population of close to fifteen million official inhabitants today (the real, unofficial number, including illegal and unregistered residents, is estimated much higher).[80] Istanbul's enclosure by two seas necessitated an immense expansion on its east-west axis inwards into the country, covering today a metropolitan area of 5,343 km2, after Istanbul's municipality established a new borderline for the city in 2004 to accommodate its unstoppable growth.[81]

The city of Istanbul underwent a tumultuous history since its inception. First known records of the habitation of its Asian side point towards 2000 BC. The first major stage of its development came with the settlements of Greek colonists naming the area of today's Istanbul Byzantium, the greek name for the city on the Bosphorus. In 193 AD the Roman Empire conquered the city and put it under its rule. Next, in

79 See Burdett 2009.
80 Turkish Statistical Institute. (https://biruni.tuik.gov.tr/medas/?kn=95&locale=tr) (accessed 18 Sept 16)
81 Tumerdem 2014, 3.

the fourth century Constantine the Great declared Byzantium the capital city of the Empire and named the city after himself - Constantinople was born. In the following centuries, the city had to deal with many attempted conquests of its soil. It was finally conquered by Sultan Mehmed II, the sultan of the Ottomans, in 1453. *(See chapter 2.4.2. - Walls of Constantinople)* Constantinople was the capital city of the Ottoman Empire until its collapse in the wake of the 1st World War, a collapse that consequently marked the birth of the Turkish Republic under the leadership of Kemal Atatürk in 1923. Istanbul, the capital city of many empires for more than 16 centuries, was dethroned by Ankara, the new capital of the newly founded Republic.[82]

In the wake of the fall of the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul was considered as a city that is too old, too Islamic and too multicultural, it was seen as a fabric lacking all of the ideals of the nationalist, modernist and secular Republic and was therefore ignored for a long period. Eventually, starting in the 1930s, Istanbul was marked for an urban modernization process to align the city with the ideals of the government. *(See chapters 2.7.2. Dichotomies - Istanbul and Ankara and 2.7.3. Contesting Otherness - Taksim)*

Simultaneously, anti-minority laws were established, destroying the livelihood of most non-muslim and non-turkish inhabitants of Istanbul, leading to their mass exodus from the mostly inner city districts that they inhabited, leaving them empty and vacant. *(See chapter 2.7.1. Vanished Cosmopolitanism)*

Starting in the 1950s changes in the economic policies of the government caused a rapid industrialization and urbanization of Istanbul, subsequently causing an uncontrolled growth of the city and a duplication of its population in the decade from the 1950s to the 1960s. New migrants arrived and settled both in the core, in the abandoned and now decayed historic districts previously inhabited by minorities, *(See chapters 2.6.3. Into the Void - Tarlabașı and 3.3.2. Limbo and Paradise - Tarlabașı and Cihangir)* and in the fringes, with the construction of first shanty towns called gecekondus built on illegally occupied land. *(See chapters 2.5.1. Shifts of Center and Periphery and 2.7.4. Layers of Otherness - Gecekondus)*

In the 1980s Istanbul went through a new process of change in governmental policies, triggering the onset of neoliberal effects on economic, social and urban changes. A process of deindustrialization and an emerging service sector lead to the creation of a new upper-middle and upper class, whose specific taste needs to be catered to. In

82 See in Kuban 2010.

accordance with this and with the rising importance of the housing sector, private developers and investors started building new luxurious housing projects all over the city's fringe, marketing its natural landscape. The first gated community began to appear. *(see chapters 2.4.1 Conquest of Nature, 2.5.1 Shifts of Center and Periphery and 2.6.2 Walls of Affluence - Gated Communities)*

Further, after the legalization of gecekondu areas they underwent a process of commercialization, affecting their urban fabric, with both benefits and consequences for both their previous inhabitants and developers. *(see chapter 2.5.1. Shifts of Center and Periphery)*

The continuously and massively growing Istanbul lead to the development of new networks of infrastructure, including bridges and highways, dividing and connecting the city. All of them made the fringe of the city accessible and lead to a commodification of this now valuable sites, with mega projects popping out everywhere. *(see chapters 2.4.1. Conquest of Nature and 2.6.2. Walls of Affluence - Gated Communities)*

A major force behind the massive increase of urban transformation processes in the 2000s and onwards is the dominance of the AKP, the Justice and Development Party. One of its concerns is bringing Istanbul back into its former prime and glory, by fusing together neoliberal tendencies with a neo-ottoman agenda. *(see chapters 2.7.2. Dichotomies - Istanbul and Ankara and 2.7.3 Contesting Otherness - Taksim)*

As they established their power, Istanbul started to transform completely. In addition to mega projects and similar developments, the previously soft gentrification of inner city districts that began in the 1980s intensified and was commercialized, *(see chapter 3.3.2. Limbo and Paradise - Tarlabasi and Cihangir)* additionally more forceful cases of urban renewal projects took place. *(See chapter 3.3.1. Cleansing the Other - Sulukule)*

These urban renewal projects go hand in hand with the exigence for touristic spaces in the city, as Istanbul is now a prominent spot on the global map and needs to keep up a flawless image that it portrays to the world. This happens simultaneously with an emergence of feelings for a longing for the past of Istanbul *(See chapter 2.7.5. Alienating Nostalgia and 2.7.6. The Totality of Miniatürk)*

The sum of these processes in the urban fabric of Istanbul resulted in the eviction of

thousands of its economically disadvantaged and unwanted residents. Evictions take places everywhere in the city, from the spaces of gecekondus, that are now obstacles to new developments, and in the core that needs to be well presented. All of them are now a playground for developers and the ambitions of a globalized Istanbul. The residents of these spaces end up with their only choice being their relocation into new mass housing projects, called TOKI, on the outskirts of the city. *(See chapter 3.3.3. Spaces of Banishment - Toki)*

The urban transformation of Istanbul does not pass by without conflict and resistance, despite its permanently surveilled and controlled public sphere. *(See chapter 2.6.1. The Surveilled Public)* Most prominently among these conflicts is the Gezi Park protests in 2013, that were a direct response to urban renewal projects affecting its immediate surrounding. *(See chapter 2.7.3. Contesting Otherness - Taksim)* Further, smaller and internal conflicts inside of the spaces that are being transformed, among them Gecekondus and gentrified neighborhoods, take place. *(See chapters 2.6.3 Into the Void - Tarlabasi, 2.7.4. Layers of Otherness - Gecekondu and 3.3.2. Limbo and Paradise - Tarlabasi and Cihangir))*

The massive changes that affect the fabric of Istanbul as a whole lead to its restructuring *(See chapter 3.3. Reordering)* and to the fragmentation of its urban landscape and and a change in its morphology. *(See chapter 3.4. Morphology of the Archipelago)*

To conclude, the spaces that have been mentioned in this brief introduction of Istanbul will be studied in depth in the following chapter, always under the light of Otherness.

2.3. Spatiality of Otherness

"We, here, are the Self; they, there, are the Other."[83]

Otherness is usually not associated with spatial aspects, it is generally seen in more abstract terms. Nonetheless, even forms of Otherness that do not have an evident spatial process of Othering often find spatial manifestations to some degree. As the Self assumes the position of power in the relationship with the Other, it imposes its power onto the Other and space becomes a part of the act of Othering. To give an example, historically, women, people of color, sexual minorities or any group that stood in opposition to what represents the Self was forced into submission and the

83 Staszak 2009, 45.

position of the Other. These categories of Alterity are social, but they have clear spatial consequences with clear physical boundaries, for instance, women were traditionally forced into the domestic space or minorities were limited to certain areas of cities.[84]

Phenomena of Otherness can have a spatial dimension, no matter how obscured or vague, be it the cause or the consequence. To illuminate this spatial dimension of Alterity the premodern Stranger in form the merchant that Simmel describes will be reiterated. The merchant is a wanderer, arriving from far away, moving from place to place. He never settles in a spatial territory, only temporarily occupying it. The merchant is connoted with the spatial dimension of *distance*.[85]

As previously discussed in the chapter about the Stranger, the basic notion of distance that is characteristic of the Stranger has transformed in postmodernity, and so has the Alterity of the Other. The Alterity of the Stranger can not be explained with the notion of distance alone anymore, as the postmodern Stranger is not one that arrives from far away, like in the case of the merchant. He has positioned himself at the core of cities, amidst the Self, he is everywhere:

> "In 'small and isolated worlds', characteristic of modernity, the stranger was the exception rather than the rule, but with the emergence of the modem city, and the increase in both the quantity and diversity of the population, being a stranger was no longer the exception but the rule (...) Modernity's will-to-order, which also underlines modernist urban planning, attempted to expunge any individual or group who upset or questioned the boundaries between self and Other. Modernity, argues Bauman, needs modem strangers so that it could justify its war against ambivalence and chaos. Post-modernity, on the other hand, is less interested in imposing a universal order and thus difference and strangers become a source of curiosity and pleasure rather than fear."[86]

Today's cities, called by Lofland *societies of strangers,* are spaces where "physical distance between self and other slowly dissolves."[87] The physical distance that defined the Otherness of the premodern Stranger lost its importance as it finds new spatial conceptions. In cities with a proximate multitude of Otherness, an "impulse to privatize, to enclose oneself"[88] emerges. This process can be seen as a reaction to the loss of modernity's clear Other and as a desire for a sense of safety, spaces like gated communities, megaprojects or inner city slums emerge as a consequence of this in global cities. What they have in common is the "manifestation of post-modem fears in which the search for roots, the desire for familiarity and escapist mentality take hold."[89]

84 Staszak 2009, 43.
85 See chapter 1.7.
86 Marotta 2005, 3-4.
87 Ibid., 5.
88 Ibid., 6.
89 Ibid., 5.

What is important to note is how all of them have a new and transformed notion of distance inherent in their spatial Alterity. These spaces are methods of Othering, as they try to exclude the Other to limit the interaction and encounter with it. This process of Othering mirrors the spatial configuration observable with the pre-modern stranger. They both are characterized by distance, however, the way in which distance becomes spatial is very different. Unlike the merchant, the postmodern Stranger's distance is mostly non-geographical, due to the nearness of the Other. The Otherness of the Other is now maintained through new notions of distance. The overlap of the way spatial othering occurs in pre- and postmodernity is very paradoxical, as their notions of distance and the presence of the Other in them are diametrical to each other - the "post-modern strangers experience the pre-modem spatial dimension of strangeness, they bring to the typology of the stranger a critical paradigm."[90]

The transformed notion of distance that is characteristic of the postmodern Stranger appears in physical and non-physical boundaries, that manifest "through walls around the gated cities or through signs and property prices, signify the social distinction and physical separation between self and Other."[91] They lead to a boundary-making for the exclusion of the Other by methods of architectural elements and language. The boundaries created to keep the Self and Other distinctly separate from each other can be seen as the isolating mechanisms of the city. They show the ambivalence of this process, as they simultaneously create and secure identity, but also uncover the lost superiority of the Self in its relationship to the Other. In this act of boundary making distance became a virtual type of Othering.

The figure of the Stranger, for Bauman, stands in opposition to the established order, it is at threat to be eradicated by the process of ordering.[92] The ordering process and the clear boundaries it has stabilize the identity of the Self, which the Strangers are threatening, as they "befog and eclipse the boundary lines which ought to be clearly seen."[93] As a result, spatial segregation as a method of the ordering process between the Self and the Other becomes a necessity for the Self to maintain the current order in its favor by keeping the grand narrative alive, and to continue forcing the Other into discernable categories. In the postmodern city however the identity of the city as a collective can not be constructed anymore in a simple contrast to the Other, given its proximity and scale, leading to paradoxical urbanistic developments, with many conflicts and ambiguities resulting from the relationship of Self and Other can be observed. This complexity of the contemporary urban environment, in contrast

90 Marotta 2005, 6.
91 Ibid,. 5.
92 See Chapter 1.5.
93 Bauman 1995, 8.

to modernity with its clear borders, leads to non-evident spatial manifestations of Otherness, collectively providing "sets of spatial constructs and practices [that] are based on the discursive construction of otherness to separate the self from the other."[94] They might not appear to be primarily related to Alterity at first glance and need a deeper study to be revealed.

2.4. Primordial Urban Otherness

> "In the beginning there was the fence."[95]

> "The state of nature is not a real epoch chronologically prior to the foundation of the City but a principle internal to the City, which appears at the moment the City is considered tanquam dissoluta, 'as if it were dissolved'."[96]

After establishing the notion of the spatiality of Otherness, the focus will begin moving to the realm of cities. As they are the set for large scale human settlement Otherness is an inherent element. The theoretical and urbanistic factors that make cities the breeding ground for the emergence of spaces of Otherness will be discussed, beginning with an external look at the city.

Even on a most basic level cities are, merely by the fact that they exist, systems of geographical demarcation between the Self and the Other. They form a separation between elements that are part of the city, of what belongs to the inside of it, what is constitutive of the Self, and everything that is outside of their realm, constitutive of the Other. This distinction of what is on the inside of the city, what is made by man on purpose and with his will, against everything that is already in existence, grouped together under the realm of nature, wilderness, and the barbarians, lies at the core of cities. This can be observed in all types of settlements, be they premodern or postmodern, from tribal settlements to the largest of global cities today.[97] Otherness can thus b seen as the fundamental essence of cities, with cities forming islands amidst the Otherness of nature. At the core of cities "there is always a rem(a)inder of nature, a residue, a stain of traumatic irrationality."[98]

After humans start forming settlements, following long periods of nomadic and tribal life, a demarcation between Self and Other, manifested through the opposition and

94 Staszak 2009, 48.
95 Jost Trier in Schmitt 2003, 74.
96 Agamben in Diken and Laustsen 2005, 24.
97 Diken and Laustsen, 2006, 443.
98 Žižek in Diken 2008, 114.

duality of civilization, and nature emerges. The first act of Othering then is, linking to the ideas of Jost Trier, the act of putting up the fence. Setting up a fence is an act of man taking possession of the natural land he occupies, the fence provides "order and orientation"[99] in the savage wilderness of nature. This process can be analyzed with the Self's identity gaining a very clear and also spatially demarcated Other. Carl Schmitt further reiterates the ideas of Trier and calls this process of spatial Othering and the taking possession of land *Landnahme,*[100] with the possible analysis that "the origin of culture and law is not the word, which links people, but the fence, which separates them."[101] For Schmitt, the *nomos of the earth* (referencing the greek term nomos meaning land appropriation, as in what lies behind the law), is a:

> "geographical ordering; that is, the linking together of localization (Ortung) and order (Ordnung). In this sense, order refers to an inside–outside divide; that is, in spatial terms, to homes, towns and nations; on the outside, disorder reigns."[102]

Consequently, the nomos of the earth is the collection of rules that are applied in establishing demarcations in the world, it leads to a world that is "delineated by fences, enclosures, boundaries, walls, houses, and other constructs (...) [and makes] the orders and orientations of human social life become apparent."[103]

2.4.1. Conquest of Nature

The city of Istanbul has a strong relationship with its surrounding nature, it's natural elements shape and determine the geography of the city. Above all these elements, the Bosphorus Strait divides Istanbul into two distinct and separate halves, being located at the borderline of the two continents of Europe and Asia. A notion of Otherness lies at its core, as it can not be a whole, with nature omnipresent at its heart, determining the city and its fate. Further, the fact that Constantinople, just like Rome, was built on top of seven hills, gives it a very unique geographic topography. The hills of Istanbul were always covered with massive forest areas and the metropolis of Istanbul today is still surrounded by them, most obviously pronounced in the north of the city. Natural elements are important in the geography of the city and how it is defined, either dividing it (the Bosphorus), limiting and framing it (The sea and Forests) and threatening it (with the underlying risk of earthquakes). These three aspects are explored in this

99 Schmitt 2003, 80.
100 Ibid.
101 Diken and Laustsen, 2006, 444.
102 Diken and Laustsen, 2005, 40.
103 Schmitt 2003, 42.

chapter in the light of Otherness.

In more recent times, as Istanbul underwent massive development and expansion, the city had to spread from its developed and overcrowded core to fringe areas of the city. The fringe areas of Istanbul, previously the realm of the Other, are now designated for new intense urban development to become an integral part of the city. This development can be read in the light of Alterity as a transgression of the Otherness of the natural realm by the city, which was triggered with the help of certain new or changed laws that were established. Among those changed are a forest law in 1987 that enabled the natural land of Istanbul to be designated for construction. The first gated communities of Istanbul were constructed on the same areas shortly afterward.[104] In addition, with the extension of the borderline of Istanbul's municipal region in 2004, the fringe, even though mostly still intact in its original form, became an actual part of the territory of the city, falling under the governance of the Self.[105] Additionally, the "Law on the Treasury Lands that Have Lost the Qualification of Being a Forest", the "Law on the Conservation of Nature and Biological Diversity" and the "Law on the Protection of Water Reserves and Environmental Impact Assessment" were modified to enable this natural fringe to transform into a playground for developers, making available the formerly protected land as a site for profit.[106] The entry of the fringe and its "uncommodified spaces like forests, agricultural lands, natural reserves, and quarries into the real estate market acts as a newfound tool for reproducing and redistributing wealth."[107]

These new emerging spaces on the border of the city are interconnected with a network of highways and transportation nodes that emerged simultaneously to them.[108] The gradual destruction of the natural spaces surrounding Istanbul by the ever growing city does not stop its continuing influence on some of Istanbul's urban characteristics, defining the spaces of settlements of internal Self and Other in the geography of the city.

