Life Between Construction Sites and Reconfiguring Public Space: The Current Case of Istanbul

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LIFE BETWEEN CONSTRUCTION SITES AND RECONFIGURING PUBLIC SPACE: THE CURRENT CASE OF ISTANBUL

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Abstract

The recent urban transformation and redevelopment of Istanbul has been associated with gentrification resulting from the neoliberal policies of the current government. This inevitably has changed and shaped daily life, streets, neighbourhoods and created a city that seems to be constantly under reconstruction. With almost half of the building stock in Istanbul listed to be demolished, life is experienced in and around construction sites. Public spaces, streets and neighbourhoods are being reconfigured, transformed, emptied, and even demolished.

The fundamental question of this research is this impact of the mass redevelopment of Istanbul on the use and experience of public space. What drives the government's urban redevelopment agenda, how life between buildings has become life between construction sites, and what it means to live one's everyday life surrounded by construction projects form the secondary questions. The research investigates three areas in Istanbul (Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy) through a micro-ethnographic study which includes economic, visual, sensory, and observational methods, together with a review of redevelopment policies and laws implemented by the government. The findings suggest that the construction sites are in every corner of the city and creating noise, dirt, and dust, as well as changing visionscapes, soundscapes and smellscapes. This systematic 'cleansing' is not only blocking traffic and closing streets to accommodate constructions but it also breaks nodes, edges, and linkages, damages them temporarily or sometimes demolishes them completely in a spatial and relational sense. The chain of continuity in certain neighbourhoods is being reconfigured and the collective memory of places are being erased physically, sensorially, and emotionally. The research further argues that a secular versus postsecular dichotomy has emerged and the government's postsecular Islamist ideology is erasing secular memory, while giving 'rights to the city' to certain groups of people.

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List of Abbreviations

AKM	Ataturk Cultural Centre (*Ataturk Kultur Merkezi*)
AKP	The Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkinma Partisi*)
CCTV	Close-Circuit Television
CHP	The Republican People's Party (*Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi*)
CKM	Caddebostan Cultural Centre (*Caddebostan Kultur Merkezi*)
DIY	Do-It-Yourself
EU	The European Union
FBA	Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray
FEBAYDER	The Association for the Rights of Owners & Renters in Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray (*Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray Mulk Sahiplerinin ve Kiracilarin Haklarini Koruma Dernegi*)
IMM	Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (*Istanbul Buyuksehir Belediyesi*)
KEDV	The Foundation for the Support of Women's Work (*Kadin Emegini Degerlendirme Vakfi*)
LGBTQ	Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual-Transgender-Queer or Questioning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
TMMOB	The Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (*Turk Muhendis ve Mimar Odalari Birligi*)
TOKI	The Mass Housing Association (*Toplu Konut Idaresi Baskanligi*)
UK	The United Kingdom
UNESCO	The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
US	The United States

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Author’s Declaration

I, Elvan Can, declare that all the material contained in this thesis is my own work.

Map of Istanbul

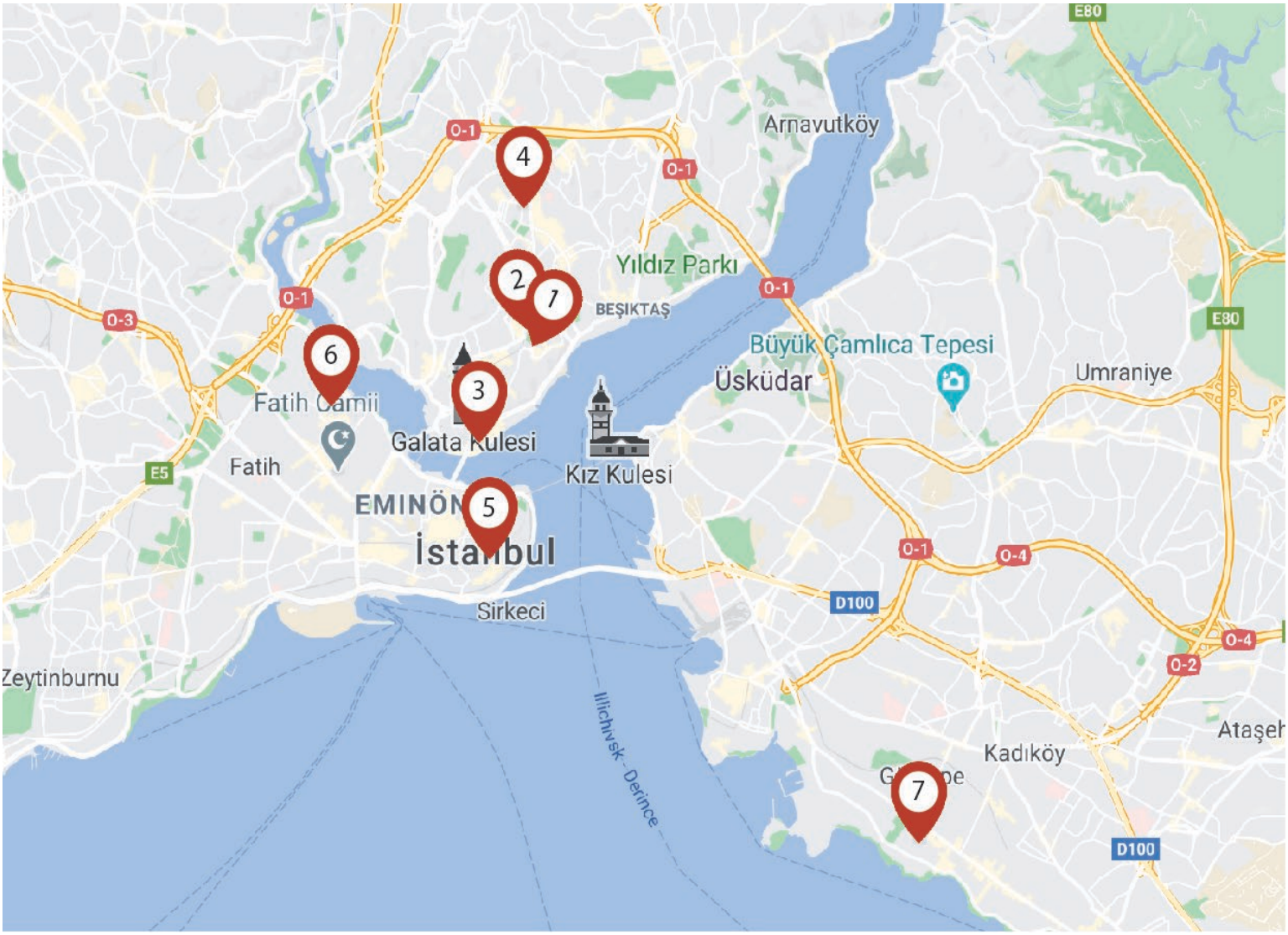

Figure A. *Map of Istanbul sourced from Google Maps, (2020a)*

1. Taksim Square
2. Gezi Park
3. Karakoy
4. Bomonti
5. Hagia Sophia
6. Balat
7. Caddebostan

Introduction

Motivation of the Thesis

I was born and raised in Istanbul and left my hometown in 2012. Every time I went back to Istanbul the city was more and more alien. At first, I thought this was to be expected, once we leave a place behind the place freezes in that time and perhaps, we are simply missing out on the small changes that occur daily. However, the changes that I started to witness in Istanbul gradually appeared to have had more and more impact on daily life and the use of public spaces.

Before the Gezi Park movement in the summer of 2013, many landmarks in Istanbul had already been demolished and there had been numerous interventions in public spaces, and therefore the ways public spaces were used. The initial changes that affected daily life mostly occurred in Beyoglu, a nightlife and creative hub in Istanbul now commonly examined in terms of gentrification (Bezmez, 2008; Dincer, 2011; Enlil, 2011; Soysal, 2010; Yetiskul and Demirel, 2018). By 2011, bars and cafés in the area were told to remove their tables and chairs from the sidewalks and alleyways, a first step in 'interiorising' the public café and bar culture which had made Beyoglu popular in the first place. There were other projects in Beyoglu at this time that consisted of reconfiguring local landmarks. AKM (Ataturk Cultural Centre) was closed in 2008 for restoration and, after a decade of standing idle, was demolished in 2018. In 2013, Emek Cinema in Beyoglu, a historic movie theatre dating back to the 1880s, was also demolished. Meanwhile, in 2013, the well-publicised Gezi Park movement started with the aim of protecting the park from 'the planned construction of a neo-Ottoman style shopping mall' (Karaman, 2013 cited in Gokarisal and Secor, 2015, p26). Countless numbers of landmarks, symbolic places, historical cafés, bakeries and bars were also closing down, moving away or being demolished in Beyoglu and other areas of Istanbul. At the time of the Gezi Park movement, just like many other Istanbulites, I saw Beyoglu being 'liquidated'.