The paradox behind these developments, many of which have begun in the 1980s, is that they are not part of the Strategic Plan for the development of Istanbul issued in 2009 by Istanbul Metropolitan Planning (IMP).[109] What this strategic plan suggests is a development of Istanbul in the southern east-west axis, along the Sea of Marmara, with the goal to preserve the natural resources of the north of the city.[110] However, triggered by the construction of the two first Bosphorus bridges in 1973 and 1988,

104 Öncel ve Özaydın in Gurkas, 2012, 6.
105 Tumerdem, 2014, 3.
106 Ibid.
107 Cavusoglu, 2014 in Tumerdem, 2014, 3.
108 Berkoz and Tepe, 2013, 3.
109 Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality, 2010.
110 Tumerdem 2014, 4.

leading to an easier access to fringe parts of Istanbul, directed the move of new developments from the southern axis to the northern part of the city, fueled mostly by private investment and ignoring the goals of the master plan.[111]

As the expansion of the city pushes the fringe, and its natural landscapes, further and further from the core of the city, accessing nature became harder. Also, as Istanbul grows and becomes economically strong, its environment and its natural landscape become an arena for commodification. Its value increases and in some cases a zone of exclusion and Othering is created. Nature turns into an exclusive space with limited and restricted entry.[112]

Today, the most expensive neighborhoods and projects, many of them gated communities,[113] of Istanbul are located either by the Bosphorus, the Sea of Marmara or in proximity to green spaces,[114] however In the sought after qualities of nature are not the only reason for living next to it. Locating expensive and exclusive real estate in forests is a mechanism for detaching the Self from the Other, “the forest isolates from the miasma of the megalopolis, the forest protects, the forest tranquilizes,”[115] it removes their residents from the perceived chaos and dirt of the center, as in the example of the gated community Saklıkoru in Bahçekoy. Additionally, in this process of commodifying the qualities of nature in Istanbul, many previously working class neighborhoods that possessed certain positive qualities in regarding the natural environment, were gradually taken over by capital interest and replaced or restored for high-class customers.[116] However, the internal Otherness of Nature, in the form of the constant threat of destruction that Istanbul carries from earthquakes, due to its geographical location, has effects on this process of commodification. The Marmara Earthquake of 1999, that caused many casualties and destruction to the urban fabric is a good example of this. The neighborhood Avcılar, located in close proximity to the sea of Marmara, and potentially a great locale for profitable development, has never been transformed. Due to its low-quality fabric and the fact that the neighborhood is built on a landfill, it was severely hit and destroyed by the 1999 earthquake.[117]

Figure 3. Saklıkoru, Bahçekoy, gated community hidden in Belgrad Forest, Istanbul

111 Berkoz and Tepe, 2013, 13, and Tumerdem 2014, 4.
112 Pérouse 2006, 2.
113 See 2.6.2.
114 Pérouse 2006, 5.
115 Ibid., 8.
116 Uzun 2003, 368.
117 Pérouse 2006, 6-7.

The flight to the periphery, not just from Avcilar but other neighborhoods as well, was massively influenced by the events of this earthquake.[118]

Figure 4. Commodifying Nature: massive construction site in the northern part of Istanbul. 2012, Serkan Taycan

When nature becomes commodified it is exploited, reshaped, destroyed and transgressed. As explained in the theoretical notions and the preceding examples the relationship space making has with nature is one of alterity, often resulting in the transgression of the Otherness of it. A perfect example for this is the *Third Bridge* over the Bosphorus in Istanbul. The bridge is located at the northern end of the Bosphorus Strait, at the entrance to the Black Sea. It connects the most northern European part of Istanbul, Sarıyer, and its Asian counterpart, Beykoz. A very ambitious project, constructed in a record time of only three years, and opened in the summer of 2016, it can be interpreted as one of Istanbul's biggest achievements in terms of a conquest of the Other, being Nature, and submitting it to its needs and desires. This interpretation has two aspects. Firstly, despite the fragmentation of nature by other, and smaller, mega projects all over Istanbul's green landscape, the most northern part of the city remained untouched. Its natural ecosystem and forests have become the victim of a "bridge to nowhere,"[119] as the *New York Times* put it, as this part of the city is not yet urbanized. Secondly, the bridge triggers and justifies an upcoming urbanization of the last holdout of nature in the city, waiting to be destroyed. The bridge attracts future developments of the city to the areas surrounding it, as "transportation routes determine the future trajectory of Istanbul's built environment, the macroform of the city transforms. Following these transformations, the natural form of the city changes as well."[120] The bridge marks the start of massive effects on Istanbul, in its transgression of nature and commodification of the Other, eventually leading to the emergence of new artificial urban geographies in the north of the city. In a more extreme example, nature is more than commodified, it is artificially created, as in the case of *Kanal Istanbul*, the second Istanbul Strait that is currently under construction. As a project first proposed already in the 16th century by Ottoman sultan Suleiman the Magnificent and his architect Mimar Sinan, it is today developed

118 Karaman 2012, 722.
119 Finkel 2011.
120 Tumerdem, 2014, 2.

Figure 5. Unfinished Third Bridge, viewed from Beykoz, 2015

Figure 6. Beginning development of northern Istanbul triggered by construction of Third Bridge

with the justification of minimizing cargo traffic in the Bosphorus Strait.[121] What it marks is a complete domination of the self over the Otherness of Nature, recreating it in a self-directed and more grandiose way.

This conquest and commodification of the Otherness of nature, previously limiting and encircling the city, adapts it for the benefit of the privileged Self. Amidst this Otherness of nature spatial islands of the Self are popping up everywhere in this landscape. In this process, they destroy not just nature but also have big effects on the rest of the city. They are located in a limbo, constantly shuffled between the realms of Self and Other.

2.4.2. Walls of Constantinople

The theme of conquest relates very closely to the topic of the fence discussed in the theory. It forms a demarcation between the Self, being the city, and everything that lies outside of its realm, be it nature or humans, deemed the Other. The fence has the function to reinforce the identity of the Self with a clear opposite and of protecting it physically against it.

Going to the case study of Istanbul, this demarcation is manifested in the Wall of Constantinople located in the historic peninsula of Istanbul. The Walls of Constantinople, looking at it as the, symbolically, first wall of the city, connects to the theoretical notion of taking possession of land as a process of Othering. Originally

121 Hürriyet Haber 2011.
122 Livius 2016.

built by the first Greek settlers and later rebuilt by many emperors,[122] The Walls of Constantinople, not only a sign of this demarcation and a device for its protection, forms an "an obstacle to the circulation of men and vehicles."[123] However, as a city of the status and size of Constantinople forms a marketplace that can not sustain itself in isolation, it needs to communicate with the outside to exchange goods. The notion of a gate, that the Walls of Constantinople had many of, "represents how separating and connecting are only two sides of precisely the same act" and how it "transcends the separation between the inner and the outer."[124] The gate is a willful act of connection with the Other, its purpose is "not only to block movement but also to facilitate, to regulate and to control them."[125]

The relation the wall has with the Other is not always a controlled one, acting as a site of a forceful conflict with it. Since its creation, the Walls of Constantinople have been subject to many destructions and reconstructions, both internally triggered by the Self or externally by the forces it was created to resist, the Other that attacks it. Examples of this are the redevelopments by the those in power, earthquakes in the region, many sieges on the city in its history, or today, the highways built to support a massively growing city.[126] One of the most important and crucial changes to the Walls of Constantinople, and also to the city at large, happened in the conquest of the city by the Ottomans in 1453 under the command of Sultan Mehmed II, referred to as *the Conqueror*. At the culmination of a 53-day long siege, the canons of the Ottoman army had torn a massive hole into the Wall, enabling their entry into the city that until that moment had proven to be impenetrable, marking in effect the fall of the Byzantine Empire and the birth of the Ottoman Reign over Constantinople.[127] A shift in the identity of the Self of an entire city was triggered by the penetration of its Wall, the exchange between Self and Other occurred. The entry of the Other into the realm of the Self made the outsiders into the governing Self.

Figure 7. Sultan Mehmed II's entry into Constantinople, Fausto Zonaro

The destruction of the Wall was symbolically extremely significant to the overtaking of Constantinople. The gate where the wall of Constantinople was heavily damaged, enabling the

123 Pérouse 2003, 2.
124 Simmel in Diken and Laustsen, 2005, 137.
125 Reid in ibid.
126 Pérouse 2003, 2.

entry of the enemy, also became the site where the last Byzantine emperor was killed in 1453. Later the name of this gate changed to Top Kapısı ("gate of the cannon"), in honor of the cannon that took down the Walls of Constantinople.[128] This event was deemed so significant, marking the conquest of the Other over the Self, that Topkapı Palace, the main palace of the Ottoman emperors for a very long time, took its name from this gate. The entire neighborhood was renamed to Fatih, a name it bears until today, meaning "the conqueror", named after Sultan Mehmed II.

2.5. Topography of Urban Otherness

> "If the metropolis is still a place, a geographical site, it no longer has anything to do with the classical oppositions of city/country nor center/periphery."[129]

In a simple definition of the city, the analysis can be made that the geographic center of the city is the space that is closer to the optimal and therefore closer to what the city considers to be the Self. Opposed to this notion of a center stands the geographical fringe of the city, which is closer to the borderline that historically demarcated the city and the Otherness that lies outside of it. It forms the diffuse borderland at the edge of the city's wall. Referencing Levinas, this diffuse borderland creates a kind of relative Otherness, internal to the city, different from the absolute Other that is connoted with nature and the external Other.[130] This simple geographical definition of the Otherness of cities divides the spatial system of a city into three clearly distinct and abstract categories - the center, as the source of the Self, the fringe as the source of the internal Other of the city, and everything that lies outside the borderline of the city, the absolute Other to the city.

However, as the order of today's postmodern cities is vastly different, this clear distinction into the categories of fringe and center does not always apply anymore. What can be observed is that the characteristics of fringe spaces and central spaces are not exclusively tied to their actual physical and geographical location in the city, they are found and located anywhere in the city. Fringe and center have transformed from geographical notions into representations of Self and Other and the spaces they inhabit. A fringe space can be located in the absolute physical center of a city but not have any of the characteristics of a central space. The same principle applies to the center. The paradox of this change is that the displaced fringe or center, now completely stripped from their geographical notion, functions according to the rules

127 Hatzopoulos, n.d.
128 Ibid.
129 Virilio 1991, 360.
130 See chapter 1.1. for distinction of relative and absolute Otherness.

of their implied position in the city. Erman and Eken describe this process of a central urban periphery:

> "We use the term 'urban periphery', despite the changes in its geographical location, in order to draw attention to its asymmetric positioning vis-a-vis the established and better-off areas and population in the city, i.e. 'the Center'." [131]

This transformation is closely tied to matters of Alterity.

An early and extreme manifestation of this observation is the Jewish Ghetto of Venice. A ghetto can be summarized as the segment or area of cities that is either mostly or entirely inhabited by the same group of minorities. The Venetian Ghetto formed a true periphery in the center, it was the domain of the Jewish minority, confined to a spatial zone in the city of Venice. It showcases all the characteristics of a fringe space but is located in the dead center of the city. This zone was a precise spatial construction of Othering at the core of a city, forming one of the first urban islands of Otherness.[132] The same observation applies to Istanbul, with the difference, that this phenomenon is not an exception anymore, like in the historical example of the Venetian ghetto, and these sorts of urban island are present on an unprecedented scale.

2.5.1. Shifts of Center and Periphery

One of the spaces that has a transformed notion of periphery and center in Istanbul, and also in other Turkish cities, is the Gecekondu. They are often compared to slums, but are distinct from them, having specific parameters that define them. Similar to slums, they are a spatial manifestation that results from the extreme growth and development of the economy of cities. These spaces started to develop, more commonly at the fringes of Istanbul, in the 50s and 60s, as the primary residence of disadvantaged social classes, mostly rural migrants from the east of Turkey that came to Istanbul looking for a better life and following the lure of better economic opportunities and jobs in the newly established industrial sector of Istanbul. Similar spaces have emerged in other global cities, put together under the term slum.[133] This chapter will explore how Istanbul's gecekondus are spaces of Otherness from the perspective of the fringe-center dichotomy, comparing them to gated communities.

131 Erman and Eken 2003, 58.
132 Nightingale 2012, 55.
133 Pérouse 2004, par. 1.

The term gecekondu comes from the way these spaces were constructed initially. Geckendu consists of two turkish words, one being *gece*, meaning night, the other one being *kondu*, which can be translated as landed. Their combination describes the fast paced and usually overnight building process of Gecekondus. They are generally constructed in a very cheap way providing only basic shelter, completely disregarding any building regulations that should be followed in standard construction processes.[134] Like slums the Gecekondu is initially built on land that is not owned by its occupants, they are built without the consent of the owner of the land. In most cases, Gecekondus were constructed on state-owned land, as they located themselves on the fringes of Istanbul, far away from any infrastructure and on vacant land. Perouse calls the combination of these two parameters of transcending the law the *double illegality* characteristic of all slum spaces.[135]

The Gecekondu differs from slums in some key aspects and has developed into a very complex entity and is often misunderstood.[136] Since their inception as informal settlements on the edges of Istanbul, few have remained untouched and in their traditional squatter housing sense. As the gecekondus expanded a series of laws were issued that legalized the squatters that already established their building structures to provide them with infrastructure.[137] Today, some Gecekondus consist of a mix of legal and illegal, poorly built and proper apartments, making them distinct from the definition of a regular slum.

The notion of fringe and center that was theoretically explored in the previous chapter forms the essence of contemporary Gecekondus. With Istanbul's rapid growth the original Gecekondus, located hitherto at the fringe, have been swallowed and surrounded by the ever growing urban fabric of Istanbul. Their spatial location, previously isolated and independent in the margins, forming their own island of Otherness among nature, was disconnected from the Self that constitutes the city. However, many gecekondu neighborhoods are still disadvantaged zones, but now with this new proximity to the core of the city the

Figure 8. Former Gecekondu Hillside, Istanbul, 2009, Bas Princen

134 Yalcintan and Erbas 2003, 96, and Erman and Eken 2004, 57.
135 Pérouse 2004, par. 6.
136 Ibid., par. 1 and 2.
137 Uzun et al. 2004, 205, and Şenyapılı 2004, par. 13.

gecekondu loses its peripherality and distance from the Self in a spatial manner. The gecekondu still keeps its state of Otherness,[138] because the space of the gecekondu still functions according to principles that are inherent in it, as they are not linked to their spatial position in the city anymore. What the gecekondu neighborhoods have become is a centralized space with the characteristics of the fringe embedded in it, they "occupy a 'twilight zone' that is torn between the fringe and the center, a prototypical zone of indistinction."[139] As a zone that intermingles both illegal and authorized buildings it is the clearest example of a spatial manifestation of the confrontation with Otherness. The closeness of the Other of the Gecekondu to the Self in this new spatial constellation leads to the increased segregation between those two categories and it becomes reinforced by new methods, not by distance alone anymore. Those new notions of borders are further explained in chapter 2.6. The Other that constitutes the Gecekondus of Istanbul is now located in:

> "the 'outside' of a new locally delineated inside/outside binary (...) They occupy a much fuzzier inside/outside dialectic: simultaneously inside and outside. Slums are not peripheral or marginal configurations on the physical and metaphorical edges of the 'normal' city, they are, as Alsayyad and Roy write, "the 'constitutive inside' of cities…the forms of exceptionalism that constitute the grid of the normal."[140]

Similarly, gated communities, the space of residence for much of the affluent class, have located themselves mostly on the fringe of Istanbul, many of them at the former sites of Gecekondus or in close proximity to them, far from the Center and the Self. The distribution of wealth and its attachment to neighborhoods in Istanbul does not follow any logic of center and fringe anymore, neighborhoods of any social class are located everywhere. Both the core and the fringe have become highly fragmented, the "center / periphery model is totally irrelevant" for analyzing the urban fabric of Istanbul today.[141] As the notion of what is center and fringe dissolves, islands, which are independent from this model emerge, without any connection to the city at large, functioning autonomously from it.

Figure 9. Megaproject, adjacent to gecekondu, separated by highway, Serkan Taycan

138 See chapter 2.7.5.
139 Erman and Eken 2004, 57.
140 Abourahme 2009, 8.
141 Pérouse 2006, 9.

2.6. Borders of Urban Otherness

"To exclude the urban from groups, classes, individuals, is also to exclude them from civilization, if not from society itself."[142]

Cities, considering the themes indicated so far in this thesis, have been pictured as a "space entrenched by 'walls', originating in an act of inclusion/exclusion."[143] There are clear borders between the Self and the Other, between the inside and outside. On an abstract level, the outside is detached completely from the city which happens in a "sovereign act dividing the urban from the non-urban."[144] In today's cities, with their fading borders and demarcations, this divisions and borderlines still exist but appear in new and transformed forms. With the transformation of the notion of fringe and center consequently causing the Other to become an internal notion of the city, as it loses its absoluteness and gains relativity, the spatial manifestations of internal borders and internal Otherness transforms as well. The order that was dictated by the distance between center and fringe that gave a hierarchy to the Otherness of the city has dissolved, requiring new types of borders and walls. These new "walls and boundaries represent an increasingly ubiquitous, yet contested mechanism, with very diverse outcomes and effects, by which individuals address challenges of living together."[145] Walls as objects of Otherness emerge in this process of a intermixed reality of life, where Self and Other are in close proximity. They materialize the separation of Self and Other, even with the disappearance of the spatial hierarchy of the past:

> "The physical shapes of walls and borders, their articulation with social boundaries, their ways of functioning as security artifacts as well as how they are perceived in the imaginaries of communities are under transformation. Constructed walls strong and imposing. (...) walls, barriers and other physical or virtual enclosures have become increasingly prominent artifacts in the built environment at subnational levels, embodying the (often conflicting) traces of an array of meanings, old and new. (...) Walls become points of application of sophisticated techniques of power and scrutiny as well as of creative forms of resistance, instruments for waging war as well as sites for forming and transforming community identities and for imagining processes of peace and displaying alternative imaginaries."[146]

The postmodern fear of the Other, now living in proximity, results in voluntary and involuntary exclusion, these exclusions can be "territorial or metaphoric, psychic or social, political or economic, or any or all of these."[147] The borderlines necessary for any of these exclusions represent sociological realities. For Simmel, every kind of spatial manifestation of a border is a representation of a sociological borderline,

142 Lefebvre 1996, 195.
143 Diken and Laustsen 2005, 73.
144 ibid.
145 Stephenson and Zanotti 2013, 6.
146 Ibid., 2.
147 Ibid., 6.

consequently many borderlines are not physically manifested and therefore invisible in the fabric of the city.[148]

Of those borderlines in the contemporary city that are physically materialized the most common is still, "despite the proliferation of emerging technologies of control, the most ubiquitous symbol of securitised 'enclave urbanism' is the relatively low-tech wall."[149] The difference that can be observed in postmodern walls is in the way they are not built anymore with the goal of keeping external Others but internal Others out.

Despite technological progress and the emergence of an increasing variety of digital, non-physical and virtual borders, all of them invisible, the same system that was prevalent in premodernity still defines contemporary cities. Paradoxically, the contemporary city with its narrative of openness and mobility, is increasingly fragmented and divided into securitized and isolated islands everywhere in its fabric:

> "walls, with dizzying pace, now straddle fault lines between enclaves and countries alike, fencing 'out' camp-dwellers / refugees / poverty / desperation and fencing 'in' elites / wealth / privilege / safety / capital with the same absolutist and fanaticist logic, albeit with radically varied permeability."[150]

2.6.1. The Surveilled Public

The notion of non-physical but virtual borders will be elaborated with the public sphere of Istanbul, forming an Island itself, especially its most prominent and frequented spots and squares, spaces of "political power, celebration and public demonstration"[151] and therefore spaces in need of control.[152] Urban planning and architecture are increasingly concerned with parameters of security and safety, "surveillance is now a commonplace feature of city life."[153] In addition, public space is full of "semiotic barriers to filter out 'undesirables'."[154] A perceived increase in threats, be they real or imagined, among them terrorism, a rise in crime rate and conflicts caused by political instability, lead to a securitization of the cores of global cities, among them Istanbul. A system called MOBESE was established in Istanbul in 2005 by the police force of the city. It is a network of CCTV cameras, spread among critical spots of the city, with the stated goal of fighting crime and preventing it.[155] This phenomenon, not particular to Istanbul and visible in many global cities, leads to a state of permanent surveillance in the public

148 Ovacık and Dinçer 2011, 2-3.
149 Abourahme 2009, 5.
150 Ibid., 5.
151 Gül et al. 2014, 64.
152 See chapter 2.7.3.
153 Lyon 2004, 300.
154 Mike Davis 1990, 257.
155 Aydin et al. 2012, 66-67.

spaces of the city. Every individual is seen as a potential threat and Other to the city. In the same way, reciprocally the city becomes an Other to the inhabitants of Istanbul, Other used here in the sense that the city alienates people in its mission to protect it, never letting them escape its gaze and its Othering. The CCTV cameras in the public sphere, as the eye of the city, can be analyzed, above their function of protecting and surveilling the city, as an attempt to homogenize the public spaces of Istanbul from unwanted Others, those that do not fit the criteria for inclusion. CCTV cameras have a possible effect on the social constellation of public spaces.

Similar to the wall, the virtual border of the camera is present in the public sphere, limiting the entry and presence of the Other. They differ in their method of Othering, in the sense that one of them blocks sight and physically excludes, the other one externalizes and maximizes vision with the same effect, albeit in a virtual manner. The way in which the borderline of an invisible camera goes beyond the wall, is in its ambiguity and its omnipresence, making it impossible to escape it:

> "Cameras proliferate in the (postmodern) urban environment. All around using the streets, in public buildings, in department stores, in corner shops their lenses watch us, creating a new scanscape. A growing number of city centers are monitored by an extensive network of cameras recording everything that moves. We see images of ourselves as we pass shop windows, as we walk through shopping malls, as we stand in banks or post offices. Everything is video-recorded continuously, indiscriminately. It is the distributed panopticon, the dispersed panorama of the city."[156]

People adapt to this psychological effect of a constant presence of cameras by adjusting their behavior, Othering and alienation happen in an automatized and unconscious way. The public sphere of the city is now "symbolically - but also practically (...) no longer governed by physical boundaries but by systems of electronic surveillance."[157]

The public sphere of Istanbul, concentrated in its hotspots, is the borderless border space of maximized visibility and maximized surveillance. With the tool of the CCTV camera, everyone becomes an Other in the eyes of the city. Conclusively, the Self of Istanbul, in its attempt to control and surveil, with the pretext of protection, alienates its inhabitants, making them an Other to the City and in return becoming an Other of its own to its inhabitants.

156 Robins 1996, 138.
157 Leach 1991, 358.

2.6.2. Walls of Affluence - Gated Communities

One of the most notable and significant examples of both the classic border in the form of a wall and of more complex virtual borderlines is found in different gated communities of Istanbul. In a simple definition of gated communities they can be described as "physical privatized areas with restricted entrance where outsiders and insiders exist,"[158] they refer to a secure "form of space by the term 'gating', and an organized social structure by 'community'."[159] Blakely and Snyder generalize three distinct types of gated communities. They can be created out of a desire for a certain lifestyle, for maintaining an elite status, or for creating a secure and safe zone.[160] These categories, in reality, often come packaged together. Their creation is triggered by elements like "fear, security, high living standards, isolation, privacy, exclusivity, predictability and real-estate values."[161] Regardless of their original motivation and their category, they all have elements of Othering, based on difference and exclusion, inherent in them. What they strive towards is "'homogenous constructions' [to] keep themselves apart from the centers of heterogeneous diversities."[162]

Before exploring the process of boundary-making and othering in different examples of gated communities in Istanbul, their emergence in this city will be briefly sketched. In Istanbul gated communities have become a major component of its urban fabric starting in the early 1980s, triggered by newly issued mass housing laws and by massive privatizations of public land,[163] that made the construction of projects in the periphery a possibility. Also, the last twenty years have been profoundly influenced and marked by neoliberal effects on urban planning. In this context a "gating of the city at large"[164] can be observed everywhere in the city, leading to "enclosing new forms of wealth and new forms of relations and non-relations"[165] between the categories of Self and Other in the city, manifesting inside the borderlines that separate them into islands.

Levent, in his extensive studies about Gated Communities in Istanbul, has differentiated them into four different categories, looking at their spatial context, typology, and location. Those categories are "gated villa towns (...) gated apartment blocks (...) gated towns", and as the only type in the city center, "gated towers."[166] Different borderlines and how they function as methods of Othering will be demonstrated with the help of two examples from two of the categories above, starting with a *gated high-rises* in the center of Istanbul. This kind of development has mushroomed close to the central

158 Blakely and Synder in Levent and Gülumser 2007, 2.
159 Yönet and Yirmibeşoğlu 2009, 2.
160 Levent and Gülumser 2007, 3.
161 Ibid., 2.
162 Gurkas, 2012, 1.
163 See chapter 2.4.1.
164 Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008, 6.
165 Ibid., 6.
166 Levent and Gülumser 2007, 7.

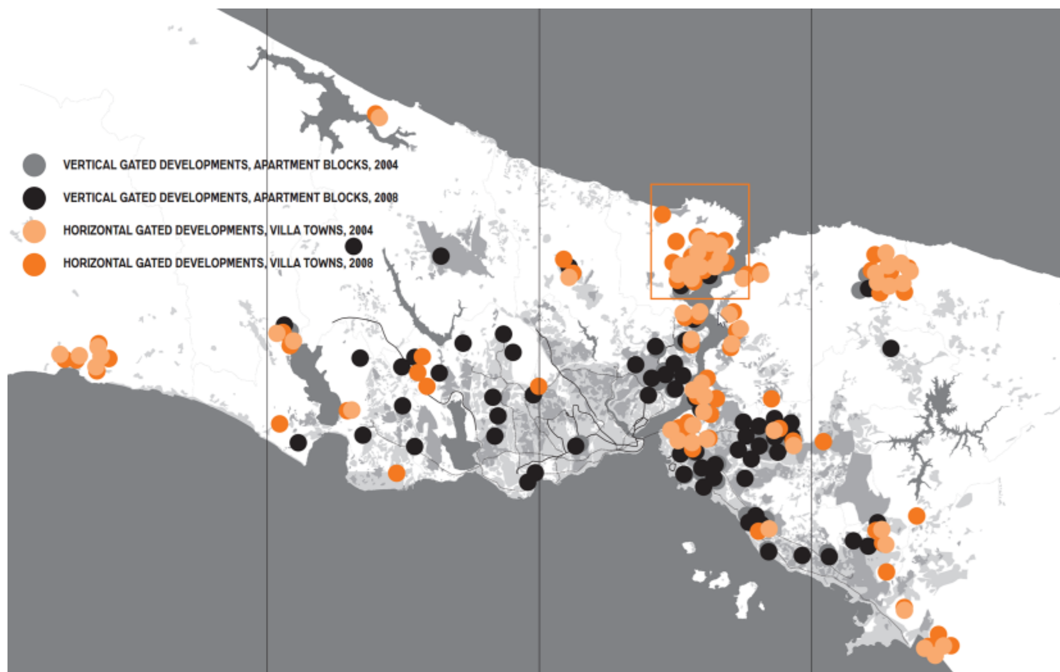

Figure 10. Distribution of Levent's categories of gated communities in Istanbul

business districts of Istanbul, both in the Asian and European bank of the city, although the majority of them is located in Beşiktaş, Levent, and Maslak, on the European side of Istanbul.[167] They differ widely in their aesthetic styles, attracting different tastes and clients. What they have in common, is their methods of Othering. Differing from traditional gated communities, which are surrounded by walls to control access and entry, gated towers apply their verticality as a mechanism of disconnection from the city. Additionally, they use non-spatial types of borders, including CCTV cameras, around the clock security systems and automated, highly technologized modes of entry.[168] In many examples gated high rises accommodate mixed use functions, for instance commercial spaces like

Figure 11. Anthill Residence, Şişli, a vertical gated community

167 Levent and Gülumser 2007, 8.
168 Ibid., 10.

shopping malls or general retail, at their ground level. The actual tower that rises above is an entirely exclusive and restricted zone. The mix of public and restricted zones make the nature of the boundaries in these buildings more complex and varied. The Otherness of these gated high rises is further amplified by the fact that they offer every service necessary to sustain life inside of them. It offers the option and possibility to its inhabitants to contain themselves indefinitely inside of the tower. Despite being located at the center, as in the example of the *Anthill Residence* in Şişli, they are cut off completely from the reality of the city, becoming an Other to it.

> "This is a very funny story. These friends of mine moved to England with their five-year-old daughter and she started school there. In the first days they were asking kids where they were from, and my friends' daughter replied 'I am from Kemer Country'."[169]

Further away, at the edges of the city, a different type of gated community is located. Those mainly gated villa towns, highly exclusive residential areas, offer a small town vibe for a limited homogenous social group that can afford its expenses. These gated towns are numerous in Istanbul. This chapter will focus on the example of Goktürk and Kemer Country, one of it's subcommunities. Goktürk is one of the first gated towns that emerged in Istanbul in the late 1980s. Built in proximity to the forest areas of the north of Istanbul, it features an array of exclusive villas, each with their own garden, arranged flawlessly composed around ponds and green alleys, reassembling a small town. All of Goktürk, "whose effect of artificiality is amplified in their togetherness,"[170] forms a space of Otherness, cut off from the pulse of the rest of the city. More than that, it carries no information or context of where it is located. As one resident put it, "it might as well have been in Konya [a central Anatolian city]."[171] Like gated towers, they offer anything necessary to remain inside of them, from schools to small private hospitals, further amplifying this disconnection.

Figure 12. Kemer Country, gated town in Goktürk.

What makes the example of Goktürk and similar projects interesting, is the way in

169 Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008, 37.
170 Ibid., 30.
171 Ibid., 33.

which they isolate themselves and form islands without an actual, physical border or wall, as it works in a typical gated community. It achieves this effect, first of all, by its physical location on the fringe, amplified by an extremely difficult access. It has a component of actual geographical distance, not just an implied one. It is sheltered in its location, surrounded by nature as its protective layer of Otherness.[172] The borderline is an implied and virtual one, it is not physical but symbolic.

As gated communities are spaces that long for status, security and belonging to a homogenous social group, the symbolic nature of the wall has to be read in relation to the city, as the city is seen as an Other to the Self that wants to contain itself in those spaces. As a cosmopolitan city, a space where the encounter with the Other is inevitable, a viewpoint emerged that considers Istanbul to be overall dangerous and a space of violent tension and crime that necessitates isolating spatial practices as a reaction to this "fear of the metropolis."[173] This relationship towards a city seen as an Other is one of the factors that cause the emergence of gated communities, a reflection of the wish to live detached from the city and in the natural fringes, be it in isolated gated towns close to forests or in gated towers with their closeness to the sky. The furthest possible location from the core is preferred. Following this logic, living behind the wall turns into a marketing tool, as living away from the Other of the city turns into a symbol of privilege.[174] The notion of border and wall as a means of securing those inside transforms and turns into a objects that "have social and psychological effects as much as they have physical effects,"[175] they are more than just barriers. These barriers, in fact, become stronger with their implied meanings:

> "The borderlines of gated community settlements which reject the city are also completely impermeable. It is not always wall, camera or other security systems which lead to this impermeability, but also a consciousness that forbids entrance into "there" or more precisely crossing the borderline."[176]

Gated Communities become not just a space that keeps the dangerous Other out, but they are more about keeping the Self contained and inside the realm of its walls, they are a "gang way of looking at life, the institutionalization of turf."[177] Just as difficult as the entry is the exit, as a resident states, "we are trapped behind our own gates unable to exit. Instead of keeping people out, we have shut ourselves in."[178] As a space of Othering and of restricted entry and exit a "gated community is a device of control."[179] No matter how these walls emerge and how they manifest they reflect the relationship between Self and Other and affect the city and its morphology on a

172 See chapter 2.4.
173 Tanyeli in Gurkas 2012, 6, and Yönet and Yirmibeşoğlu 2009, 1-4.
174 Yönet and Yirmibeşoğlu 2009, 3.
175 Ibid., 3.
176 Ovacık and Dinçer 2011, 5.
177 Jane Jacobs in Diken and Laustsen 2005, 94.
178 Low 2003, 229.
179 Tanju 2008, 89.

massive scale.[180] Gated communities are one of the clearest examples in Istanbul of spaces of Otherness that result in completely isolated spatial worlds, triggering more and more disconnection and a de-urbanized city.