The changes soon spread to many other neighbourhoods in Istanbul and increasingly gained speed after 2012. In October 2012, a 'demolition ceremony' took place in Istanbul to celebrate the start of 'earthquake-focused urban transformation' in Turkey (Angell, 2014, p674). This was the materialisation of the *Law on Transformation of Areas at Risk of Natural Disaster* that was passed in parliament in May 2012 with the slogan 'making slums history'. The demolition of 6.5 million buildings (equivalent to 40% of the building stock) in the entire country was soon

underway, which for Istanbul meant the demolition of 1 million buildings (Gunay, 2015, p103). Expanding on Gunay's account (2015), Ceker and Belge explain that almost half of the building stock in Istanbul needed to be renewed because it had reached its 'end-of-life' in terms of disaster risk. This equalled approximately 916.491 dwellings [translated by author] (2015, p83). 2012 was therefore the beginning of a new chapter for Istanbul. On return visits, I started to pay attention to the ways the city was changing due to urban transformation and redevelopment projects, top-down interventions, the state's role in all of this, the resulting gentrification and, most importantly, the impact of all these changes on the use and experience of public spaces.

Much research has been conducted on gentrification in Istanbul, mostly underlining the negative impact of gentrification, the displacement of locals, and the overall housing issue, especially illegal housing (*gecekondu*). I, on the other hand, decided not to focus on housing or displacement linked to gentrification. In this thesis, I instead focus on micro publics, the impact of change on daily life, how transformation is felt through the sensory, the material effects of so much noise, dust and dirt, and finally how constant redevelopment affects public spaces and how public spaces are used during the construction process (Lynch, 1960, 1981, 1984; May, 2013).

Most literature on public space over recent decades, such as by Massey (2005), Franck and Stevens (2007), Hubbard (2001) and others recognises public space as 'relational' and continuous, rather than simply geographically-fixed sites. This work does not always look at how public spaces change through direct intervention, or the sensory, however. I chose to focus on public spaces and public life because I realised that with every project and every intervention, not only were spaces being demolished and disappearing, but also the symbols and the symbolic meaning they inhabited were being erased or hollowed out. New meanings and uses were instead *given* to them and the right to the city was not being extensively discussed. Perceiving public space as a *given* was a well-established concept in Turkey, but this appeared to be changing. Public space and its use in Turkey, has been shaped by the society's relationship and understanding of the inside and the outside, the sacred and the profane, ever since the republic was founded. As Gole highlights 'the Turkish experience allows for an in-depth analysis of the conflict between secularists and Islamists' (1997, p47). The struggle between secularists and Islamists, public and private, continues to inform the claiming and reclaiming of public spaces in Turkey. Secularism has manifested itself since the beginning of the Republic through events such as 'taking religion out of the public sphere' (Gole, 1997, p49)

in order to neutralise and 'purify' public space from religious connotations and activities. This has also led to religion being seen as a completely private matter (Komecoglu, 2016, p43).

Historically, the ways public space can be used and by whom has been a problematic subject in Turkey. Traditionally, public space was controlled by the state and therefore reflected its ideology (Gole, 1997). Researching the recent transformation of Istanbul, this research also takes into consideration the impact of the recent shift of state ideology from secularism to postsecularism. As argued by Komecoglu (2016, p41-42) and Rosati (2016, p62), Turkey has transitioned from a long tradition of secularism to a postsecular system with the rising conservative Islamist movement. Influenced by Watson (2006, 2015), I argue that public spaces are also made by the various publics including both secular and religious publics that constitute them on a daily basis, and that they are therefore constantly being reconfigured. The concept of public space therefore can be considered as both something always being made, and the right of inhabitants to shape, reshape, claim and reclaim them (Butler, 2015; Harvey, 2013).

With these theories and observations in mind, I designed this research to catch a glimpse of the transformation of my city. Drawing upon Gehl's 'life between buildings' (2011), this thesis focuses on how the materiality of the built environment shapes the use, experience and perception of public space and how this impacts the relationships that are enabled. The aim was to investigate the relationship between urban redevelopment and the mass reconfiguration of public spaces in Istanbul, and to examine how the public are understood in urban redevelopment policies. My interest was to understand how urban laws and the outcome of such extensive redevelopment was affecting three contrasting areas in Istanbul; Balat, an area which was more traditionally Islamic but has become more 'hipster', fits the cultural gentrification and neo-bohemia model; Caddebostan, which fits super gentrification, and Karakoy which fits the model of Western regeneration through cultural uses and commercial gentrification. Istanbul is commonly identified with the sea and urban waterfronts, so I chose three areas which were located by urban waterfronts. This way I could also examine the different ways of using waterfronts in different areas, how gentrification was shaping or erasing public spaces and how the public was reconfiguring public spaces on a daily basis in the face of extensive constructions.

While I had initially intended to conduct interviews with users and officials, a state of emergency was announced in the summer of 2016[1], just as I was starting my research. I decided to instead conduct a micro-ethnography and include the impact of redevelopment both on the sensory and the built environment. Doing so, I sought to understand whether vision, sounds, and smells in each area were changing. The sensory has a significant part to play in our urban collective memory; we identify certain areas with certain visions, sounds and smells and if they change, our memory about certain spaces also shifts. As I was writing this thesis, many symbolic landmarks and public spaces were being demolished, their uses were changing, and new landmarks were being created. It was, however, the actual experience of change, how people adapted to it, the laws that continued to be implemented, and the daily encounter of transformation, rather than the eventual outcome, which guided my methodology.

Outline of the Thesis

Chapter 1 presents the literature review and the historical context of urban redevelopment from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic. It provides a historical account, explains public space and private space in Ottoman-Istanbul, and in doing so explores the embedded cultural and religious codes that shape the use and understanding of the relationship between the two. Furthermore, a timeline of urban changes in Istanbul in three eras is defined and the current regime in Turkey and its approach towards urban redevelopment is reviewed in three waves. The chapter also explores how urban redevelopment is shaped by neoliberalism, globalisation and postsecularism. Gezi Park movement is introduced in relation to 'the right to the city' and the government's probable wishes are discussed in relation to key terms and increasing number of urban redevelopment projects.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on public space in more detail. It explains what public space means and how it is understood for this research. The chapter also presents two local concepts which are used to understand public space and its use in Turkish society: *meydan* and *mahalle*.

[1] The government of Turkey declared a state of emergency after the attempted coup on the July 15, 2016. The state of emergency lasted approximately two years.

The chapter then briefly introduces three case study areas; Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy and explains the ways in which public spaces are used in each area.

Chapter 3 develops the conceptual framework by presenting two further key concepts for this research: 'the sensory city' and 'life between buildings'. The chapter explores how redevelopment transforms and shapes the city, public spaces, and neighbourhoods. The sensory city is a helpful concept for understanding the city through our senses. Having been influenced by Gehl's (2011) account of life between buildings, the thesis uses the concept to grasp daily life in Istanbul and how it is slowly becoming life in and between construction sites. Chapter 3 also explains how redevelopment and gentrification impact essential aspects of urban life such as a sense of belonging, community, and collectivity and how these are linked to mental maps and collective memory.

Chapter 4 describes the methods and methodology of the thesis, the aims and objectives. The research questions are explained in relation to the themes introduced in the previous three chapters, and the justification for the questions guiding the research are explained. The research methods are also explained in terms of how they address the aims, objectives and questions. Moreover, sample/access, data analysis, limitations, ethics and positionality, and contribution to knowledge are covered in this chapter.

Chapter 5 presents the legal framework of the research through an analysis of six laws that enabled the urban changes, urban redevelopment and housing development taking place in Turkey. The chapter explains the significance of the legal framework for the demolition and reconstruction of Istanbul with regards to the national housing authority called TOKI (The Mass Housing Association). Its transformation and its current role are also discussed. The chapter also examines the long-lasting illegal housing issue (*gecekondu*) in Turkey and the background to making laws to address urban issues. The chapter then examines six urban laws introduced between 2004 and 2012 and how these laws frame public space. The outcome of the laws is explained to show how they enabled the urban redevelopment and constructions now happening across Istanbul.

Chapter 6 presents the descriptive analysis of the three case study areas: Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy. The chapter explores the literature on these three areas including their historical, cultural, economic, political, ethnic, religious backgrounds and demographic context. The chapter provides background to each area with the aim of creating a foundation for the findings of the fieldwork. Secondary research is introduced to explain the structure of each area,

including maps, demographics and property prices. To prepare the reader for the findings, the current state of each area is described in relation to urban laws and various urban redevelopment projects. Chapter 6 acts as a preliminary analysis before introducing the findings of the case study areas and analysing them in more depth in Chapter 7.