2.6.3. Into the Void - Tarlabaşı

A more complex aspect of borders leading to urban islands that may not seem as evident as gated communities can be observed in the neighborhood of Tarlabaşı, an inner city slum located in close proximity to the hub of cultural life of Istanbul in the Beyoğlu district. Due to a few factors that isolate Tarlabaşı, the neighborhood has not yet become gentrified, despite its closeness to areas of affluence and touristic sites in the center.[181] On the contrary, it has become "an enclave of difference stigmatized and deemed dangerous by the public opinion."[182] Its spatial isolation was aided by the transformation of its adjacent Tarlabaşı Caddesi (Street) into Tarlabaşı Boulevard, an eight lane highway that disconnects the neighborhood from the rest of Beyoğlu.[183]

Figure 13. Construction of Tarlabaşı Boulevard, 1986.

Figure 14. Tarlabaşı's inaccessibility extends to Google Street View.

This boulevard gives the whole neighborhood an invisible but perceptible border that prevents or inconveniences entry. It functions both on a physical and psychological level. The spatial dimension of the boulevard itself cuts off the neighborhood visually. In addition, the high presence of prostitutes and transvestites, a reality of the

180 Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008, 42.
181 See Chapter 3.3.2.
182 Talocci 2011, 13.
183 Ibid.

neighborhood that is abused in media representations of it,[184] and the fact that the neighborhood's main entrances are permanently controlled by a strong police force,[185] whose station has become synonymous with the name of the neighborhood,[186] give Tarlabaşı a sense and atmosphere of a dangerous zone, that is not to be entered.

Figure 15. Advertisement for future developments, covering Tarlabaşı's facades

Figure 16. urban fabric of Tarlabaşı, 2015

As the neighborhood is considered an eyesore to the gaze of tourists that frequent close by neighborhoods this disconnecting is further amplified by covering the entire axis of the boulevard with wall high advertisements for future urban developments, hiding the blemished face of Tarlabaşı.[187] Tarlabaşı is an island of Otherness located at the absolute center of the city, to reiterate the transformed center-fringe notion. This sense of being an island that the neighborhood possesses, despite no actual walls or physical distance being present, constitutes a intra-urban border functioning with elements of Alterity at its core. The Otherness of Tarlabaşı is what gives it its borders, not any actual borders.

Cont. 2.6. Borders of Urban Otherness

To conclude, all these new forms of borders observable in today's cities and exemplified with spaces in Istanbul can be abstracted with Eyal Weizman's term *frontier geography*, they are part of a "fluid frontier notion of geography (...) characterized by a non-linear, non-continuous, non-contiguous demarcation of space."[188] Cities today with their new forms of borderlines create spaces that "resemble a territorial patchwork

184 Perouse 2009, 3.
185 Talocci 2011, 13.
186 Pérouse 2009, 2.
187 Adanalı 2011, 7-8.
188 Abourahme 2009, 5.

of introvert enclaves located side by side, each within the other, simultaneously and in unprecedented proximity,"[189] forming a city looking more and more like an archipelago of individual, loosely connected islands. These islands, all of them existing as a consequence and resulting from alterity are separated from their individual Other by these new flexible and shifting borders. They have become the rule of cities, they are now located everywhere, "around every public and private property and infrastructure, taking the form of local and regional fortifications and security apparatuses epitomized by today's roadblocks, checkpoints, fences, walls, CCTV and sterile parameters."[190] To conclude, cities as islands of Alterity are based on their newly found internalized spatial apparatuses of Othering with the primary goal of separating Other and Self. They help the self in creating a false sense of security amidst a city less and less resembling itself as a real city.

2.7. Narratives of Urban Otherness

The aspects discussed so far in this chapter, be it the distinction between the city and what is outside or its intra-urban borders, take part in the development of spaces of Otherness by keeping up a distinction between Self and Other. A deeper study of these spaces, or urban islands, that remain enclosed by their borders reveals that each of them individually offers a notion of Self and Other that is particular to each space, different from other islands. As a final aspect of this chapter, the way in which this distinction of Self and Other, in form of identity or of a narrative that it transports or constructs, is established will be demonstrated.

Following Lyotard's notion of a transition from metanarrative to small narratives in postmodernity, these islands in their individual identity, each represent a narrative of their own, as the concept of the Other has no universal notion anymore. This narrative becomes especially important in the way methods of Othering are defined for each island, each of them establishing the relationship between Self and Other on their own, resulting in a specific narrative and its spatial manifestation. In this variety of manifestations, the Other is treated in very different ways - it can be expulsed, invited, banished, welcomed or exterminated. Further, neither Self nor Other are constant, they mutate with time, and have layers inside themselves, being multi-layered in some cases and splintering into sub-Otherness.

189 Franke and Weizman 2003.
190 Weizman 2006, 86.

Referring to the chapter about *Identity and Alterity*, the notion that the Stranger acts as a key component in the formation of identity was established. In cities as collective spaces of a big scale, the distinction between "us and them"[191] is a critical point of the formation of identity. The Other, previously definable in the figure of a clear Stranger, was a relatable opposite of the self that wants to define itself.[192] However, today, as these clear distinctions fall away, with the proximity of many Others, identity is difficult to define. For Bauman the best example of this idea is the *Insider Outsider*, 'always on the outside even when inside."[193] They form a permanent threat to the identity of the established Self. The clear borders that emerge as a result of this process create spaces, or islands of alterity, "powerful sites around which individual or collective identities are transformed, contested and hybridized."[194]

This chapter will discuss the aspect of identity in spaces of Otherness with examples in Istanbul, starting with the expulsion of minorities from Istanbul, the dichotomous relationship between Istanbul and Ankara, the public island of Taksim square, where questions of Otherness are contested, the multilayered alterity embedded in gecekondus, and hyperreal spaces, in form of a commodified historic peninsula. The way in which these islands are the ground for the formation of identity is discussed.

2.7.1. Vanished Cosmopolitanism

> "Constantinople is a city not of one nation but of many, and hardly more of one than of another ... There is no people who can be described as being par excellence the people of the city, with a common character or habits of language ... Among the 943.575 inhabitants there are representatives of nearly every nation of the globe."[195]

As witnessed in the above quote Istanbul has a rich cosmopolitan past. The time of the Ottoman Empire was largely characterized by a tolerance for the Other, different ethnic and religious groups co-existed more or less without conflict.[196] In the conquest of different territories by the Ottoman Empire, their original identity remained. There were some limitations in regards to marginalized groups, for example, they did not benefit from equal rights to Muslims and paid higher taxes. They were however given the freedom to independently govern their community according to their own rules.[197]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, in the wake of the First World War,

191 Bauman 1990, 26.
192 Marotta 2002, 42.
193 Bauman in Marotta 2002, 45.
194 Stephenson and Zanotti 2013, 5.
195 Baedeker of Leipzig in Oncu 2007, 240.
196 Engresi and Hoşgeçin 2014, 37.
197 Ibid.

Figure 17. Grande Rue de Péra, 1919, today's Istiklal Caddesi

Constantinople was the home to a large population of Greeks, but also Armenians and a Jewish community.[198] Also, the neighborhoods of Pera and Galata, on the European side of the city, had a large community of foreigners, from ambassadors to merchants to bankers, each with their own flourishing cultural life. According to some historians the policy of letting the Other exist with its own identity, was the trigger for many nationalist uprisings all over the territory of the Ottoman Empire, weakening it before it's collapse in 1923. With the establishment of the Turkish Republic in 1923, a nationalist movement at its core, the presence of the many minority groups in the country was seen as a possible threat to the homogeneity of the new and idealized turkish nation.[199]

This fear of the Other that captures the nation of Turkey has been summarized under the term Sèvres Syndrome.[200] A short definition of the term "presents a narrative of foreign powers as consistently pursuing a hidden agenda when it comes to Turkey, an agenda that entails wanting to destroy the Turkish nation and undermine its sovereignty."[201] The Sèvres Syndrome gets its name from the post-World War I Treaty of Sèvres, signed between the Allies and the Ottoman Empire in the french city of Sèvres. This treaty would have led to the partitioning of the remaining territory of the Ottoman Empire among the Allies. It never took effect as the consequence of the Turkish War of Independence which lead to the foundation of the Turkish Republic with its contemporary borders.[202] This fear of an external Other still influences the Turkish nation and in fact leads to a suspicion toward internal Others. A continuing *Turkification* of the nation offers ontological security, to "render its self-identity secure in relations with the 'other'."[203]Any cosmopolitan feature to Istanbul refers to a "loss of nationality" that needs to be gotten rid of.[204]

This can be understood in the light of Bauman's observation of the tendency of humans in establishing an order or structure that causes a destructive expulsion of the Other in its wake, necessitated by the Self to reinforce its identity.[205] With the foundation of the Republic a cultural homogenization soon followed, regarding

198 Ergun 2004, 399.
199 Engresi and Hoşgeçin 2014, 38.
200 Jung in Aghaie Joobani 2016.
201 Kuzmanovic 2012, 46.
202 See http://omniatlas.com/maps/europe/19200810.
203 Aghaeie Joobani 2016.
204 Gurkas 2012, 1.
205 Marotta 2002, 39.

Figure 18. Pogrom, 1955

the activities of minorities, with a goal to "turkify the city."[206] These events lead to the migration of most minorities away from Turkey, the majority of which used to live in Istanbul. This discrimination of the Other experienced its peak in the 1940s, with the establishment of a wealth tax *(Varlık Vergisi)* that applied to minorities, ruining their businesses and their livelihood. This culminated in a pogrom in 1955 that shattered Greek properties all over Istanbul and led to the mass exodus of almost their entire population, and also other fearful minorities, from Istanbul.[207]

The minorities of Istanbul congregated in specific neighborhoods of Istanbul, many of them very central. In the center, more than half of the population of the district of Beyoğlu and Galata were non-muslim minorities (Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and foreigners).[208] Along the Haliç, the Golden Horn, most prominently the neighborhood of Fener was a hotspot of the Greek minority and Balat was the traditional Jewish quarter. Other neighborhoods like Kuzguncuk,[209] a multi-cultural neighborhood with very few Muslims and Arnavutköy, another Greek hotspot,[210] were located further away from the center of Istanbul. After the expulsion of the Other, these neighborhoods became urban voids, emptied of their residents. This slowly decaying urban fabric offered housing to a wave of rural migrants arriving mostly from East Anatolia turning these formerly wealthy neighborhoods into working class areas. The new

Figure 19. Former cosmopolitan districts, housing rural migrants, Beyoglu, 1984, Ara Güler

206 Mills 2006, 374.
207 Ibid., 371-374.
208 Uzun 2003, 367.
209 See Mills 2004.
210 Engresi and Hoşgeçin 2014, 42.

inhabitants, becoming the new Other of the city, eventually suffered the same fate as the non-Muslim minorities that preceded them, as their attractive neighborhoods were targeted for "the creation of gentrifiable housing."[211] What is important to note is that these processes of Othering in the city of Istanbul reflect "the boundaries of the nation on the cultural landscape of Istanbul, territorializing a Turkish national identity in this city known for its multiethnic character."[212]

2.7.2. Dichotomies - Istanbul and Ankara

The relationship between Self and Other on the scale of the nation sometimes is mirrored in spaces in the city. As an introduction to these spaces a short overview of the formation of identity between the former capital of the Ottoman Empire Constantinople, now Istanbul, and the capital of the newly founded secular republic, Ankara, will be presented.

After almost sixteen centuries as the capital of many empires, lastly the Ottoman Empire, Istanbul was dethroned by Ankara in the wake of the new Republic founded in 1923. The leaders of the Republic saw Istanbul as the representative of the values of the former empire, opposing their ideals for being too old, too Islamic, too imperial and too cosmopolitan in the face of a nationalist movement that the birth of the Republic was followed by:

> "In the cosmology of Turkish nationalism, Istanbul's name had been debased as emblematic of Ottoman decadence, pollution, miscegenation, against which the purity of a new national culture - located in Ankara - could be imagined. The polarity between these two cities, both as a set of images and the power relations implied in them, has been one of the central axes of modern Turkish history."[213]

In an immediately beginning modernization process, following their new ideals, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, lead to fundamental changes in the social and political structure of Turkey. Any remainder of the Ottoman past was dealt with, be it the removal of the arabic alphabet with the latin one, the ban of former dress codes, and the removal of all symbols representing the identity of the former political regime.[214] These transformations were executed by "a top-down process carried out by bureaucratic-authoritarian political elite and military officers, whose ideology was based on secularism, rationalism, nationalism, and statism."[215]

211 Islam 2005, 126, and see chapter 3.3.2.
212 Mills 2006, 382.
213 Oncu 2007, 236.
214 Gül et al. 2014, 64-65.
215 Bozdağlıoğlu in Aghaie Joobani 2016.

As the spatial representation of the new Self of the nation, Ankara was declared the capital city of Turkey and Istanbul lost most of its power, leaving a population of under one million remaining in it, Istanbul became the Other of the nation. Ankara was "the showcase of 'civilization'; its newness and cleanliness was celebrated against the cosmopolitanness and decadence of Istanbul."[216] After a period of neglect, Istanbul had to finally be modified following the new ideals dictated by Ankara to make it acceptable to the standards of the Self, leading to beginning changes to the city and to the dichotomous relationship of Ankara and Istanbul as Self and Other.[217]

The Otherness of Istanbul started to slowly change again in the 1980s, with the appearance of globalizing tendencies in the government.[218] This slow change accelerated with the rise of power of the AKP (the Justice and Development Party), starting with Recep Tayyip Erdoğan's win to become the mayor of Istanbul in 1994. The party itself saw this election as a "re-conquest of Istanbul, in the sense of bringing light onto darkness"[219], as the AKP is "a party of Istanbulites, whether of origin, migration, investment or personal attachment."[220] The AKP blends together strong neoliberal goals with populist islamic tendencies. They are divergent from the traditions and ideals of the founders of the Turkish Republic, which was based on secular and modernistic ideals. Further, Istanbul rather than Ankara is seen as the pinnacle of Turkey by AKP, which leads to their narrative of returning Istanbul into the spotlight, looking back nostalgically and fondly on its perceived glorious Ottoman past, at its global and economic potentials and with a general admiration of the city.[221]

> "We like the streets of this city. We love the Bosphorus, its vapur [ships], its birds, its plane trees, and cats. We also like the towers, minarets and calls to prayer in this city. We love the Turkish language of this city. We love all the languages of this city, the air we breathe in it and its water. We love the mausoleums of this city, its tombs, and the Prophet's companions who lie in its cemeteries. We, you, are enamored. We are in love with Istanbul, the essence and summary of Turkey. From this podium, I salute not only Istanbul but the entire world."[222]

Ankara is left behind as it does have the potential to match the ambitions of the party anymore. Infused with AKP's policies in the 2000s Istanbul regained its former popularity, becoming the economic and cultural center of the country again.[223] Istanbul, in its goal to become a global city, "has undermined the very categories upon which the cosmology of Turkish nationalism and modernity has been based. It has opened the multiple layers of 'Ottoman past' to opposing political claims and projects, not

216 Türeli 2010, 302.
217 Gül et al. 2014, 69.
218 Keyder 2010, 177.
219 Recep Tayyip Erdoğan quoted in Bora 1999, 48.
220 Pérouse, 2012, 1.
221 Gül et al. 2014, 67.
222 Recep Tayyip Erdoğan quoted in Pérouse 2012, 3.

only for the city, but also for the nation"[224] Another shift of where Self and Other are localized inside the nation occurs, Istanbul trumps Ankara and is once again the Self of the Nation.

These shifts in the perception and narrative of Self and Other leads to concrete and very drastic changes to the urban fabric of Istanbul. As the new site of the Self, ideology is applied to the city with bulldozers.[225] The sum of these developments and their reflection of ideology as their driving force will be explored in the next chapter with the example of Taksim Square and Gezi Park, the prime site of where ideology is exercised and contested in the city.

2.7.3. Contesting Otherness - Taksim

Taksim Square and its adjacent Gezi Park, located on the European side of Istanbul in the district Beyoğlu, at the end of Istiklal Avenue, is the city's most famous public space, beyond just the city but nationwide. In recent history, it has become infamous globally for the Gezi Park protests in 2013. To explain how Taksim is a spatial manifestation of the Self and Other dichotomy and how it is a site where ideology is contested, or as Wim Blockman says for cities in general, one of the "'theaters' where political regimes show their ideology and social practices,"[226] its history will be briefly sketched.