Chapter 7 introduces the key findings of the research, explains the fieldwork and the data for each area including visual, sensory and observational analysis. Three key themes are used to structure the findings for each area: public spaces, sensescapes and elements, and lifestyle. The chapter presents the visual material from the fieldwork, explains the lifestyle in each area, and describes the material and sensory changes taking place. The chapter not only observes and notes urban redevelopment and its impact, but it also focuses on the construction in each area and explores how it affects areas differently. The chapter also explains the ways in which urban laws have been implemented in each area.

Chapter 8 presents the discussion of the thesis and answers the research questions by bringing together the findings in relation to the main theoretical themes of the research. The aims and the objectives are reiterated, and the methods are also reviewed. The chapter ties the entire thesis together and concludes by linking the chapters and presenting the contribution to knowledge.

The main argument that is presented here is that as well as exploring the drivers of urban transformation (laws, globalisation, neoliberalism and postsecularism), and the outcome (gentrification, changes in urban memory and displacement) it is important to also look at how an area transforms while undergoing urban redevelopment. The significance of dust, dirt, and changing elements and senses, for instance, are all significant in understanding the ways public spaces in Istanbul are experienced and the reconfiguration of urban collective memory. Moreover, public and private have always overlapped in Turkish society but I argue here that in some areas there has been a hardening of what constitutes the public or private. This can in part be explained by the coming together of the concepts guiding this research – postsecularism, globalisation, and gentrification. I argue that there is evidence of both culture-led and economic gentrification occurring in Istanbul, but it is crucial that these models are understood in context. In Istanbul, gentrification, post-secularism, and mass redevelopment have converged and this is leading not only to the erasure of streets, buildings and public spaces, but the reconfiguration of what and who ‘the public’ means.

Chapter 1: The Historical Context of Urban Redevelopment in Istanbul

This first chapter of the literature review will review and analyse the historical context of urban redevelopment in Turkey and the ways that Istanbul has been shaped by wider historical, political, and cultural forces. In particular, the urban history of Istanbul, including the shift from the collapse of the Ottoman Empire to the foundation of the Republic of Turkey and subsequent urban changes, will be examined. The chapter then moves on to explore the most recent wave of development and how it is shaped by three concepts central to this thesis: neoliberalism, globalisation, and postsecularism. As well as being central to the mass construction occurring in Istanbul, these are crucial terms for understanding how public space is being reconfigured in the city.

The chapter develops a timeline of urban change in Istanbul from the mid-1800s onwards (Bilsel, 2007; Cerasi, 2004; Tankut, 1975) and pinpoints three important eras in terms of urban redevelopment: the 1950s, the 1980s, the 2000s, and the new regime still in power at the time of writing. These periods have been chosen to explore the various top-down, government-led initiatives that have most profoundly shaped Istanbul's urban form over the past century. More systematic large-scale interventions in the city, including the period of the 1950s under Menderes' Democrat Party and the mass migration from rural Turkey to urban Istanbul, are also explored (Akpinar, 2014; Dincer, 2011; Mutman, 2013; Soytemel, 2015; Turkun, 2015). The 1980s, after the military coup, the introduction of new neoliberal policies, and the foundation of TOKI are also examined (Akkan et al., 2017; Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2014; Gundogdu and Gough, 2009; Isin, 2010). Finally, the 1999 earthquake is highlighted and the ways it was used to motivate a set of debates about the vital importance and urgent necessity of safe building stock in the country (Gunay, 2015; Karaman, 2013; Kocabas, 2006; Yalcintan et al., 2014). Correspondingly, the 2000s witnessed the emergence of the current AKP (The Justice and Development Party) government in Turkey and the introduction of new and updated laws that have gradually broadened urban redevelopment projects (Can, 2013; Erdi, 2018; Ergun, 2004; Mutman and Turgut, 2018; Oz and Eder, 2018). This period has been chosen to demonstrate the seeds of mass urban renewal in Istanbul, including the current pattern of mass demolition and displacement. The importance of public landmarks, and traditional working-class neighbourhoods are discussed, and how these were constructed by the government organisation, TOKI, is also explained. The significance of Gezi Park movement is also explored

in terms of uses and understandings of public space in Turkey alongside the increasing number of urban redevelopment projects. Secularism versus Islamification is then discussed in relation to the right to the city and the chapter concludes with a discussion of the wishes of the government for Istanbul. The chapter sets the ground for considering the increasing number of urban redevelopment projects happening in Istanbul and the impact they have on the use of public space, which is the primary theme of the second chapter.

1.1 Public and Private Space for the Ottomans

The recent redevelopment of Istanbul is by no means unique and this first part of the discussion maps out some of the other major periods of change in the city. Istanbul was under Ottoman rule for almost 500 years and the uses and understandings of public space transformed over that time. As mentioned earlier, this chapter focuses on the period starting from the 19th century when Ottoman rule began to wane. This period witnessed major political and social shifts that shaped the urban fabric both relationally and materially. This period covers the *Tanzimat* edict, attempts at Westernisation, and the eventual collapse of the Empire. In particular, this period saw important urban changes that aimed to introduce urban planning and European style public spaces to the city (Gul and Lamb, 2004).

Ottoman society was divided according to religion and ethnicity and as Stefanos Yerasimos points out there was a 'lack of public open space in the Ottoman city' (cited in Akpinar, 2014, p66). The use of space and how it was understood was fairly specific in Ottoman Istanbul mainly due to embedded religious codes. The Ottoman society was predominantly Muslim and although the Empire was ethnically and religiously diverse, Islam was the dominant religion with influence over everyday life. As Hakim argues, Islam defined the design and uses of space which included 'cultural or religious codes' which had 'strong land use principles' and saw the minimization of 'wasted space' (1986 cited in Stanley et al., 2012, p20). Come the late 19th century, however, there was a new understanding and use of space existing alongside the more traditional Islamic one. Boyar and Fleet, for example, argue that the Ottomans liked their gardens and had many of them in and around the city (2010). In this sense, the Ottomans did have 'public spaces' but these were mostly privately owned either by the Ottoman Royal family or other wealthy groups with 'limited public access' (Stanley et al., 2012, p11). The concept of an open area, or public space in a geographical sense, did exist but sharing an open area with

every member of society, as in the Western notion of a 'public space' for the public, was not very common.

Instead, Ottoman Istanbul consisted of 'back alleys, winding streets, cul-de-sacs, and private inner courtyards' (Akpinar, 2014, p66). These spaces, as well as courtyards, alleyways, and streets, were important social spaces in Istanbul. They were and still are transition areas which can be used for both public and private purposes and therefore their use and purpose constantly changes (Bianca, 2000 cited in Stanley et al., 2012, p16). The use of streets as an extension of private spaces continues to take on many forms from hanging laundry to having tea with neighbours by doorways and entrances. These are common everyday life practices that can still be found in certain areas of Istanbul. This is a traditional way of using public spaces and is part of Istanbul's urban character. In contrast to entrances and back roads, main streets and avenues have more of a public and neutral role, whereas narrow alleyways and households have strong 'private characteristics from their architectural form to the ways in which they are used (Abu-Lughod, 1987; Bianca, 2000 cited in Stanley et al., 2012, p17). For this reason, the boundaries between public and private are somewhat unclear and in Istanbul public space can be used to conduct private activities.

Up until the early 19th century, Istanbul remained 'unaffected by contemporary Western developments in urban design and architecture [and] maintained its Turkish-Islamic character' (Celik, 1993, p3). The late 19th and early 20th century, however, saw the Westernisation of Istanbul and the construction of defined public spaces, parks and *meydans*[2] with European characteristics, such as Gezi Park and Taksim Meydan (Square) (Baykan and Hatuka, 2010; Enlil, 2011; Gul and Lamb, 2004; Yegenoglu, 1998). This period also witnessed a change of the capital city from Istanbul to Ankara due to the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the foundation of the Republic of Turkey as a new nation-state with the introduction of Kemalist ideology (Cinar, 2001, 2005, 2007; Kezer, 2010, 2016; Tekeli, 2010; Yetiskul and Demirel, 2018). Kemalist ideology, also known as Kemalism, was the dominant framework for the new Republic from the 1920s onwards.

[2] *Meydan* is a local term for public space that translates as 'a square'.

> It includes political thought and practices of Mustafa Kemal and his party, the RRP (Republican People's Party). Kemalism's tenets are crystalized in the "six arrows of the RRP", which are nationalism, populism, laicism, republicanism, reformism, and etatism (Idrisoglu, 2016, p5).

The introduction of modern public spaces instigated a complex relationship with the outside for Ottoman society. It was a society that was used to having more privately-owned open spaces and inner courtyards (Boyar and Fleet, 2010, p209). Even before the introduction of sites designed to serve as public spaces, the public-private distinction was blurry. On the one hand, 'the outside' and 'the public', could be used as an extension of private space such as entrances and alleyways. On the other hand, 'the private' or 'the household' was considered holy and sacred mainly because of the 'constitutive role' of Islam in Ottoman society (Cinar and Bender, 2007, p157). This sacred connotation that was attributed to private space existed alongside gender roles. According to Tanulku, the Ottomans had 'the same tradition of the gendered domestic space, which was divided into *harem* (female/private) and *selamlik* (male/public) settings, based on the Islamic interpretation of gender differences' (2013, p950). The Islamic understanding of gender roles and public vs. private impacted traditional Ottoman houses which were hidden from the outside by large walls with inner courtyards which underlined the importance of privacy and seclusion. This distinction began to change, however, towards the end of the 19th century and decline of the Empire.

1.2 The Shift from the Empire to the Republic

Prior to the collapse of the Empire and the foundation of the Republic, the Ottoman Empire introduced changes under the notion of 'Westernisation' and did so with 'the declaration of an Imperial edict known as *Tanzimat Fermanı'* in 1839 (Gul and Lamb, 2004, p421). The edict was announced because of the declining power of the Empire, both domestically and internationally, and it was regarded as a movement to shift the Empire to a more Western and European civilisation (Yegenoglu, 1998). The reforms consisted of:

> [...] the abolition of the patrimonial taxation system and the creation of a monetary system of levying taxes, the secularization and formalization of education and justice, the differentiation of the administrative structure along functional lines, the introduction of a new provincial administration, and finally the establishment of the Ottoman parliament and constitution (Gul and Lamb, 2004, p421-22).

The Ottoman society had its own practices and models of society and adapting a Western model was a complex procedure. The Empire began the urban transformation process in the capital: Istanbul. The city started to expand towards the north into new business and residential areas with a broad European style referred to as Galata, Pera and Besiktas (Enlil, 2011, p7-8). Even the Ottoman palace moved to a new neighbourhood in Istanbul, leaving the former palace in the old city:

> The most striking aspect of this transformation was the explosion of the city outward from its historical center. A constellation of mansions (*yalıs, kasırs, and köşks* of the imperial household and the ruling elite) along the shores of the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus had long before initiated the process. Toward the mid – nineteenth century, the palace itself joined them. After almost four centuries of rule from within the city intra muros, the pinnacle of power was moving out of the city to the European shore of the Bosphorus, establishing itself in the palaces of Beşiktaş, Dolmabahçe, Çırağan, and Yıldız (Eldem, Goffman and Masters, 1999, p202).

This transformation, which started in the late 19th century, led to the construction of new buildings and modern streets designed by mainly Italian and French architects (Eldem, Goffman and Masters, 1999; Rosenthal, 1980).

The collapse of the Ottoman Empire in 1922 and the foundation of the Republic of Turkey in 1923 sped up the modernisation project. It resulted in a series of state led political, cultural, and social reforms established by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk – also known as 'the founder of the republic' – who entrenched his own Kemalist ideology, alongside a group of founding elites shaping the country's future and political faith (Ertuna-Howison and Howison, 2012, p3; Yegenoglu, 1998). As Raudvere explains: 'In the Kemalist ideology, modernity was identified with what was Western and European' (1998, p130). Istanbul, once the capital, lost its position as a capital of the young republic to Ankara. Modernisation was built on the complete erasure of the Ottomans and their 'backward' choices which were believed to have weakened the Empire and led to its inevitable collapse (Lovering and Turkmen, 2011). Thus, the Republic was founded on rejecting the Empire and its former capital, Istanbul, with Ankara seen as everything the Empire was not; distant from the previous regime and completely new (Cinar, 2001, p370). As Kandiyoti underlines, the root of this shift was from an empire to a nation-state and consequently, the reforms were fundamentally centred around a new and modern 'Turkish' identity:

> Mustafa Kemal Ataturk not only dismantled the central institutions of Ottoman Islam by abolishing the caliphate and secularising every sphere of life, but took measures to heighten Turkey's 'Turkish' national consciousness at the expense of a wider Islamic identification: the compulsory romanisation of the alphabet, the new dress code and an elaborate rereading of Turkish history stressing its pre-Islamic heritage were elements of the cultural mobilisation in the service of the new state (Kandiyoti, 1991, p4).

Many other reforms were also made with regards to law and education from the 1920s onwards (Raudvere, 1998, p128). Since all of these reforms were related to practices of daily life, they deeply affected the built environment and public spaces. Sites that represented Ottoman society were abandoned and new secular sites were built in their place. This was also achieved by transforming Ottoman landmarks and palaces into museums and by stripping them of their 'political presence and national significance' (Cinar and Bender, 2007, p165-6) as well as their Islamic significance.

> In Turkey, secularism was established as one of the most essential principles of the founding ideology. The institutionalization of secularism involved the construction of a public sphere around secularist norms, which were measured by the degree to which Islam was kept under the control of secularist discourse. Secularism established and preserved its privileged position at the center of public discourse by confining Islam to a specific and tightly monitored visibility in the public sphere (Cinar, 2008, p896-897).

The Republic of Turkey was founded on the idea of a nation-state and creating a more 'Turk' society. As Mills explains 'during the early years of the Turkish Republic and in the era between the 1940s and 1960s, firm boundaries of ethnic identity as 'Turk' and minority were created' unlike during the time of empire (2006, p373). According to Mills argues, denial of the past resulted in Istanbul a feeling of 'in-betweenness' partially due to its geographical location (2005). This is very much mirrored in the way the public and private, east and west, modern and traditional blur:

> In the urban spaces of everyday life and in cultural representations of the city, Istanbul is a boundary space. Its contours and margins are continually retraced through negotiation with the paradox - of being distinctively Turkish and yet of Europe, of being secular and modern and yet denying those who are not Muslim and Turkish full inclusion- that lies at the core of Turkish nationalism (Mills, 2005, p445).

Turkification was articulated with the new nation-state and created a shift from a cosmopolitan and multi-ethnic society to a Turkish one. As noted, if Istanbul was the symbol of the Ottoman, the Empire and multiculturalism, then Ankara would be the symbol of the Republic, modernity, the nation, and the Turk. A subsequent shift in focus and investment and lack of sustainable

urban policies with different agendas by different governments resulted in leaving certain areas in Istanbul in a state of decline for decades.

2.1 Timeline of Massive Urban Changes in Istanbul

Having explained the shift from the Empire to the Republic, the discussion now turns to a broader theme of the research, which is the transformation of Istanbul in the mid-to late 20th century. This will establish how urban change impacted on the use and construction of public space in the city. Istanbul has always been the most populated city in Turkey with a population of over 15 million people. The population grew from 983,000 in 1950 to 10,923,000 by 2000, partly due to expanding the city limits (World City Populations, 2020, np). As of 2020, Istanbul is one of the largest cities in the world with its population spread across 531 sq. miles and its population density being 28,539 per sq. mile (Demographia World Urban Areas, 2020, p23).

Significant urban changes in Istanbul can be understood in three waves: the 1950s with the then newly elected government and its urban laws and urban interventions, the 1980s with the military coup, the introduction of neoliberal policies, mass migration from rural to the urban and subsequent housing problems, and the third era from the early 2000s onwards with the current government and its increasing interest in the construction sector. The root of urban transformation in Istanbul has long been the housing problem due to the increasing population, commonly from rural to urban. However, each of the three eras (discussed below) had its own set of challenges which impacted on the use of public space.