In the late 16th century, as the neighborhoods of Beyoğlu and Pera were scarcely inhabited, the area of Taksim was used for two cemeteries. The view that their location offered made them a popular public space since their inception. Later, in the 19th century, the Ottoman government designated the area of these cemeteries, still outside the perimeter of the city, for the construction of a Military hospital and a barracks, moving the cemeteries to a nearby neighborhood. The construction of the barracks in 1806 "marked Taksim's importance in the urban morphology of Istanbul."[227] With the fall of the empire and

Figure 20. Aerial View of Taksim Square, before the demolition of the former Ottoman barracks

223 Pérouse, 2012, 3.
224 Oncu 2007, 236.
225 Ibid., 234.
226 Gül et al. 2014, 63.
227 ibid., 64.

the birth of the Republic of Turkey, the barracks no longer had any military function and was used as a stadium.[228]

As the Kemalist government began to modernize Istanbul, they focused most of their efforts on Pera, and not on the historic Peninsula, which was deemed too traditional. In their effort to create a new Istanbul they hired the french urban planner Henri Proust in the 1930s to work on Istanbul's new master plan. Among his many substantial changes to the fabric of the city, the demolition of the barracks on Taksim Square and its transformation into a public space, namely İnönü Promenade, was one of the most important.[229]

Figure 21. Taksim Square, after redevelopment by Henri Prost

Following the desire to establish the Self of the nation also in Istanbul, away from Ankara, the leading elite of Turkey saw "architecture and urban planning and design as the key visual indicators of cultural modernisation."[230] Prost's plan for Taksim, is in its modernistic design as a vast open space a reflection of the republican Identity, in addition its location away from the historical peninsula reinforces this. This change brings "Taksim to new heights by turning it into a political showcase to promote modernisation policies."[231] In the decades since its establishment, Taksim Square, as the now biggest urban square and public space of Istanbul, has been repeatedly the space for exercising political agendas, demonstrations and rallies, representing the conflict between the Self and the Other.

Today, Taksim Square continues to be important as a space where questions of ideology are shown and contested, most famously in the Gezi Park protests starting in May 2013. They were a response to the fact that Taksim has become a playground "where politicians have acted as pseudo urban designers"[232] with an attempt to alter the identity and memory that the square represents. Just like the Ottoman and Republican governments did in their own time, an attempt was made to project a new architectural form or language with a new symbolic meaning onto the square to alter its identity.

This attempt can be summarized by a plan for destroying Gezi Park and making space

228 Polvan and Yönet 2010, 1-3.
229 Ibid., 4-5.
230 Gül et al. 2014, 65.
231 Ibid., 70.
232 Gül et al. 2014, 64.

for the reconstruction of the Ottoman military barracks that previously was on the square, with the minor but important difference that only its shell would be true to the original, with a shopping mall filling its core. This process "exemplifies the Neo-liberal tendencies embedded within the policies of the current government, solidifying the government's reputation for trying to make a profit out of every single acre of land in the city, for turning public spaces into controlled and commoditized spaces." [233] In addition, the AKM, the Atatürk Cultural Center, a centerpiece of the square, one of the best regarded achievements of modernist architecture, and a symbol of republican values, was scheduled to be demolished and replaced with a neo-Ottoman style opera house and a mosque. This plan can be read as a "provocative action with the clear intention to erase the republican memory of the place and by doing so remove the Square's symbolic 'free' status."[234] Attempts at changing the character of the square are nothing new, there have been attempts at it since the 1950s, shortly after its construction, by conservative forces in the country, they, however, remained unsuccessful. With the support of the AKP as the majority in the government, achieving this goal seemed to be actually possible.[235]

Figure 22. Taksim during the Gezi Park protests, 2013

These developments were not without resistance. A small-scale protest against the uprooting of trees in Gezi Park turned into the refusal of the government policies that aim at creating a "neo-liberal paradise in Istanbul," which was met with violent police suppression.[236] The problems that materialized in Taksim are visible everywhere in the city, as megaprojects are altering wide parts of it, the slogan "Every place is Taksim" emerged during the protests.[237] The protesters were successful in stopping the impending construction and the effect of altering the Self of the square. However, the AKM remains closed, awaiting a future attempt of demolition. The protesters were unsuccessful in the bigger fight against the neoliberal reshaping of Istanbul as a whole, that ignores the rights of Others, replacing them with pockets of megaprojects and leaving their spaces shattered, as *every place is Taksim*, in the sense that the same attack is happening everywhere in Istanbul, with an increasing and seemingly unstoppable pace.

233 Ekmekci 2013.
234 Gül et al 2014, 63.
235 Ibid., 68.
236 Diken 2004, 316.
237 Ibid. and see in Gurcan and Peker 2015.

2.7.4. Layers of Otherness - Gecekondus

The perception of Otherness has a broad spectrum. The same Other can be perceived differently from different perspectives and in different times and situations. This notion will be explored with the example of the gecekondu, from its origins as a slum-like informal housing on the fringes of Istanbul to today, surrounded by the ever-growing city, and as a central fringe.

In the early days of their formation of gecekondus their dwellers were mostly ignored, not feared and left alone, following after a short moment of shock, as they appeared on the fringes of the city with a sudden and fast pace, met by a city not accustomed to them.[238] As the home of the cheap labor force of the industrial Istanbul and the consumers of the state protected market they were functional to the city and were tolerated.[239] The Otherness of the gecekondu had a spatial dimension, as the space of the gecekondu was placed on the absolute fringe of the city, with the city staying oblivious and at a safe distance to it. The existence of the gecekondu was irrelevant to the city. To repeat, with the massive growth of the city, the gecekondu turns into a more centralized space, without losing its peripheral attributes. It becomes an Other among the Self, an insider-outsider. Together with the loss of the need for a labor force for the industrial market sector, the gecekondu shifts from the harmless and somewhat useful peripheral Other to the unwanted, unnecessary, and to be expulsed Other at the Center.[240] The Nature of Otherness in the islands of gecekondus transformed. Further, the Othering of the Other in the gecekondu becomes necessary, ignoring it is not an option anymore.

This shifts from a tolerated space of Otherness to one that is met with hostility is reflected in the terminology used to describe gecekondus. In the early 1990s, the space of gecekondus occasionally became the site of conflicts, or at least was portrayed this way in the media. The media representation during this time on the topic of gecekondus, prominently among them the Gazi conflict in 1995,[241] started to shift their reports about them portraying them as sites of violence and crime, and therefore as an underlying threat to everyone in the city. The view of the public on the topic of gecekondus altered in the light of these reports and a new term for describing gecekondus and their residents emerged.[242] The word *varoşlu*, a "term of Hungarian origin, has pejorative connotations in the turkish language and has been in use since

238 Şenyapılı, 2004, par. 9.

239 Erman 2001, 985.

240 Erman and Eken 2004, 67.

241 According to Erman and Eken, "in the 1990s, the gecekondus once more became the site of violence, at least as presented in the media, namely the Gazi episode of 1995, which was introduced by the media as the uprising of a neighborhood, where Alevis (...) resided, in its reaction to the bombing of a local coffee house, and the 1 May 1996 demonstrations, which were explained in the media as the vandalism of radical leftist groups who 'came down to the city center to destroy it'." (Erman and Eken 2004, 58)

242 Erman and Eken 2004, 58.

the mid-1990s, in journalistic discourse, to designate shapeless and poor suburbs,"[243] became commonplace in describing the gecekondus as spaces that are more and more ready to cause trouble, violence, and opposition. The gecekondu became varoş, a space positioning itself against the city that it is part of, as a space that is "hostile and antagonistic to the city (...) attacking the city, its values, its political institutions and, more importantly, the very core of its ideology (a secular and democratic society built on consensus and unity) and its social order."[244] The term was originally used in a derogatory manner by the media but today is also in academia to describe the spaces of gecekondus. It groups together a large group of classes and people, from gangs to drug addicts to opposing political forces, among them communists or islamists, all of them located and rooted in the peripheral neighborhoods of the city. In this shift the "former term gecekondulu can be understood as the "Rural Other," the latter term varoşlu can be best summarized as the "Threatening Other."[245] This process of labeling the gecekondu a Varos, as harmful and dangerous, is one step towards its complete Othering, which can lead to a more radical process of cleansing, displacement, as the now valuable central land is needed for the growth of the city and profitable developments.

DÜELLOYU BETONKONDU KAZANDI-Halk yıkım ekibini bir tepenin üzerinde topluca karşıladı. Çevre gecekondu sahiplerinin de direnişe destek vermesiyle yıkım ekibi fazla bir şey yapamadan geri dönmek zorunda kaldı. (Fotograf: MEHMET DEMİRKAYA)

Betonkondunun iki kolonu yıkılabildi

► Küçükarmutlu'da gecekondular çok katlı inşaatlara dönüşmeye başlayınca Sarıyer belediye yıkım ekibi harekete geçti. Halkın direnişi ile karşılaşan ekip bir binanın iki kolonunu yıkabildi.

Figure 23. Newspaper article derogatorily naming Gecekondus betonkondus, awaiting destruction, Cumhürriyet, February 1993.

Figure 24. Dwellers of the Gecekondu Ayazma awaiting eviction, with megaprojects looming in background

Figure 25. Fabric of Ayazma, 2006

Not only is the gecekondu an Other to the city, but it is in some cases fragmented into multiple internal Others with different levels of Alterity. The gecekondu settlements appear as a whole from an outside perspective, as a unified island of Otherness. Its

243 Pérouse 2006, 2.
244 Erman 2001, 996.
245 Ibid., 995.

residents are most often not accounted for, "ignored by the political and administrative powers, and populated by ghosts as far as the population registry is concerned, as if beyond/outside of civil rights."[246] The gecekondu is seen as an integral whole whose components are rarely considered individually.

Gecekondus went from being a harmless eyesore to a more serious threat to Istanbul in the mainstream public opinion, being the space where the "other Istanbul (...) of the excluded, unwanted and repressed" accumulates, giving it "a face that is shameful, that the authorities would like to eliminate or at least conceal from the eyes of foreigners."[247] This external face of the excluded that is represented in the gecekondu has many internal facets and is not homogenous. A deeper study of gecekondus reveals layers of Otherness, "internal discourses and identity practices [and] a much more subtle system of oppositions and distinctions" is shown.[248]

The gecekondu is unified first by its common territory, but also by the perception and narrative attached to it as a space of the disadvantaged Other of Istanbul, determined by an external discourse. Gecekondus incorporate internal divisions based on ethnicity, religious sects, regional origins and political orientations, but also elements of ownership of property or tenantship put certain groups in a favourable or marginalized position.[249] These "series of micro-distinction that make sense from the inside for locals (...) determine daily life and the socio-spatial relationships" that shape the life and spatial manifestations inside of gecekondus.[250] The external distinctions of Self and Other that puts it in the position of Otherness in a relationship with the city, repeats and manifest locally and internally. *The Other of the Other* and their conflicts for gaining power often lead to violent tensions, further fueling and reinforcing the perception of the gecekondu as being the place of a dangerous Other, reflected in term varoş. Conclusively, this leads to further exclusions and in the final step the cleansing of gecekondus.[251]

246 Pérouse 2006, 3.
247 Ibid., 159.
248 Ibid., 163.
249 Pérouse 2006, 8-13, and Erman and Eken 2004, 63.
250 Pérouse 2006, 1.
251 See chapter 3.3.3.

2.7.5. Alienating Nostalgia

"I is another."[252]

"Awash in a sea of faces, we look back nostalgically to the shore in a sudden memory of a ground already lost. Now, threatened with a deadening pluralism that makes us all just an other among others, ...nostalgia becomes the very lighthouse waving us back to shore, the one point on the landscape that-gives hope of direction."[253]

In an interesting case, Othering can affect the Self and paradoxically make it an Other. In the city, this alienation of the Self happens in historic and touristic spaces. As tourism enters the global market and becomes a profitable endeavor, global cities begin to adapt and modify the presentation of their Self as a tool to attract and appeal to the foreigner Other, as a consumer and tourist. The city becomes a consumer good targeting the tourist, emphasizing its exotic potential and value. For this purpose, cities engage "in (re)producing and promoting their urban heritage and symbolic assets for tourism."[254] In the Turkey of the 1980s, fueled by a significant shift in political power with neoliberal tendencies, Istanbul "was remade as the 'showcase' of Turkey's economic opening to global markets."[255] The rich Ottoman history of Istanbul, with its inherent Otherness that appeals to the western eye and creates a sense of exotism, was a key element of this new marketing of the city. The tourist, looking for an encounter with the Other, is offered this element of exotism that is used for the sake of profit and for the creation of tourist spaces. This *musealized* urban landscape doesn't necessarily have an intention of being the historically authentic Self of the city and is mostly in search of portraying a pleasing image**.** What it offers is "less the pleasure of confronting otherness than the pleasure of having the satisfaction of experiencing the sight of a reassuring version of this confrontation, true to our fantasies, that comfort us in our identity and superiority."[256] The Other in this scenario is at the epicenter of the Self of the City, its Othering occurs on the territory of the Self, alienating the Self from its own core, making the Self an Other in the process.

In this process the city's image is re-developed, re-constructed and in turn commodified and transformed into a consumable product**,** the city's heritage becomes the "new symbolic economy" of cities.[257] Istanbul is capitalizing from its history.[258] What it strives to do, is to turn the whole center of the historic peninsula into an Island of Otherness, a staged space to keep the tourist in and the unwanted Other out. This new, almost curated version of the Self of the city further aids both sides, the Other

252 Rimbaud 1871.
253 Stewart in Mills 2006, 386.
254 Doğan 2010, 9.
255 Oncu 2007, 234.
256 Staszak 2009, 47.
257 Zukin in Oncu 2007, 233.
258 Doğan 2011, 75-78.

of the tourist and the Self of the city. The tourist's fetish for the Other is satisfied in a safe and cleansed environment, the Self of the city is provided with a reassuring constructed identity. This process is accompanied by feelings of nostalgia.

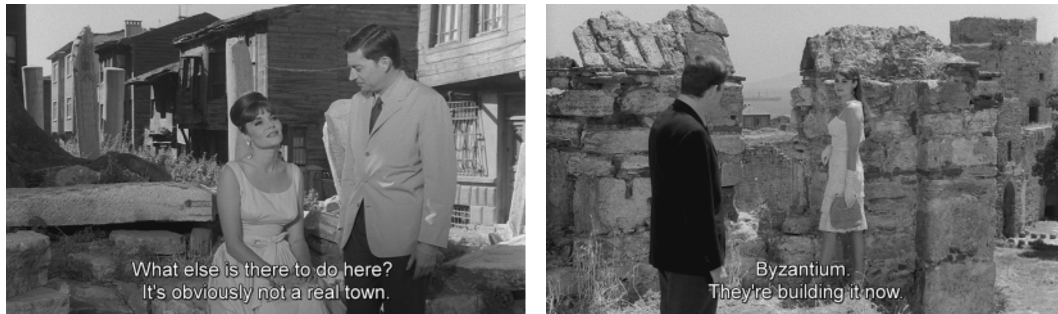

Figure 26 and 27. Stills from the L'immortelle, 1963, by Alain Robbe-Grillet, 26:30 and 35:54. Commenting on the constructed nature of Istanbul's historic landscape.

In the process of globalization, as Istanbul faces massive restructuring and becomes a full part of the global network, a collective feeling of longing for the Self of the city that got lost and "for a home that no longer exists"[259] emerges.[260] This feeling can be associated with Orhan Pamuk's concept of *hüzün*, a turkish word that Pamuk himself describes as a "hazy state [of] melancholy, or perhaps we should call it by its Turkish name, hüzün, which denotes a melancholy that is communal, rather than private."[261] Orhan Pamuk uses this idea to describe the collective state of the people of Istanbul, a feeling that binds them together. This melancholia that hovers over all of Istanbul describes this longing for the past of the city while struggling to live in an Istanbul that has completely metamorphosed.

> "In the good old days nostalgia was a curable disease, dangerous but not always lethal."[262]

These feelings can be seen as a response to the sense of loss of a unifying identity in a postmodern world. This idealization of a seemingly perfect past erases the factual history of the city, replacing it with a positive and comfortable remembrance of it. The dark sides of the history of the city are mostly forgotten and ignored. The paradox of this attachment to an idealized past can be illuminated with the photography of the renowned turkish photographer Ara Güler. In this process of idealizing the past of Istanbul, which had a peak in the 1990s, Ara Güler's photographs were rediscovered and used in "the pursuit of recalling 'Old Istanbul' as a cosmopolitan city."[263] His photographs, all of them black and white, as Susan Sontag puts it "turn the past into

259 Boym 2001, XIII.
260 Yalman 2010, 111-113.
261 Pamuk 2005, 109.
262 Boym 2001, 4.
263 Türeli 2010, 301.

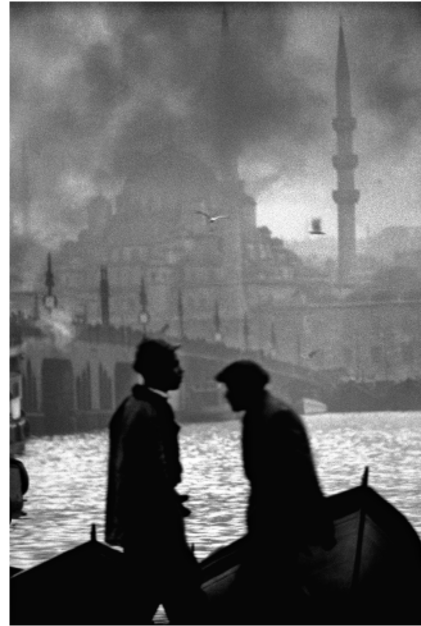
Figure 28. Karaköy, 1965, Ara Güler

an object of tender regard,"[264] and boost these feelings of nostalgia**.** They start filling many spaces of Istanbul, from the metro trains to metro stations, to countless galleries and billboards of the city, all with the goal of visualizing this nostalgia in a unifying way. The paradox in this, however, is that the intention behind the actual creation of these photographs could not be further from wanting to romanticize and idealize Istanbul's history. Ara Güler, at that time working as a photojournalist for several newspapers, focused his work mainly on the massive shifts that were affecting the urban fabric of Istanbul, starting with migration, urban expansion and renewal projects.[265] Studying his photographs, the transformation of Istanbul is shown, and not what can be considered the Self of the city that is romanticized today. His photographs are misused and mislabeled to show the grandiosity and cosmopolitan nature of the past Istanbul despite portraying the exact opposite, a new and Other Istanbul, far away from the idealized past that it aims to display. This example shows how the longing for an idealized Self results in "constructions of memory [that] entails remembering and forgetting, in a dialectical relationship, where memory and history are entangled."[266] On the scale of the city of Istanbul as a whole, this superficial and in some cases false remembrance can lead to an alienation of the real Self of the city from itself - it is replaced by a new and constructed version of it, making the Self an Other.

2.7.6. The Totality of Miniatürk

> "'History' has now been transformed into a prized collection of architectural fragments to be preserved in bits and pieces and protected from the sights, sounds and smells of local populations."[267]

The desire for a utopia of a perfect, cleansed and musealized city can be observed in the theme park Miniatürk in Istanbul. Built in the early 2000s, it is a miniature park, one of the world's largest, featuring models in the scale of 1:25 of the "jewels"

264 Sontag in Türeli 2010, 303.
265 Türeli 2010, 305-308.
266 Ibid., 303.
267 Oncu 2007, 234.

of Ottoman architecture, mostly from Turkey, but also Ottoman exports around the globe. As one visits Miniatürk Park, a self-proclaimed "place where time is frozen," the visitor finds himself in a walled off and guarded oasis built amidst gecekondus hovering around it in the distance. He is offered a tour along a predefined path, a visit of "a small model of a great country" where the wonders of the nation can be experienced, "a wonderful trip around Turkey in a short span of time. Miniaturk is a display window for Turkey!"[268]

Figure 29. Miniatürk Park, Istanbul.

The space of Miniatürk, as an island of Otherness that has lost connection to the reality that surrounds it, can be read as a hyperreal space. The term hyperreality was first used by Umberto Eco in his book *Travels in Hyperreality*. Simplified, the term describes the impossibility of making a distinction between what is reality and what is a simulation of it.[269] The way Eco sees this process is as one that completely "deconstructs the conception of authenticity through destructuring the boundaries between the copy and the original, or between sign and reality."[270] Eco and Baudrillard use examples of theme parks to discuss this subject. Usually, theme parks are situated in the realm of pure fantasy. In the case of Miniatürk, which is based on a arranged and constructed version of history that it wants to sell as real, the distinction between real and false also doesn't apply anymore. The version of history that is presented is highly modified and de-territorialized. What it references originally becomes irrelevant and history is wiped away, a shallow mask of it remains. The way Miniatürk presents history is in a spatially rearranged and deliberately narrated way. The space of Miniatürk is a hyperreal space, one of simulation, a space that operates "by the mode of referendum precisely because there is no longer any referential,"[271] and a space where "contradictory process of true and false, of real and the imaginary, is abolished in this hyperreal logic of montage."[272]

Miniatürk does this abolishment of history in a very interesting way. All these architectural wonders of the Ottoman Empire are taken out of their original chronological, spatial context and put together in a new and rearranged system so

268 Miniatürk 2014.
269 Wang 1999, 356.
270 Ibid.
271 Baudrillard 1983, 116.
272 Ibid., 122.

"that they can be experienced simultaneously (...) transform them into a new whole (...) in the enclosed spatial order of the park itself."[273] Inside of the island of Miniatürk they form and constitute a new model of history, one not true to fact but hyperreal. One could say that Miniatürk's goal is not to represent history but to portray a possible revival of the excellence of the imagined past of Istanbul. Visiting Minatürk "offers the experience of a totality, with the self at its very centre - the ultimate inclusion."[274]

An analysis of the parks spatial system can be further understood as a model for the reality of Istanbul. The historic core of the city, with its emergence of more and more tourist spaces, has the goal of representing the idealized form of Istanbul's Self, and not its real, multifaceted and troubled Self. Just like Miniatürk, the core of Istanbul strives to become a walled off garden, cleansed of everything but the grandiose, with every eyesore removed, free of Otherness, a hyperreal urban space.[275]

Figure 30. Bosphorus City, Küçükçekmece, Istanbul. Serkan Taycan

This notion is further clearly spatialized in *themed* gated communities, which are, perhaps like Miniatürk, prototypes for the city. Among them, most fittingly, is *Bosphorus City*, a mixed-use megaproject situated at the bank of an artificially created Bosphorus, located in the far periphery of Istanbul, guarded and protected from the reality of the city.

2.8. Conclusion

After clarifying basic notions regarding the subject of Otherness in Chapter I, Chapter II applied it in the context of space and cities. Spatial aspects of Otherness were shortly explored with the help of the concept of the Stranger, and Istanbul, the city in which these aspects are exemplified, was introduced briefly. The primordial Otherness of cities, the Otherness inherent in their core, was elaborated in relation to nature as

273 Oncu 2007, 248.
274 Ibid., 260.
275 See chapter 3.3.1.

an Other which is transgressed and conquered by the Self. Additionally, the symbolic meaning of the demarcation between the Self and the Other by the *fence*, the original walls of the city, was explored. Further, in a shift towards the internal structure of the city, the center/periphery model, with the center being closer to the Self and the periphery being a relative Other, and its transformation in recent times was explained. The center and the periphery are further not dependent on topographical location anymore and are defined by their fundamental characteristics resulting from their relationship to Self and Other. This was demonstrated in the example of gecekondu squatter housings and affluent gated communities.

With the disappearance of clear boundaries, the distinction of the Other becomes difficult, new and complex spatial boundaries become a necessity for the Self. Among those, a few examples were introduced - the invisible but rigid boundaries of surveillance in the public sphere, the mechanisms of boundary-making that replace the walls of gated communities, and the invisible borders enclosing the inner city slum Tarlabaşı despite its close proximity to prestigious areas of the city. These new borders enhance the islandness of these *spaces of Otherness* and make them increasingly isolated *off worlds*.

Each of these islands represents different narratives of Self and Other. The last chapter introduced examples - the exodus of Istanbul's minorities after undergoing a massive Othering and resulting in loss of Otherness and ethnic pluralism, Istanbul's conflicting position between Self and Other in different times, its public spaces as sites for applying and contesting Self and Other, the different layers of Otherness from the inside and outside of gecekondu settlements, and Istanbul becoming alienated from itself, driven by forces of nostalgia and hyperreality.

All of the examples elaborated in Chapter II show how Islands of Otherness emerge and how they "create effective barriers that honeycomb local populations into isolated enclaves of limited habitat."[276] The Notion of Self and Other not only creates them but amplifies their detachment and islandness. The dichotomy of Self and Other, as the binary code of the city, affects and influences its identity and consequently its morphology.

276 Weizman 2006, 89.

III

From Islands to Archipelago

3.1. Introduction

> "A modern city is as much a complex reality as it cannot be glued together any-more."[277]

> "In the built environment fragmentation is manifest in deepening landscapes of inequality, acute socio-spatial polarisation and a fractalized morphological pattern that can be described as a kind of 'enclave' urbanism – the segregation of urban populations into self-enclosed 'islands' with parallel but distinct realities, physically proximate but institutionally and cognitively estranged."[278]

The previous chapter *Islands of Otherness* established how an urban island, with its borders and with the narrative of Self and Other that it embodies, operates on the basis of Alterity. The speculative observation that the Self and the Other are what forms the binary code of these urban islands was made and their individual connection to questions of Otherness was explored. The thesis *Islands of Otherness: Archipelago Istanbul* continues in its conclusive elaboration by looking at the islands, as the "solipsistic enclaves of the under-theorised splintering city,"[279] as positioned in the urban fabric of the city as a collective, how they form an archipelago, and how this archipelago leads to massive changes in the morphology of the city.

277 Koolhaas 1996.
278 Abourahme 2009, 2.
279 Diken and Laustsen 2005, 96.

In order to examine this hypothesis, this final chapter of the thesis will be structured into two parts. Firstly, the way in which cities are fragmented as a consequence of urban islands will be elaborated, in a reordering of the postmodern city read as a result of Otherness and in the light of a transformed nature in the relationship between Self and Other. This re-ordering results in the formation of more and more islands, discussed in the examples of urban renewal, gentrification, and mass housing developments, all of which further amplify the change to the structure of the city, leading to the morphology of the city turning into one of an archipelago. Secondly, the multitude of islands that are reordering the city and that now function collectively as an archipelago will be elaborated with related theoretical concepts about splintering and fragmented cities, applying them further to the reality of Istanbul.

3.2. Ordering in the City

The tendency of human beings to *ordering* was explored with the ideas of Zygmunt Bauman in chapter I, how it leads to the creation of hierarchies and boundaries in different stages of modernity and how this process of ordering relates to the theme of Self and Other were elaborated. In chapter II, looking at the context of urban systems as the space of human settlements, it is demonstrated how boundaries, created in the process of Ordering, lead to spatial manifestations that result in divisions and a fragmentation of the city. They are the key factor in the emergence of urban islands, all of which have a tendency of reinforcing the distinction and separation between the Self and the Other in cities today.

The hierarchies created in the process of Ordering have always impacted the spatial dimension of cities, using them as a mechanism of Othering in the hands of the dominant power. Tracing the history of cities, forcible segregations of marginalized groups, following criteria of class, religion, gender, among others, can be observed. The process of Othering in cities in history was curated by the menage a trois of the government, the religious elite and wealth inequalities. The synergies between these three aspects cause a domination over urban soil.[280] This resulted in the creation of spaces that can be described as islands in the urban fabric, they were however not prevalent everywhere and represented an exception, not causing any big or lasting effects on the overall structure and morphology of the city.

280 Nightingale 2012, 40.

Istanbul is no exception to this. It has an internal notion of Othering present in it, one that is visible in the concept of Mahalle, a traditional spatial ordering method that has shaped the city historically for a long time.

3.2.1. Innate Othering - Mahalle

"To be the master (...) is to see."[281]

The term Mahalle, today used as a simple term to describe a neighborhood, was originally a powerful conceptual method that constituted the "social hegemony of the Same."[282] The mahalle, being a residential area in the urban fabric, was a part of the spatial organization of osmanic cities,[283] identifying someone as Ottoman as opposed to what was deemed as the Other. Inside of the mahalle groups of people, with a collective identity, be it ethnic or religious, were spatialized in autonomous spaces, each with its particular internal structure and hierarchy. The mahalle acts as "a socio-spatial locator for the ethnic and religious identity of a particular community."[284] Referring to Bauman, the Mahalle can be interpreted as a spatial method of Ordering,[285] enabling the clear and visible distinction between Self and Other:

> "The concept of 'mahalle' was an anti-urban device identifying someone as Ottoman-Islamic-Turkish in a binary opposition to the relatively new developing parts of the city as the locus of the unfamiliar. Essentially like any other conservative concept, it was trying to create an illusion of totality: neither the pre-modern spatio-temporal organization of Ottoman Empire and the 19th century 'mahalle' nor the new parts of the city were as totalized as they were imagined to be."[286]

From the point of view of the Self, in the case of Constantinople the *Sublime Porte*,[287] the mahalle served not just in establishing Order but in visualizing and spatializing it, with the goal of aiding in the execution of the power and control of the state.[288] The Sublime Porte internalized safety "as long as [it] sees. Not to see is to be condemned to obey. In despotic regimes where one obeys blindly, to be blind is the emblematic figure of the subject."[289]

The mahalle concept, as a method of the spatial homogenization of urban landscape, can be conceptually used to describe the structure of the urban islands of the

281 Grosrichard in Seni, 171.
282 Tanju 2008, 89.
283 Engresi and Hoşgeçin. 2014, 37.
284 Mills 2006, 372.
285 See chapter 1.4.
286 Tanju 2008, 90.
287 The Sublime Porte, or in Ottoman Turkish Bab-ı Ali meaning "high gate", was a metaphor of the central government of the Ottoman Empire.
288 See chapter 2.6.1.
289 Grosrichard in Seni, 171.

contemporary landscape of Istanbul. Most fittingly in this analogy of a mahalle in today's city is the gated community, in the sense that it strives towards an internal and purified homogeneity, a space without Other. Ironically, despite its actuality as a segregative space, the mahalle, as a space enclosing groups of the Same, implies in the common memory of the city a space that reflects belonging and familiarity.[290] This fond (and maybe false) remembrance of the past mahalle is today a factor in the marketing and establishment of gated communities, as the narrative that accompanies them is one that strives "to reach the fiction of 'mahalle'."[291]

In a larger scale, contemporary Istanbul and the processes of reordering that can be observed all over its urban fabric might be understood as an attempt of purifying the entire sphere of the city, elevating it into the status of a mahalle, cleansed of all Others, leaving only the Self in its own territory. Postmodern urban islands therefore, the way this thesis reads them, take the notion of mahalle to a new extreme, going from *socio-spatial locators* in the city to entirely disembedded spaces, urban islands are now a "single-layered anti-urban expression of the desire of the Same."[292]

3.3. Reordering in the City

> "The postmodern city is a deliberate mutation engendered by a bureaucratic state and a corporate civil society. Both spheres are driven by economic return, in fiscal or in profit terms. The postmodern city has become a mutant money machine, driven by the twin engines of (state) penetration and (corporate) commodification."[293]

Urban islands of Otherness have risen to become paradigmatic spaces in Istanbul. Their diversity and the different relationships that they have with Otherness were shown in chapter II. Following the examples in chapter II, it can be observed that an increasing emergence of these spaces of Alterity, in a short period of time and with an accelerating rhythm and an increasing diversity, is happening in Istanbul, resulting in massive changes in the structure of the city - an intense reordering of its fabric is underway. To understand this reordering, the context in which the city of Istanbul and cities in general exist today has to be considered. In a radical break from past trends in politics, economics, society and culture, now the postmodern condition and strong forces of globalization affect every aspect of life. As was explored in chapter I, these changes transform notions relatable to Self and Other, which in turn transform cities as the site of their manifestations. This reordering does not result in the creation of

290 See chapter 2.7.5.
291 Gurkas 2012, 6.
292 Tanju 2008, 90.
293 Elliot 2010, 118.

mere individual islands, it produces and reproduces them continuously, together they eliminate past hierarchy and order in an intense pace. This change in the morphology of the city as a whole, has to therefore be understood as a change caused by Self and Other, as their transformation is at the core of the islands and the islands, once numerous enough to affect the scale of the city, lead to the transformation of the morphology into a one of an archipelago.

Additionally, the globalized world goes hand in hand with neoliberalism. According to Ed Soja, every change in urban systems since the 1970s has clear parallels to changes and reactions that originate from neoliberalism, every morphological transformation a city undergoes, is linked to urban policies that are the direct result of capitalism.[294] The forces of neoliberalism and globalization together lead to a factual change of the structure of the city. To reiterate, through the lens of this thesis, this structural change of the city has clear implications regarding the subject of Self and Other.

In the case of Istanbul, a city that has become a showcase of the neoliberal policies and ambitions of the AKP, it has undergone such a change of morphology in a very brief period of time. Starting from the 1990s and accelerating rapidly in the 2000s, Istanbul is being rebuilt into a tourist hotspot, a financial center, a cultural capital (a title it officially received as the Cultural Capital of Europe in 2010) and a capital of sports, with ambitions to host the 2020 summer Olympics, among other things.[295] All of these developments lead to negative consequences for what is considered the Other of Istanbul, the eyesores, and everything "unworthy of a world metropolis."[296] This process leads to, only to name a few examples, inner city slums turning into luxury housing, gecekondus being wiped away to make space for new megaprojects and the complete dispossession of inner city inhabitants for the sake of gentrification. In this neoliberal restructuring of the city, Istanbul's urbanization process sees the fabric of the city "as an abstract, empty plate (a tabula rasa) and plans, designs, and reconstructs the city and its constitutive elements from scratch on a daily basis,"[297] following the conceptual goal of neoliberalism to create "a universe where every action of

Figure 31. Urban Renewal, Fikirtepe, Istanbul

294 See Ed Soja 1987.
295 Pérouse 2013, sect. a focus on mega-events.
296 Pérouse 2012, 2.
297 Adanalı 2011, 1.

every being is a market transaction, conducted in competition with every other being and influencing every other transaction, with transactions occurring in an infinitely short time, and repeated at an infinitely fast rate."[298] Consequently, this results in more and more grandiose projects,[299] described as *crazy* even by their developers and by the government narrative as an admirable action. Their destructive nature is seen and marketed as beneficial and glorious for the city.