The 1950s

Istanbul's demographic makeup transformed during the 1940s. This was the decade of industrial growth for Istanbul (Baykan et al., 2010; Enlil, 2011) with large-scale industrial businesses doubling between 1950 and 1964; 'increasing from 15,000 to 30,000 establishments' (Tekeli, 1992 cited in Enlil, 2011, p10). Once the city had become a centre of industry, it attracted low-income groups from rural areas (Unsal, 2015, p1303). This mass migration from rural areas to Istanbul rapidly increased the population of the city (Genis, 2007;

Gul and Lamb, 2004; Karaman, 2013; Yetiskul and Demirel, 2018) and created a serious housing issue, due to lack of 'social housing' (Gundogdu and Gough, 2009, p17). As Ayatac underlines, Istanbul's population had gone up to 2,141,000 by 1965 from 975,000 in 1950 (2007, p124). That said, at around the same time many groups started to leave Istanbul as a result of political events such as the 'Wealth Tax for non-Muslim groups in 1942, and foundation of the state of Israel in 1948 [which] encouraged Jewish people to leave neighbourhoods such as Balat' [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p156). The majority of middle-income non-Muslim groups also started to leave Istanbul, while low-income groups from rural areas started to move in (Islam, 2005, p131). As a result of migration from rural areas to Istanbul, many illegal squatter settlements were built in Istanbul during the 1940s. These were called *gecekondu,* which means 'unauthorised building set up in one night' (Balci, 2006, p87-88 cited in Muller et al., 2016). *Gecekondus* were built on empty land, their numbers increased drastically, and some areas of Istanbul were thought to resemble shanty towns (Keyder, 2010; Mutman, 2013). As Uzun et al. explain, since 1949, Turkey has created different approaches to end the *gecekondu* issue with two laws being implemented to do so: Law no. 5431 the Demolition of Illegally Built Structure and Law no. 775 the Gecekondu Law which was altered in 1949 and then again in 1966 (2010, p205). According to Candas et al., Law no. 775 founded in 1966 can be regarded as 'the first legal arrangement for urban regeneration' in Turkey (2016, p670) and depending on the condition of the *gecekondus* some were rehabilitated, whereas the rest were demolished (Yonder, 1998).

The 1950s was also the very first time Turkey moved from a single party system to a Democrat Party under the leadership of Adnan Menderes who was elected in 1950 (Akcali and Korkut, 2015). The prime minister and his government were at the centre of the decision-making process of reinvesting in Istanbul and started what were called 'beautification' programmes (Yonder, 1998, p60). Law no. 6785 in 1956, also known as the new Reconstruction and Resettlement law, and the foundation of the Ministry of Reconstruction and Resettlement in 1958, were important products of this era (Yonder, 1998, p60-61). The construction of large avenues and demolition of areas deemed to be in decline were important attempts by the government to transform Istanbul's traditional urban fabric (Gul and Lamb, 2004; Gunay, 2015). While constructions transformed the city spatially, a number of other socio-political events kept changing Istanbul's demographic make-up including 'a pogrom against the Greek community in 1955 due to conflicts in Cyprus and deportation of Greek passport holders in the

1960s' [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p156). According to Keyder, as a result of intense political events against ethnic groups (almost exclusively non-Muslims) 'ethnic tolerance and coexistence gave way to distrust and coercion after the 1950s' (1999, p181). Unsurprisingly, all these events succeeded in 'Turkifying' society, and led to various ethnic groups from Istanbul's old and historical neighbourhoods found by the waterfront such as Balat, Fener, Samatya, Kuzguncuk, Arnavutkoy, Cengelkoy and Beylerbeyi leaving (Mills, 2006, p371). Most of the housing and commercial premises in these neighbourhoods changed hands and declined economically due to the former minority groups having more prestigious jobs and higher incomes than the Turks (Arslanli et al., 2011; Satiroglu, 2003). As Houston indicates, 1956 to 1960 was known as 'the most intense period of city reconstruction' (2020, p71), with the total number of demolitions varying between 5,000 to 7,289 (Gul, 2009, p152 and Akpinar, 2010, p192 cited in Houston, 2020, p71).

The 1980s

The 1980s was a further important turning point for the urban history of Istanbul, especially with regards to the introduction of neoliberal policies. On 12 September 1980, Turkey witnessed a military coup which transformed the country completely. The coup was sudden and repressive, and access and use of public spaces were restricted by the military with strict curfew orders imposed. When access was granted, it had to be under military surveillance. Freedom of speech was banned, and democracy was halted by closing down the parliament; mass protests and demonstrations in public spaces were strictly forbidden, and control and oppression became part of daily life (Baykan and Hatuka, 2010, p64). The coup also resulted in the expansion of Istanbul, primarily due to the mass influx of Kurdish migration from the southeast of the country (Ertuna-Howison and Howison, 2012; Mills, 2006). Every aspect of life was on standstill until the next election in 1983. As Gole notes, the post-1983 period was 'the emergence of contemporary Islamism in Turkey' (1997, p54). Islamic actors had become more visible and 'the move of Islam from periphery of the system to its center' had begun (Gole, 1997, p54). The late 1980s and 1990s can be understood as the beginning of re-Islamification of the system and the liberation of public space from the homogeneous secular Kemalist understandings (Gole, 1997, p51; Rosati, 2016, p61).

Uncertainty and mass migration also created a demand for change, and this was the perfect moment for urban regeneration to peak and gain speed in Istanbul and led to many projects designed to reinstate Istanbul's 'past glory' (Oncu, 1997, p56-7). Consequently, new areas were constructed, and the upper-middle classes started to move towards the peripheries and to gated communities (Aksoy, 2008; Arat-Koc, 2007; Dokmeci et al., 2007; Genis, 2007; Keyder, 2005, 2010; Soysal, 2010). Additionally, ongoing neglect led to further *gecekondu* constructions and many other forms of illegal settlements (Uzun et al., 2010). In contrast to previous policies designed to get rid of illegal settlements, the government chose to legalise them as they spread to more than 40 cities (Uzun et al., 2010). With the elections of 1983, a new party was elected, and the economy changed to an open market system. The legislative and financial solidity between 1984 to 1989 allowed extensive urban interventions to be made by Istanbul's mayor Bedrettin Dalan (Gul et al., 2014, p66). Urban redevelopment by the mid-1980s, according to Yonucu, was a 'neoliberal reorganization of space', representing the neoliberal policies that came into effect during this period (2013, p224).

The foundation of TOKI also known as the Mass Housing Association was one clear example of this new neoliberal order and was implemented to address the fundamental urban issue that Istanbul now faced: housing. TOKI was created in 1984 to 'provide credits for housing and housing production especially for low-income segments of the population' (Turkun, 2011, p69). Alongside this, the 1984 Municipal Code led to the privatization of 'municipal services such as transportation, housing and natural gas' (Dossick et al., 2012, p10). 1984 was an important turning point for Istanbul's urban development, and subsequent gentrification, as it became systematised for the first time due to the Municipal Code.

> The Local Administration Reform was rather modest; still, it extended the rights and responsibilities of municipalities and increased their financial resources. Especially the law on the Greater City Municipalities (No 3030, 1984) extended municipal jurisdictions and powers. While municipalities gained the authority to "plan" with the enactment of the Planning Law (No 3194) in 1985, the Law on Greater City Municipalities (No 3030) defined the rights of Greater Cities, including planning (Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2014, p117-118).

From 1984 onwards, with these new powers in place, the government could more directly intervene in the city's fate. Between 1983 and 1990, transformation of run-down areas took place under the name of 'cleansing' and Istanbul's historical peninsula was rediscovered and made reachable by new under and overpasses (Oncu, 1997, p57). However, the late 1980s and predominantly after the 1990s saw new forms of urban poverty that surfaced with the

introduction of neoliberal globalisation (Akkan et al., 2017, p76). During this period, many areas in Istanbul's inner-city were occupied by low-income groups and continued to decline and eventually became very affordable. An example of this is Tarlabasi, a neighbourhood also known as 'the notorious ghetto' with a reputation for poverty, danger, and crime (Ertuna-Howison and Howison, 2012, p10). Over the years, the state intervened in these areas, not just to solve crime, but also to make them 'cleaner', 'nicer' and more 'presentable'. This was largely framed in terms of tourism which, as Istanbul became more popular, became one of its most important sources of income.

The 2000s

Although there were some urban changes in Istanbul up until the 2000s, none of these urban interventions were long-term projects that could offer long-term solutions to *gecekondus*, lack of housing due to migration from rural to urban areas, and the overall housing problem (Bugra, 1998; Erman, 2001; Uzun et al., 2010). According to Gokce et al., as of 1991 the estimated number of *gecekondu* settlements in Turkey was 1,585,455 and almost half of them were in Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir, the three most populated cities of Turkey (1993: 3, 35 cited in Bugra, 1998, p307). As mentioned earlier, laws that aimed to demolish *gecekondu* settlements almost always failed because of political and economic reasons; there were no plans of resettlement and politicians did not want to risk losing the votes of the millions who were increasingly living in *gecekondus.* Istanbul's urban issues thus remained the same throughout the 1990s.