Before the framework for the morphology of the archipelago is discussed in theoretical terms, three final examples from the city of Istanbul, located in the context of a reordering of the city by criteria of Self and Other are discussed. All the islands presented so far in this thesis have a reordering of the city as an effect, and all of them are created in the context of a globalized and neoliberal system. However, the examples given now are more extreme, in the sense that they result in the displacement and rearrangement of Self and Other on a much more massive scale. Entire neighborhoods are cleansed of the Other, which is now moved far away, to be replaced by representations of the Self. This process is one that occurs without the consent of those displaced, it is an act of involuntary Othering. The examples that will be explored are the urban renewal of the inner city district of Sulukule, the gentrification of Cihangir and Tarlabasi, and the spaces of banishment for all those displaced, TOKis, state built mass housing projects, located at the new far fringes of Istanbul.

3.3.1. Cleansing the Other - Sulukule

The desire and striving towards an increasingly hyperreal Istanbul, a notion studied with the example of Miniatürk, leads to the reordering of the historic neighborhoods of the city based on the principle of hyperreality.[300] This process affects the proximate Other in these districts. The Istanbul of the tourist, with its manufactured urban landscapes, stands in extreme contrast to the reality of the rest of the city, the newly built and posh hotels and commercial centers stand right next to inner city slums. Those slums, due to their proximity to historic fabric, or rather, the playground for the idealized Self, become a problem for the maintenance of this cleansed identity. Ironically, these underprivileged neighborhoods in the center of Istanbul carry a significant portion of what is Istanbul, therefore the city's Self. This extreme segregation of urban poverty from the *glorified* historic core has led to clear spatial transformations with principles

298 Treanor 2005.

299 For example Kanal Istanbul, see chapter 2.4.1.

300 See chapter 2.7.6.

of Othering.

An example of these events is the neighborhood Sulukule, located just north of the historic core, the Fatih district, which has been completely transformed in recent years, to fit the agenda of a cleansed center. Right up until the neighborhood was destroyed and restructured ending in 2009, the historic neighborhood of Sulukule was the residence of a large Roma population and was so for a long period of time.[301] First processes of demolition in the neighborhood started in the 1960s, continuing at a much faster pace in recent years.[302] Despite its status as an Other of Istanbul, the neighborhood was still economically viable and able to sustain itself due to many entertainment houses[303] located in Sulukule. In the early 1990s the local authorities issued a ban on these spaces, arguing that they do not comply with regulations, do not pay taxes, employ underage women and have turned into brothels. This resulted in the fast economic decline of the entire neighborhood and a consequent massive loss of jobs lead to a shift towards criminal activity.[304] The Otherness of Sulukule intensified, going from from being an island of Otherness due to its ethnic difference, to a space that has an added dimension of poverty and criminality associated with it.

The process of cleansing that Sulukule underwent in the past fifteen years has different aspects of Othering. On a basic level, the negative connotation associated with the neighborhoods primary inhabitants, the Roma minority, is reflected in the discourse of the authorities. The labeling of Sulukules Roma residents as a problematic Other enabled and justified the process of regeneration leading to a cleansing of its population. Former prime minister and current president Recep Tayyip Erdogan called this process of renewal a "cleaning away the monstrosity."[305] In addition the coordinator of the Sulukule renewal plans stated that:

> "It is not easy to integrate these people to society, but we have to accomplish it, in the end these are our people; we have to save them. If it was up to me, as a state policy, I would take all the kids under the age of ten from their parents, put them in boarding schools, educate them and make them members of society. This is the only way."[306]

In addition to the Othering of the inhabitants, the destruction of Sulukule was driven by the potential its geographic location in the city offers, right next to Fatih, neighboring the most important and valuable historic fragments of Istanbul.[307] Due to this prominent, and very valuable and profitable location and its implied historic and symbolic value to the city, the entire neighborhood was marked for regeneration,

301 Foggo 2007, 41.
302 Uysal 2012, 14.
303 According to Karaman "for decades Sulukule was famous for its 'entertainment houses' (eğlence evleri or devriye evleri) – houses composed of rooms in which groups of customers are served food and drinks as they are entertained by scantily clad young girls dancing to the tunes of Romani music bands. Prototypes of these houses were established in the early 1940s, and they continued to serve the entertainment life of the city until the early 1990s." in Karaman 2010, 102.
304 Karaman 2010, 103.
305 Erdoğan in Karaman 2010, 103.
306 Interview with Mustafa Ciftci in Karaman 2010, 106.
307 Foggo 2007, 44.

at the cost of its inhabitants, that were displaced in this process.[308] Evictions happen and are justified under the pretense of preservation, with the actual goal of cleansing a neighborhood in order to sell it for profit, to a new social class that will move to the modified neighborhood.[309] The Sulukule Urban Regeneration Project was established. This regeneration project was further justifiable by Istanbul's striving towards an image of a global city that can not bare to have a shameful face at its center.

Figure 32. Sulukule, before urban renewal, 2008

Figure 33. Sulukule, same spot as figure 32, after completion of urban renewal

The main goal of this project has been described in the words of the authorities as aiming to "preserve national and world heritage, particularly historical tissue."[310] Certain parts were indeed regenerated, but the vast mass of the neighborhood was wiped away and replaced with luxurious Ottoman era style wooden houses. The goal of the project in preserving historic heritage was obtained by replacing the real historic fabric and its inhabitants with a historicized simulated version of it. Projects like Sulukule Urban Regeneration Project have the function to "transform historic inner-city neighborhoods into the commercial, touristic and leisure hubs of rejuvenated city centres" and act as "social exclusion instruments in the hands of ambitious central and local governments in their need to recreate 'global' and 'competitive' cities."[311] The urban restructuring plans that affect all of Istanbul have been further accelerated by the introduction of new laws that made the execution of regeneration projects much easier,[312] with the threat of further developments of segregation and new forms of Othering. The regeneration process of Sulukule can be interpreted as an act of Othering that aids the grandiosity of the manufactured Self of an idealized historic core, adapting it to match these ideals but destroying the real Self it contains.

308 Gunay 2012, 8.
309 Dogan 2011, 11-12.
310 trans. in Uysal 2012, 15.
311 Gunay 2012, 4.
312 *Law No. 5366: Law on the Protection and Revitalisation of Cultural and Historical Immovables* in Foggo 2007, 42.

3.3.2. Limbo and Paradise - Tarlabaşı and Cihangir

An important example of the neoliberal reordering of Istanbul is the topic of gentrification, resulting in massive spatial segregation, as the urban *Other*, living in neighborhoods designated for change, is seen in public discourse as a burden to the image and growth of the city and consequently as something that has to be expulsed from urban life. In a basic definition, gentrification can be described as the "process of housing rehabilitation in which the middle classes move into and renovate old inner and central city housing hitherto occupied by working class and other lower income groups."[313] This chapter will illuminate two examples of a confrontation with the Other in the process of gentrification in two very different, yet adjacent inner city neighborhoods of Istanbul.

The border between these two neighborhoods is Istiklal Caddesi, the city's most prominent avenue, in the center of the Beyoğlu district, which forms the cultural city center of Istanbul's European side, framed by the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn. Istiklal offers, to tourist and local alike, a flawless, almost curated and staged, narrative of a modern oriental city. On the two sides of the axis of Istiklal Caddesi two neighborhoods are located, Tarlabasi and Cihangir. Despite their proximity, their spatial characteristic is very different. They share many invisible commonalities and are undergoing a similar process of gentrification, they are only at very different stages of completion, one currently characterized by expulsion and one by fully finished gentrification.

Both being located in Beyoğlu, they share the same historic development. During the time of the Ottoman Empire, Beyoğlu represented the westernized and cosmopolitan part of Constantinople.[314]Culminating in the 1950s, the neighborhoods minority population, which constituted the majority of its demographic, left.[315] Beyoğlu was left largely abandoned and uninhabited.[316] The now empty neighborhoods in Beyoğlu became the settlement of rural-urban migrant,[317] the new Other. In this massive population shift, these inner city neighborhoods turned into mostly working class districts and slowly start to decay.[318]

By the 1980s, Artists, students, and intellectuals, a very homogenous group of gentrifiers, slowly began to move to close by neighborhoods, namely Cihangir,

313 Islam 2005, 123.
314 Adanalı 2011, 3.
315 Coskun and Yalcin 2007, 2.
316 Ergun 2004, 393.
317 Coskun and Yalcin 2007, 2.
318 Keyder 2010, Page 183-184

Figure 34. Cihangir Street, 1965, Ara Güler

Figure 35. Gentrified Cihangir, 2011

driven by their interest in historic architecture, affordable rents and the close proximity to Istiklal.[319] In addition, the pedestrianization of Istiklal Caddesi once again put Beyoğlu into the prime light of Istanbul and helped it regain much of its lost prominence and popularity, accelerating Beyoğlu's gentrification process.[320] Beyoğlu's new inhabitants, using their strong social network, encouraged and brought more and more people into the neighborhood, causing a snowball effect.[321] They started renovating the decayed houses to their old glory and began injecting the working class neighborhood with their own lifestyle, the first art galleries and cafes followed soon after. As in every other typical case of gentrification, developers followed the artists and started investing in the housing market of Cihangir, hoping to maximize their profits.[322] Gradually, housing prices rose exorbitantly, forcing not only the original working class inhabitants but also the first generation of gentrifiers out, both now unable to afford the living costs and the working class increasingly estranged by the new lifestyle in their neighborhood. Some of them left by choice, other were dispossessed from their homes by force. The only on the surface positive revitalization of the neighborhood did not happen without resistance. To exemplify, there was an attack of local residents on an opening of an art gallery in Tophane,[323] a neighborhood close to Cihangir, in 2010, in revolt of the gentrification process.

Today, Cihangir's former residents are completely swapped out with Istanbul's most affluent class and the neighborhood is one of the most expensive in the city, making it the textbook example of what is commonly understood and expected from a gentrified neighborhood. Cihangir represents one of the pillars of what has been termed "Cool Istanbul."[324]

319 Islam 2005, 132 - 135.
320 Adanali 2011, 3.
321 Soytemel and Şen 2014, 74.
322 Uzun 2003, 369.
323 Pehlivan, 2011, 4.
324 Adanali 2011, 5.

"We should find a way to keep poor people from the city of Istanbul." [325]

The complete opposite of *Cool Istanbul* is found in Tarlabasi, only steps away from Cihangir. Crossing Tarlabaşı Boulevard, one is immediately met by the presence of prostitutes, transvestites, and beggars. Despite its centrality, the neighborhood feels very closed off and hard to access, surrounded by a thick invisible border meant to keep it hidden from the eyes of tourists.[326] Tarlabaşı is a neighborhood of equally old urban fabric, as Cihangir, historically highly valuable, but is now largely in a dilapidated state - it has become a ruinous inner city slum. It houses a wide range of people, from Kurdish rural migrants, illegal immigrants, and refugees.[327] Most of the residents of Tarlabaşı are here without any legal residency or official work permits.[328] They coexist and live squeezed together in minuscule apartments and work unofficial and in many cases illegal jobs. What is considered the unwanted Other at the core of the city is found in high concentration in Tarlabaşı. Tarlabaşı, similar to its immediate neighbor Cihangir, used to be the home of Istanbul's many minorities. A wave of expulsions beginning in the 1950s made space for rural-urban migrants settling in the city center.[329] Despite very similar circumstances and analogous high potential the gentrification process that happened in Cihangir never took place in Tarlabaşı the same way. It was spared a sooner gentrification due to the construction of Tarlabasi Boulevard disconnecting the neighborhood from greater Beyoğlu.[330]

Today, still featuring its infamous ruinous inner city slum atmosphere, Tarlabasi is undergoing massive renovation and regeneration plans.[331] In recent years very cheap rents have driven some students, artists, and expats to live here for its proximity to many important hubs of Istanbul, despite the undesirable circumstances surrounding the neighborhood. The state, aware of the possible high profit that expanding the commercialized city center would bring, has stepped in and granted private investors to speed up the process of gentrification in Tarlabaşı. Consequently, in contrast to Cihangir, the process of gentrification in Tarlabaşı did not start gradually with people slowly moving here and renovating houses, but was executed with initiatives executed by the

Figure 36. Streets of Tarlabaşı, 2015.

325 Bayraktar, 2006 quoted in Gündoğdu and Gough 2009, 16.
326 See chapter 2.6.3.
327 Pérouse, 2009, 1.
328 Ibid.
329 Ibid., 2.
330 See chapter 2.6.3.
331 Adanali 2013, 56-57.

state and by force of law.[332] The State acts as "a stratifying and classifying agency that wields a dominant influence on the social and symbolic order of the city."[333] One way this was executed is the forceful dispossession of the residents of Tarlabasi, enabled by new laws and consequently moving them to TOKis.[334] The process of expulsion of the Other, that happened once before in the 1950s, is repeating itself, as a new Unwanted Other that has to be expulsed to make room for the economically advantaged is defined.[335] The difference is that now the expulsion happens purely by class and economic status, driven by neoliberal interest and a reordering of the city.

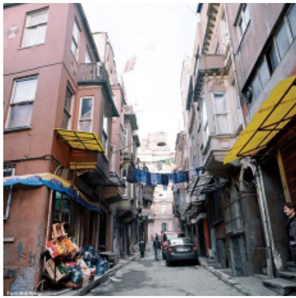
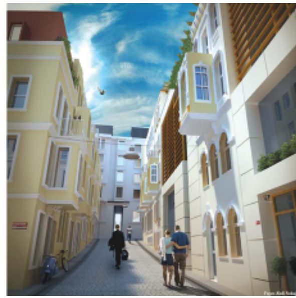

Figure 37. Design proposal for Tarlabaşı's redevelopment, before/after

Figure 38. Tarlabaşı renewal construction site, 2015

This process is justified by deliberately constructed media representations of Tarlabaşı as a hub of social disorder, similar to the way Gecekondu dwellers and neighborhoods were marginalized in the 1990s.[336] Tarlabasi is seen as a hub of criminal activity and as a threat to the city at large, making it "easy for the authorities to justify special measures, deviating from both law and custom, which can have the effect—if not the intention—of destabilizing and further marginalizing their occupants."[337]

This hostility towards the residents has not gone without massive tensions and even violent conflict.[338] Tarlabaşı was among the issues politicized during the Gezi Park protests in 2013. The urban development in Tarlabaşı is currently still underway and has not been stopped, despite all the protest against its execution, leaving the neighbourhood in a desolate state. The Othering of the neighborhood is executed as the center needs to expand, for profit and for improving the image of Istanbul. Tarlabaşı is selected for the construction of luxurious housing projects and redevelopment, making even the most undesirable neighborhood of the city profitable and, in the process of reordering the city as a whole, removing the unwanted Other from it.

332 Adanali 2013, 56-57.
333 Wacquant in Sakizlioglu and Uitermark 2014, 1371.
334 Gunay 2012, 5.
335 See chapter 2.7.2.
336 Pérouse 2009, 1, and see chapter 2.7.5.
337 Wacquant in Sakizlioglu and Uitermark 2014, 1371.
338 Pérouse 2009, 16.

3.3.3. Spaces of Banishment - TOKi

"Those, whose houses were transformed, need to be transformed."[339]

The undesired Other from everywhere in the urban fabric of Istanbul, be it the squatters in gecekondus, the inhabitants of inner city slums in Beyoğlu or the ethnic minorities of Sulukule, share the fate of being marked for an inescapable eviction, an eviction that happens at any cost and without any consideration for them. This results in most cases in their forceful relocation to mass housing projects called TOKi, on the far periphery of Istanbul.