It was the 1999 Marmara Earthquake which fundamentally shifted the discourse on such housing. The earthquake highlighted the importance and necessity of safe and secure housing stock and the severity of urban planning issues in Turkey. The earthquake led to the death of 17,000 people and caused considerable economic loss, including the damage and/or destruction of 300,000 buildings. As has been argued, 'much of this damage was a direct consequence of the failure of the planning system to steer urban development away from high-risk areas […]' (JICA & GIMM, 2002 in Kocabas, 2006, p121). Since this was a major disaster and the losses were directly attributable to the quality of housing, the government was held responsible, especially in terms of their rules and regulations in the construction sector. Mandatory earthquake insurance was introduced by the government to cover every building. This incident

awoke ongoing concerns about construction and urban planning and some radical changes were called for. This subsequently became the perfect moment for the government to introduce and officially support urban redevelopment. Nonetheless, to make urban redevelopment state-led, more organised, and controlled, legislation was required.

Two years after the disaster a new party called AKP was established on 14 August 2001. In the 3rd November 2002 elections, the new party won 34.3 per cent of the vote and approximately two-thirds of all seats in the assembly (Ozbudun, 2006, p543). With promises including urban reforms and safe housing, urban redevelopment became fully and legitimately state-led. This legitimation was important so that the public could easily accept 'much-needed' demolition and transformation. The current government in Turkey, that came into power in 2002, has promoted construction and urban redevelopment by establishing both formal and informal links with contractors and boosting TOKI. Although TOKI's main focus has been mass housing, after the AKP came to power their authority expanded to include urban redevelopment in many neighbourhoods (Ozdemir, 2011, p1106). TOKI's purpose consists of building affordable, working-class flats in and around 50 neighbourhoods by demolishing the entire area and occasionally constructing shopping malls and car parks in the name of 'aesthetics' (Dossick et al., 2012, p15). In order to systemise and organise urban transformation projects under one roof, TOKI introduced an Urban Regeneration Department with the purpose of creating links between municipalities (Ozdemir, 2011, p1105). In the early 2000s, the government planned urban redevelopment, demolished chosen areas, and offered TOKI as a solution.

2.2 The Waves of Urban Redevelopment

Urban redevelopment has now become a common phenomenon and has spread to the majority of Turkey and Istanbul's neighbourhoods, mostly resulting in gentrification and displacement. To what extent these redevelopments are directly and indirectly affecting or shaping public and public spaces is the key aim of this research and to what extent urban redevelopment has become an urban regeneration policy within the AKP government is central to addressing this. This process can be explained in three waves:

The first wave that covers the period between 2002-2005 only targeted old and historical neighbourhoods in the name of the 'restoration' of run-down buildings. To be able to do that, poor areas were essentially cleared and then prepared for the upper-middle class to invest and/or move in. The most deprived areas of Istanbul were mostly located in and around the historic peninsula. The AKP government firstly focused on these neighbourhoods to create 'safer' and 'sustainable housing' and build hotels to attract more tourists. To legitimise the projects and the overall process, laws on mass housing were amended and new laws were introduced regarding the roles of municipalities, conservation, and renovation. These were respectively Law no. 5162 (the Amendment of the Mass Housing Law and General Staff and Management Concerning the Parts on Head of Mass Housing Association (TOKI) Law) and Law no. 5216 (Metropolitan Municipality Law) which both came into effect in 2004.

In 2005, these laws were shortly followed by Law no. 5366 (Law on the Protection of Deteriorated Historic and Cultural Heritage through Renewal and Re-use). Law no. 5366, gave municipalities the power to implement the redevelopment of historical sites (Islam, 2009). Law no. 5393 (Enactment of Municipality Law) also gave municipalities the authority to carry out urban redevelopment projects without having to get approval from the Ministry (Gunay, 2015, p99). This meant that urban redevelopment in old neighbourhoods with historical buildings was possible and legal, and any bureaucracy inhibiting urban transformation projects was removed (Islam and Sakizlioglu, 2015, p249).

The second wave was roughly from 2005 to 2012 which saw the resettlement of poorer residents to the outskirts of the city, to buildings constructed by TOKI. Law no. 5609 (the Amendment of the *Gecekondu* Law) was introduced in 2007 and made TOKI the main body to choose areas for construction and in charge of selling public lands (Lelandais, 2016, p293). Even though TOKI was founded in 1984 – the same year as the Mass Housing Law – it was not actively in use until the mid-2000s. TOKI has since become an important asset for urban redevelopment, which has become a significant governmental policy for the current government. As cited in Ozdemir, TOKI's roles are: 'to renew the poor neighbourhoods in cities, to transform some parts of the cities and city centres to accommodate them to the changing needs of the day, and to clear and rebuild houses which are deteriorating and build new houses in their place' (Bayraktar, 2007, p45 cited in Ozdemir, 2011, p1105). From 2004

to 2008, 11.543 buildings were demolished in Istanbul with the goal to ‘re-create’ the city (Yonucu, 2013, p225).

One of the most significant actions of displacement by the AKP government occurred in 2008 and grasped media attention and public reaction. Sulukule, a poor and deprived neighbourhood near central Istanbul had been host to Gypsy-Roma people for decades and was chosen as an urban redevelopment area by the government. After demolishing the neighbourhood, 300 Gypsy-Roma families were forcefully moved 40 kilometres from Istanbul’s centre. After six months of living in the new neighbourhood, 291 families moved back to Sulukule only to become homeless (Lees, 2012, p159-160). What happened in Sulukule was only the beginning of many such mega-displacements that occurred under the name of urban redevelopment.

The third wave was from 2012 onwards and resulted in the spread of urban redevelopment and constructions to many different neighbourhoods of the city. Law no. 6306 (Law on Transformation of Areas at Risk of Natural Disaster) was introduced in 2012 and is known as the Urban Transformation Law (Candas et al., 2016, p669). With the help of Law no. 6306, the process of demolishing and rebuilding old housing stocks became possible and construction under the name of urban redevelopment was accelerated. Almost every neighbourhood in Istanbul became open to urban redevelopment projects, which created a whole new chapter for urban change in Istanbul and also gentrification. Since most of these neighbourhoods were already upper-middle class, such as Caddebostan, this transformation can best be understood as super-gentrification or regentrification. This has been explained by Lees as transforming an ‘already gentrified prosperous and solidly upper-middle-class neighbourhoods into much more exclusive and expensive enclaves’ (2003, p2487).

Although some neighbourhoods underwent urban redevelopment in the name of preservation and protection of historical sites in Istanbul, the new laws explained here clearly made urban redevelopment easy, broad, and legal in such a way that projects now cover not just a few ‘run-down’ neighbourhoods but the entire city. This is why 2002 onwards is such an important period. The ways in which its neighbourhoods have been demolished and rebuilt, and how everyday public life has moved from ‘life between buildings’ to ‘life between construction sites’ is central to this research.

Having mapped out the broad changes occurring in Istanbul over recent decades, the discussion now turns to consider some of the key terms which inform the research. The following section explains neoliberalism, globalisation, and postsecularism and how they operate in relation to Istanbul's transformation. How they frame my understanding of urban redevelopment, gentrification and the AKP government is then explained.

3.0 Key Terms

Neoliberalism

Having explained some of the broad shifts that occurred over the past several decades, it is necessary to pause here and look at some of the key terms underpinning both these waves of development and this thesis more generally. As mentioned above, the introduction and normalisation of neoliberalism in Turkey occurred after the 1980s when it was embraced by the AKP government. This is most seen in terms of how laws regarding urban redevelopment have gradually become more 'flexible', and housing has been privatised (Akkan et al., 2017; Adaman et al., 2017; Denec, 2014; Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2014; Gundogdu and Gough, 2009; Akkar Ercan, 2011; Keyder, 2010; Uzun, 2010). TOKI is very much central to this and has been given more power and projects by the government as a result of changing laws. While originally part of the government, it has since been transformed into a private company (Balaban, 2012; Ozdemir, 2011; Perouse, 2015; Turkun, 2011).

Before discussing how neoliberalism is understood and operates in Turkey, this section first explores neoliberalism in more general terms. Neoliberalism is a much-discussed phenomenon that can be summarised as a form of economic liberalism supporting the idea of free market capitalism and competition. It is informed by ''classic' liberal economic and politic theory' and 'borrows and appropriates extensively from classic liberal ideas' (Hall, 2011, p708). However, over time, classic liberal principles have evolved in accordance with global and post-industrial societies (Hall, 2011). These changes, much evident in Istanbul, are summarised in Harvey's account as 'the corporatization, commodification, and privatization of hitherto public assets' (2007, p160). There are many other aspects of neoliberalism such as the decline of the welfare state, individualisation, and privatisation which are crucial but since this thesis is about urban redevelopment, it is important to explore the impact of neoliberalism on the built form

specifically. Theodore, Peck and Brenner's account of regard cities as integral to neoliberal policies. As they suggest,

> […] cities have become strategic targets and proving grounds for an increasingly broad range of neoliberal policy experiments, institutional innovations, and political projects. Under these conditions, cities have become the incubators for, and generative nodes within, the reproduction of neoliberalism as a living institutional regime (2012, p24-25).