The term TOKi, an abbreviation for *Toplu Konut İdaresi Başkanlığı,* refers to the Housing Development Administration of Turkey. The term has become synonymous with the high-density mass housing that this agency is responsible for.[340] This institution has its origin in the 1980s. It was founded with the goal of solving a lack of housing structures in Istanbul. Their activities and authority intensified massively starting in 2002, linked with AKP's rise in power. Its mission, more than providing housing, is to deal with the unwanted and illegal housing fabric of the Istanbul,[341] a fabric that can not be a part of it anymore, or to say it in the words of the president of the TOKi, Erdogan Bayraktar:

> "Wherever there is an unauthorized building (...) we are determined to transform them . . . We will start from cities and will go down to towns, districts and villages."[342]

The process of dispossessing and consequently displacing residents to TOKis begins with their eviction from their original neighborhoods and houses. To give an example, in the case of Sulukule,[343] its inhabitants, living in an area marked for renewal, were given the option of either purchasing the new luxurious properties in the neighborhood, offering them long-term loans, or to leave their neighborhood.[344] The residents of this disadvantaged neighborhood were unable to even afford the very small monthly loan payments offered to them.

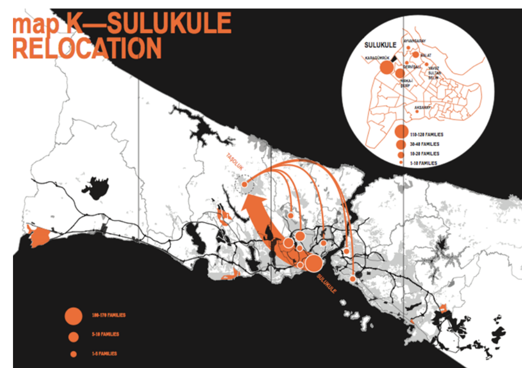

Figure 39. Displacement of Sulukule residents to peripheral TOKis

339 Aziz Yeniay, the Mayor of Küçükçekmece, in Baysal 2013, 91.
340 Baysal 2013, 84.
341 Lovering and Türkmen 2011, 81-82.
342 Bayraktar in Karaman 2012, 715. (translated by Karaman)
343 See 3.3.1.
344 Uysal 2012, 15.

Other than homelessness, they were left with no choice but to accept the alternative offered to them - they became pawns in a game of urban renewal and a part of a "charitable" resettlement strategy banishing them to TOKis. Despite their proclaimed intention of helping the Other, the relocation to TOKis leads to new struggle, as its residents are barely able to afford living there.

TOKis in the fabric of Istanbul share common characteristics. They are high rise structures located in the far periphery of the city, grouped together in an ensemble of many tower blocks, isolated and cut off from the infrastructure of the city. Unlike gated communities, "where the entry is blocked but the exit is free," The TOKi's isolation is involuntary, it is a space "where the entry is free but the exit is blocked."[345] Candan and Kolluoğlu describe Bezirganbahçe, one of the most infamous TOKi's of Istanbul, an estate of 2640 apartments, in 55 blocks of 12 stories:

> "It is like an island of tall buildings that have mushroomed in the midst of two other low-income areas, Yenidoğan and Taştepe. (...) The residents of Bezirganbahçe (...) prefer to use the minibus instead of walking the road to the neighborhood because it has no sidewalks and is always lined with trucks, since a customs zone is located nearby. Passing by the trucks, one reaches Bezirganbahçe's entrance with its bereft gate standing alone in the absence of any walls or fences, and a security cabin with no security personnel. It has barely been a year since the first residents have moved in, yet Bezirganbahçe is already derelict, with the fallen plasters of the buildings, fading paint, and shabby construction work. Neglected playgrounds, plots allocated for landscaping with a few dead plants, and half-finished pavements and streets add to the dilapidated look of this housing project."[346]

Ironically, the emergence of TOKi's in the landscape of Istanbul only displaced a problem from the core to the periphery. The destruction of spaces of Otherness, spaces that were deemed eyesores or in many cases falsely represented as areas of crime, didn't alleviate any of the problems that were associated with them, it simply displaced them out of sight.[347] The TOKi goes beyond the Otherness of spaces like the inner city slum or the gecekondu. They developed organically in the fabric and were an integral, albeit isolated, part of it. The TOKi, however, is an artificially and

Figure 40. TOKi in Büyükçekmece, Istanbul

345 Diken and Laustsen, 96.
346 Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008, 19-20.
347 Baysal 2013, 89.

deliberately constructed urban island, it is maybe the most distinct and clear island of Otherness visible in the city of Istanbul today, almost mirroring the logic of camps.[348] This reality of TOKis stands in contrast to the way their developers portray and market them, "as a remedy for the housing problem of low-income groups in the city, by providing affordable housing and better living conditions, and alleviating poverty."[349] The TOKI is presented as a positive development, the urban development transformation displacing residents is claimed to be a ticket "to a higher class" for the disadvantaged.[350] The bleak consequences that urban renewal projects in Istanbul leave behind are marketed in a positive light, point towards a brighter future for the Other that is evicted.

Bizarrely, the state-controlled and built TOKis are in many examples passed onto the hands of private companies right after their completion, which are now responsible for managing the residential space of the TOKi, leaving the "residents [with] no control over their environment."[351] All activities and all patterns of life in the TOKi are determined by the private hand that governs it.

TOKis are not homogenous but highly heterogeneous spaces, they house people displaced from everywhere in Istanbul in sometimes very clashing combinations, creating a space where "residential groups (...) conflict with each other in terms of cultural and political orientations, ethnicity and class, making the estate a battleground, witnessing daily fighting and complaints to the authorities."[352]

Figure 41. TOKi, Bezirganbahçe, Istanbul

The spatial organization of the island of the TOKi prevents individual groups from partaking in their own cultural activities, it dictates a lifestyle to its inhabitants. In the way TOKis are spatially structure, they leave no room for any public space or other open spaces for the residents to continue with the lifestyle that they were used to. Gecekondus, despite their flaws, had a functioning internal spatial structure, based on the social needs of their residents, providing them with a sense of public space. Removed from this functioning infrastructure the TOKI offers nothing alike, not only is it disembedded from the city, but also internally it has nothing but isolated

348 See chapter 3.4.
349 Candan and Kolluoğlu 2008, 20.
350 Baysal 2013, 91.
351 Erman 2014, 145.
352 Ibid., 145.

apartment units, breaking the social ties and habitual patterns of their inhabitants. Baysal reads this spatial configuration of the TOKi as being the "desired outcome for the authorities,"[353] with the intention of changing the behaviour of the Other and civilizing it. One resident of a TOKi in Basibüyük described his life as following:

> "If you fail to pay for two consecutive months you are done for! You are homeless! They [the municipality] want to turn us into robots. Working day and night to pay the dues, we'll become TOKI's indentured servants."[354]

Conclusively, TOKis can be seen as a spatial reordering that re-distributes the Other in the urban fabric into enclaves. The TOKi, with its spatial enclosure and the simple fact of distance, acts as a method of Othering, fully banishing the Other keeping it in, indefinitely. More than that, it can be interpreted as an attempt of changing the Other, changing its behavior.

3.4. Morphology of the Archipelago

> "The 21st-century metropolis is a chameleon. It shifts shape and size; margins become centres; centres become frontiers; regions become cities. BAUDRILLARD (1986) writes of this process: 'They have not destroyed space; they have simply rendered it infinite by the destruction of its centre'."[355]

This final chapter will discuss, as a conclusion to the hypothesis of the thesis *Islands of Otherness: Archipelago Istanbul*, the new morphology of the city that is created by the multitude of islands existing in the city of Istanbul. It will be elaborated how the islands of Otherness, which have been studied individually in this thesis, appear as an ensemble in the urban fabric and how they rearrange the morphology of Istanbul, creating one that resembles the arrangement and form of an archipelago, de-urbanising the city despite its growth.

The urban phenomena of islands explored in chapter III discussed under the light of a reordering of Istanbul, and also the examples from chapter II, collectively trigger a transformation of the morphology of the urban fabric of Istanbul. The landscape of the city undergoes a redistribution of its spaces according to Self and Other, meaning of where they are localized in the city, resulting in homogenized fragments all over its fabric. This phenomenon of a fragmentation of the city and its effect on it is widely studied in examples worldwide. All of them can be understood under the assumption

353 Baysal 2013, 89.
354 Karaman 2012, 13.
355 Roy 2009, 827.

that these "rebundled or reordered fragments establish, however, not a 'city'; what we get instead is fragments (...) producing an incoherent overall structure."[356]

Figure 42. Collection of floor plans of megaprojects in Istanbul

Among the many theories on this subject are studies by Mike Davis, who in his book *City of Quartz* (1990) reflects on Los Angeles and its *enclavisation* into fortified fragments of the upper class, by Edward Soja, who in *Postmetropolis* (2000) introduces six discourses on the postmodern landscape of Los Angeles, among them its structure as a carceral archipelago, by Stephen Graham and Simon Marvin, *Splintering Urbanism* (2001) reflects the fragmentation of cities into interconnected and networked clusters, by Peter Marcuse and Ronald van Kempen in *Of States and Cities: The Partitioning of Urban Space*, introducing the *Partitioned City*, a model for the deeply fractalized nature of cities, and by Oswald Mathias Ungers in *Berlin: A Green Archipelago: The City in the City* (1977) which despite speaking of a shrinking 1970s Berlin of voids, offers relevant notions for the fragmented postmodern cities of today.[357]

What these theories about reordered cities have in common is that they are observations about the fragmentation of cities that is so characteristic of them in the late twentieth century. The fragments in the city of Istanbul, following the logic of the island, form then a morphology of an archipelago of isolated islands. By their isolation and exclusion from the city the islands are connected structurally as a part of the archipelago. They are cut off from the outside, from the rest of the city, and from other islands functionally, but nonetheless are, in the system of the archipelago, tied together, "outwardly disjointed urban enclaves (...) surrounded by borders and boundaries which not only divide, but also join them together."[358]

In the case of Istanbul, Aksoy and Robins, in their research on the city's periphery, describe how Istanbul, following the same logic, is "moving towards an ever greater segregation of the urban-scene along class based and identity-based lines."[359] Istanbul is undergoing a reordering of its fabric, as this thesis states, along criteria of Self and Other, causing a "fragmenting [of] the metropolis into packaged, fortressed

356 Diken and Laustsen 2005, 95.
357 See in Dear and Flusty 1998, Kozak 2008, 241-242 and Ungers 2013.
358 Iossifova 2015, 91.
359 Aksoy and Robins 1997, 21.

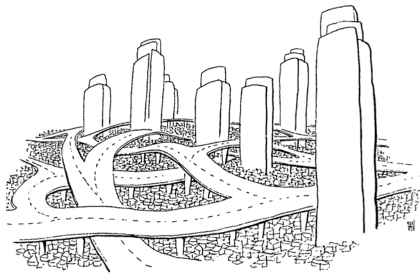

Figure 43. Istanbul imagined as a network of highrises and highways

spaces."[360] According to Aksoy and Robins, the emergence of more and more fragments in the city is directly linked to the transformation of the infrastructural landscape of Istanbul, the many new highways and bridges cutting through its fabric, creating a "modern infrastructural ideal [that] was remodelled as a logic of splintering urbanism."[361]

The Archipelago, with its islands of Otherness, expanded to a large enough scale, leaves behind, as a residue between the islands, if not yet transformed into networks of infrastructure and transportation, the remainder of the city, now the Other, a zone awaiting an imminent reordering into more islands. The city, or what is left of it, following this argument, is marked by "'permanent temporariness' (...) perpetually waiting 'to be corrected'."[362]

In a further interpretation,[363] the islands that create the morphology of the archipelago, that have multiplied to a massive scale in the city, can be understood with the logic of the camp by the philosopher Giorgio Agamben. This notion has become popular in urban discourse in describing "relational and dialectical tensions between exclusion and inclusion, freedom and unfreedom that definitively and constitutively mark today's cities."[364] The camp of Agamben, built on ideas by Schmitt,[365] is on a spatial dimension, defined by its non-relation to the city. The camp is neither a part of the inside nor outside of the city:

"The camp is not a prison, is not a legal institution, but is a territory outside of the law, an enclave in and mainly outside of society, an extra-territorial inlet, where no law is valid. Hence anything can happen there, even the unimaginable (…)."[366]

This *zone of indistinction*, as Agamben terms it, has arrived at the core of the city of today, or rather replaced it, as "today it is not the city but rather the camp that is the fundamental biopolitical paradigm of the West."[367] The logic of the camp moved from its peripheral and exceptional position to become the normative structure of societies and of urban systems, the camp has replaced the city.

360 Graham 2001, 278.
361 Ibid., 279.
362 Yiftachel 2009, 244.
363 This interpretation is written as a possible starting point for a further continuation of the ideas presented in this thesis under the aspect of the camp. Given the complexity of this subject, and its divergence from the main focus of the thesis and outside its reach, it is stated as an open question that does not intend to be conclusive in this work.
364 Abourahme 2009, 4.
365 See chapter 2.4.
366 De Cauter 2005, 277.
367 Agamben 1998, 181.

Conclusion

"There is no world, there are only islands."[368]

The complex encounter with Otherness in the diverse environment of the global city of Istanbul was the trigger for the formation of the hypothesis that the thesis *Islands of Otherness: Archipelago Istanbul* is based on. With the hypothesis that Istanbul has become an ensemble of independent urban islands that form an urban morphology that resembles an archipelago, the thesis set out to answer how these urban islands function. It looked at them under the assumption that they are consequences of Otherness and aimed to answer how Otherness is spatialized and how it manifests in different spaces localized in Istanbul.

368 Derrida 2011, 31.

Figure 44 and 45. Postcards from the Future, Istanbul 2014-2064, Gabriele Boretti

Questions of Otherness in the context of cities today are understood in relation to the conditions of globalization, which create a stronger presence of Otherness, and of postmodernity, in a world of more plural and fragmented identities. The ubiquitous presence of the Other in these conditions is spatialized in cities. The stranger and the spatial dimension of its Otherness, one of distance, is transformed in this environment, everyone becomes a Stranger, its spatiality transforms perceptions of Otherness. The result is an array of processes of border making, ranging from the invisible to the actual, complexifying the relationship the Other forms in the fabric of the city.

The city of Istanbul with its fragmented and divided cityscape provided an excellent case study for a better understanding of the spatiality of Otherness. Its contemporary fabric has inherent factors of spatial Otherness, starting from its geography and its strong relationship to nature to its history. Both the concept of Mahalle, as its historic homogenizing and structuring force, and the conquest and reconquest of its fortifying walls, find new and symbolic meanings today. Its new paradigmatic spaces, ranging from gated communities, gecekondus, inner city slums, megaprojects, touristic spaces to mass housing projects, offered a site for studying the transformed meanings of the center-periphery distinction, of intra-urban borders and of narratives between Self and Other. These factors together contribute to the creation of what was termed as urban islands of Otherness. These islands were seen as the result of a reordering of the city, homogeneously redistributing the patterns of Self and Other inside of it, voluntarily and involuntarily detaching them despite their proximity, and leaving behind the original integral urban fabric, now torn apart and residual, left between the isolated islands. These seemingly non-related islands were seen as connected by their

non-relation in the structure of an archipelago, that is gradually devouring the residual zone with more islands and restructuring the morphology of the city.

As fittingly illustrated by Gabriele Boretti in his *Postcards from the Future*, Istanbul is imagined as becoming a collection of the urban islands of Otherness that were elaborated over the course of this thesis. With the one hundred-year-anniversary of the Republic of Turkey in 2023 approaching rapidly, Istanbul's urban transformation continues at an unstoppable pace. Is the future of the islands of Otherness, as a collective of homogenous urban fragments in the Archipelago Istanbul, destined to become nothing but a collection of camps?

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List of Figures

Figure 1. *Istanbul's location and municipal boundaries*

Source: https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/c/cf/Turkey_Istanbul_location_map.svg. Accessed Oct 11, 2016. Edited by the Author.

Figure 2. *Historic Peninsula, the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus*

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Shell #06, 2012, 110x138cm, Archival Pigment Print, Serkan Taycan. Source: http://serkantaycan.com/files/serkantaycanportfolyosunumlq.pdf. Accessed Oct 11, 2016.

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Source: http://autonomies.org/pt/2015/07/landscapes-of-oppression-gestures-of-resistance-istanbul/. Accessed Oct 11, 2016.

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Photograph by Bas Princen. Source: http://www.domusweb.it/content/dam/domusweb/en/architecture/2010/05/11/refuge-five-cities-by-bas-princen/big_248963_7881_Former%20gececondu%20hillside,%20Istanbul,%202009%20%20srgb_big.jpg/_jcr_content/renditions/cq5dam.web.1280.1280.jpeg. Accessed Oct 11, 2016.

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Source: http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-ipjzxXHeem0/UQrQ0ygLCfI/AAAAAAAABk8/b7BO4iiAPog/s1600/Tarlabasi+Yenileniyor+billboard.jpg. Accessed Oct 11, 2016.

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Source:https://1.bp.blogspot.com/-9OXnF5t5Uu4/TtyktdpbJZI/AAAAAAAAALQ/KA-PlQYu9q8Q/s1600/picture6-7_tarlabasi-before-and-after.jpg. Accessed Oct 11, 2016.

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