In other words, neoliberalism is much more than just an economic policy (Brown, 2015) and instead transforms cities and daily life through such factors as the decline of public spaces and access to public spaces (Massey, 2005; Smith and Low, 2006). Butler's account of Istanbul's Gezi Park is a valuable example which examines neoliberalism's effect on the ways in which the privatization of public space functions as a tool and/or an outcome of neoliberal policies:

> So though we may wonder why it is that crowds that gather to oppose privatization are broken up and dispersed by police force, gassing and physical assault, we have to remember that the state that is off-loading public space to private enterprise, or that now makes such decisions according to market values, is involved in at least two ways of controlling and decimating public space (2015, p173-174).

This intervention into public spaces, whether it is in the form of decline, loss, or urban transformation, is one of the main focuses of this research and why Gezi Park movement was a tipping point in Turkey's neoliberal turn. The urban policies discussed in this thesis, instigated, and propagated by the current government, have caused a loss/decline of numerous public spaces, and changed much of the city irretrievably (Dolcerocca, 2015; Yetiskul et al., 2016). As Bozdogan and Akcan explain, this scale of urban transformation has changed 'the physical fabric of major Turkish cities' with what they call 'a seemingly insatiable construction boom' (2012, p205). Yetiskul and Demirel go on to describe the government's approach as being 'committed to an urban governance model' and 'a highly authoritarian form of neoliberalism', whereby they are actively enacting policies embedded in a neoliberal ideology, from the privatisation of public goods to creating specific laws regarding urban transformation (2018, p3341). The redevelopment of Istanbul is therefore bound up with neoliberalism in terms of the privatisation and outsourcing of housing provision, privatising public space, clamping down on public space when used as a site of or for resistance, and, moreover, the state awarding large development projects to private companies. With the normalisation of neoliberal policies in Turkey, land, public space, and housing becomes a commodity and something that can be made

profitable rather than a necessary feature of urban life. Bozdogan and Akcan list some further steps including facilitating investments,

> […] for Turkish and international investors and real estate development firms to undertake large-scale commercial, residential and tourism projects. These include opening new land (formerly agricultural or forest) to construction, selling public land in prime urban locations to private real estate development companies to generate revenue, relaxing codes on taller buildings and changing zoning codes, transforming traditionally residential areas into commercial zones (2012, p205).

These steps that have been implemented by the government not only transformed the built environment but relaunched and rebranded Istanbul as a global marketplace in which to invest. Crucially, neoliberal policies and urban redevelopment have been linked and systematically boosted by the AKP government. With urban redevelopment, most neighbourhoods in Istanbul have been transforming and gentrification is one of the anticipated outcomes of all these changes. Much of the gentrification witnessed in Istanbul, especially since the 2000s, has been 'controlled' and 'engineered' by the government for private investors. Although there are a few examples of accidental gentrification in certain areas such as Balat and Cihangir, which is culture-led by the creative class (artists, intellectuals, and the LGBTQ community), it more recently has occurred as a direct result of governmental policy.

It is important to note that the timeline for gentrification in Istanbul is different to the Anglo-American world. Although there are some comparable influences and similarities such as shopping malls and the privatisation of public spaces, gentrification in Istanbul is not a direct adaptation of the gentrification that Lees et al., have explained (2010). In Istanbul, it adopts the city's uneven characteristics since the transformation occurs according to different neighbourhoods' different renewal projects. New laws on urban redevelopment and government policies that make transformation easy and flexible, have led to a massive change of the city's structure. The structure not only consists of housing, but roads, waterfronts, and transportation infrastructure have been renewed and transformed almost exclusively by the government. Public-private collaboration has become less complicated as the heavy bureaucracy on urban redevelopment has been lifted. As a result of new laws, municipalities have been given new roles in the decision-making process of urban redevelopment zones. More and more areas have been declared as 'transformation' zones in Istanbul and urban redevelopment projects have not only transformed the outlook and the layout of the city but also gentrified neighbourhoods and arguably daily life.

As will be explored later in more detail, the main reason for selecting three different areas in Istanbul for this research is to be able to understand the various forms of gentrification and the ways in which it materialises in Istanbul alongside urban redevelopment. Before turning to this, it is necessary to define how globalisation has also shaped the city's recent transformation.

Globalisation

As this study argues and as seen in the case of Istanbul, cities are perceived and used as test-beds to implement neoliberal policies such as the privatization of public spaces and building ambitious luxury housing projects, shopping malls and gated communities. Deeply embedded within neoliberalism, cities are also the spaces where 'the process of globalisation' happens (Madanipour, 2006, p176). In light of this, cities are turned into marketplaces and are integral to global competition amongst other cities in an increasingly connected world. Transforming, rebranding, and representing cities to the rest of the world for investment opportunities is a common practice that underlines commodification and competition (Madanipour, 2003 cited in Carmona et al., 2010). The case of Istanbul is no different, and it became the ideal place to 'open Turkey up to world market' (Enlil, 2011, p13) after the 1980s when Turkey became increasingly a global power (Uzun, 2010; Zeybekoglu, 2015). Oncu lists some of the ways this effected the city of Istanbul:

> Most of the physical transformation associated with globalization in Istanbul has taken place since the mid-1980s: gated communities, five-star hotels, the city packaged as a consumption artifact for tourists, new office towers, expulsion of small business from the central districts, beginnings of gentrification of the old neighborhoods, and world images on billboards and shop windows (1997 cited in Keyder, 2005, p128).

As discussed earlier, while Istanbul has long been at the heart of global trade and its place along the silk route situated it at the heart of the Ottoman Empire over many centuries, when globalisation intersects with neoliberalism the result is entirely new. In recent times it has become regarded 'as the most important metropolitan centre of the country' and therefore 'the foremost candidate to obtain a location for itself in the network of global cities' (Uzun, 2010, p764). According to Erek and Koksal, Istanbul 'as a globalizing city' has been 'retexturing itself, re-structuring its spatial order and built environment' (2014, p312). Some of these

transformations are explained in this thesis including the scale of transformation projects occurring throughout the city, and the speed in which areas are gentrifying. It is important to reiterate that the urban transformation witnessed over the past decade was put on the agenda as a policy with the election of the AKP government (Karaman, 2013; Unsal and Kuyucu, 2010). The urban transformation has been supported specifically by attempts to further embed the city within globalised networks, encourage international investment, increase tourism, and expand the construction sector. As Yetiskul and Demirel explain,

> […] massive public investments in urban infrastructure, such as newly built highways, bridges and airport; commercial and tourism centres; and mass housing projects on public land with utility services provided, have attracted speculators and large-scale investors to these reconstructed or newly built areas and their surroundings (2018, p3341).

What this has resulted in, as discussed, is that the constructions in Turkey have become part of daily life, occupying, damaging, and sometimes demolishing and reshaping the built environment and public spaces. However, it is important to underline that this determined move by the AKP government has not only been changing the built environment of mega cities in Turkey, but it can also be read as reflecting the intersection of globalisation, neoliberalism, and privatisation/commercialisation of the city. These link together and manifest as gentrification in the case of Istanbul, similar to Smith's account which describes gentrification as 'uneven development' and how the process is not entirely the same everywhere, but it still transforms almost everywhere by normalising and sometimes by expanding inequalities (1996, p75). According to Atkinson and Bridge, 'Gentrification in this neo-liberal regime is ever more extreme, buffering the districts of elite gentrifiers by violently removing all traces of the poor and homeless' (2005, p12). Although their account is mainly about the US, there are some similarities with gentrification practices in Turkey. As Ertuna-Howison and Howison point out Istanbul has been following 'the same global pattern of removing low income groups from central areas' (2012, p7). This similarity can be explained as perceiving and implementing gentrification as a global urban strategy (Smith, 2002).

A final part of this puzzle is postsecularism, which while departing from much of the Western literature on globalisation, gentrification, and neoliberalism, is central to how public space, its use and development, is being transformed in Istanbul.

Postsecularism

Postsecularism is crucial to understanding how the city has transformed in recent decades. As explained, the shift to republicanism meant the erasure of formerly Islamist codes in the city. The republic, founded on modernist and secular principles, saw the boundaries between public and private become more blurry. If the Islamist model of public and private was understood as both gendered and Islamic, the changes discussed above led to a more complex sense of what was public and private in one sense, but a hardening of the boundary by creating specifically public spaces.

Drawing upon Baker and Beaumont (2011), postsecularism for this research is understood in relation to the city. As they describe 'the postsecular city is a public space which continues to be shaped by ongoing dynamics of secularization and secularism (as a political and cultural ideology) but that also has to negotiate and make space for the re-emergence of public expressions of religion and spirituality' (2011, p43). Fenster's account of Jerusalem represents a useful example of the religious-secular right to the city and questions the ways in which some significant practices such as accessibility, expression, and belonging play out when it comes to using public spaces and by whom (2011). Similar discussions of religious vs. secularist values and uses of the public sphere have been arising in Istanbul, increasingly since the government's shift towards a more postsecular society.

Postsecularism in the case of Turkey means a transition from a strictly secular system to a system of re-Islamification (Komecoglu, 2016; Rosati, 2016). As discussed earlier, after the foundation of the Republic, Turkey was declared as a secular state in the constitution by also declaring secularism as a state ideology, something hegemonic and highly integrated into public life (Navaro-Yashin, 2002, p6). In other words, secularism in Turkey meant *approaching* religion, specifically Islam, as a threat to the republic and the state (Yegenoglu, 1998; Navaro-Yashin, 2002). Drawing upon Cloke and Beaumont's account, however, it can be argued that 'secularization merely 'hushed up' religion, relegating it away from public societal debates and into private spaces' (2013, p35). In the case of Turkey, secularism manifested as building secular public spaces without any religious connotations or influence (Cinar, 2008). This practice sometimes materialised as replacing religion with the idea of the Republic, such as Taksim Republic Monument located in Taksim Meydan. This was done to inform the public that public space belongs to the state and reflects its ideology (Gole, 1997).

The shift from secularism to postsecularism in Turkey began during the 1950s where the importance of religious expression was understood in terms of freedom to manifest religion and beliefs in public spaces without discrimination and/or judgement[3] (Gul, 2009; Simsek et al., 2006). It then gradually ascended during the 1980s with Islamic political actors, which occurred alongside 'national policy intended to make Istanbul the focal point of a neo-liberal strategy' (Enlil, 2011, p14). As Enlil highlights 'the election of an Islamist mayor [Erdogan himself] in Istanbul in the mid-1990s, and the ascendency of the Islamist party (the AKP) that he later founded' clarified and anchored the long-lasting relationship between the Islamists, neoliberalism and integration of 'the Turkish economy with global markets' (Enlil, 2011, p14-15). Potuoglu-Cook explains this shift as 'Islamic revivalism' and perceives it as 'the challenge of being incorporated into a world market while also upholding a distinct Muslim identity'. She goes on to say, 'Islamist politics in Turkey have transformed from an oppositional (Kemalist secularism) to a mainstream (conservative center-Right) stance' (2006, p647). Gokarisal and Secor also describe the current government as having its 'roots in Islamist politics but has effectively combined Islamic values with neoliberal economic policies' (2015, p21). As explained in this thesis throughout, the AKP government implements neoliberal, globalist policies and postsecular practices through urban transformation which depend on implementing necessary laws, privatizing land, enabling public-private partnerships, and enhancing the construction sector. Together, these have a considerable impact on public space.

4.0 Gezi Park

To summarise the discussion so far, I have looked at some of the broad periods of change which have shaped modern Istanbul. These have been discussed historically, such as the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and emergence of the Republic, and also some of the changes that occurred as a result such as Ankara becoming the capital and the emergence of Western styles of public spaces developing in Istanbul. I have also examined how neoliberalism, globalisation, and postsecularism, as concepts, have come together to inform the development of the city. I want to now turn to the prime example of where these changes, concepts, and theories become

[3] Wearing headscarf in public buildings including schools and universities was not allowed up until 2008 creating many controversies around secularism, Republican values, Islam, freedom of expression, freedom to manifest religion/beliefs and the overall access to education.

manifest – Gezi Park. In light of the discussion around urban redevelopment and gentrification and to what extent it is all controlled by the government, it is necessary to mention the significance of Gezi Park in relation to their specific intervention into public spaces. Beyoglu is home to Taksim area and many public spaces including Taksim Meydan, and Gezi Park and the surrounding area is heavily affected by demolition occurring under the name of urban redevelopment. However, Gezi Park was probably one of the first public spaces that was subject to direct intervention by the government in the form of their proposed demolition of the site. Before exploring this, it is important to understand what has been happening in Beyoglu and Istanbul prior to that.

As discussed in the motivation for this thesis, Beyoglu has always been a popular area for the creative class and was home to various festivals, art galleries, cinemas and 24-hour nightlife. However, increasingly after the early 2010s, there were various forms of intervention in public life such as the removal and eventual prohibition of outdoor seating from bars, cafés, and restaurants in Beyoglu (Ertuna-Howison and Howison, 2012, p3). In the meantime, many historical landmarks were closed and demolished while others were transformed into shopping malls against the public's wishes. Around the same time, many nightclubs and bars were also closed and replaced with shopping malls (Adanali, 2011, p10). Introducing shopping malls as an alternative to traditional public spaces and/or as new public spaces in Istanbul has become increasingly common. According to the Hurriyet newspaper in 2012, for example, there were 313 shopping malls in Turkey and 107 of them were in Istanbul (Benmayor, 2012, cited in Dossick et al., 2012, p32). As Sorkin argues, shopping malls cannot have the same function as public spaces because the main purpose of their existence is consumption (1992). Deutsche agrees that these changes might 'signal the "end of public space."' (1996, p283). This is why the proposed demolition of Gezi Park and the resistance against that demolition was so significant and triggered a reaction from the public. Akcali and Korkut's account summarises the various proposed projects for Gezi Park and its surrounding areas:

> The modernist Atatürk Cultural Center and Opera House in Taksim Square in Istanbul, which dates back to the early Republican era, has been closed down for renovation for the last few years, for instance, and the former PM and the current president Erdogan has openly stated that he wants it completely re-built with a mosque adjacent to it. As part of the redevelopment plan for the entire Taksim area, Erdogan and Istanbul's mayor have also repeatedly informed the public about their plans to construct a replica of the 19th century Ottoman Barracks to replace Taksim Gezi Park, the only green space in the area, and then to turn this replica into a shopping mall that would also contain a parking garage, a museum and high-end housing (Akcali and Korkut, 2015, p81).

Perhaps one of the most discussed redevelopment projects in Taksim area was Gezi Park which can be read as revivalism of the Imperial past right next to the Taksim Republican Monument in Taksim Meydan. This was arguably one of the most progressive and liberal districts of the entire country. The intervention into Gezi Park and the resistance against the intervention was highly symbolic. Resistance to the proposed demolition of Gezi Park during the summer of 2013 emerged as an accumulated reaction to the increasing number of urban redevelopment projects and top-down interventions that had been transforming public spaces and daily life. The movement itself was not just about 'the park', but it was about preserving the urban collective memory and not losing yet another landmark to another government led project. As mentioned earlier, throughout history, Taksim Republican Monument in Taksim Meydan and Gezi Park had witnessed many gatherings, protests, resistance movements and had gained a progressive connotation over the years. This has always been *the* place to gather in order to claim and reclaim any rights from May 1st to Pride Parade.

The eviction and demolition of AKM and the proposed demolition of Gezi Park, although it was halted, had undoubtedly transformed Taksim materially and started to erase its symbolic meaning from the urban collective memory. However, one of the most distinct examples to this transition was the construction of a mosque behind the Republican Monument in Taksim Meydan. That *meydan* has a symbolic significance for the Republic. It was a location purposely selected by the authorities of the Republic to 'relocate the center of the city to a neutral location and inscribe the symbols of the secular ideology of the new state on a clean slate' (Cinar, 2007, p164-165). Throughout the Republic there have been many proposals to build a mosque by the square and Erdogan himself also was a vocal supporter of the project during his mayoralty (Cinar and Bender, 2007, p176-177). The project could not be materialised before 2017, however, due to criticisms from secular groups. In 2017 the construction was started and was expected to be completed in 2021. Constructing a mosque behind the Republican Monument was a symbolic move to highlight the transition that Turkey is currently undergoing, and it has restarted the heated debate of secularism versus Islamism.

What was apparent in the resistance to Gezi Park's redevelopment was the general sense of losing one's right to the city. Drawing upon Harvey's account, the right to the city is understood as a right to change and shape the city as well as experience it:

> The right to the city is, therefore, far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts' desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization (Harvey, 2013, p4).

Although the Gezi Park movement was about saving the park from demolition and standing up against another top-down intervention, it was also about reclaiming public space by exercising one's right to the city. We 'the people' share the city together by assuming that we all have equal accesses to the city and its public spaces. However, and as the example clearly demonstrated, it is not always clear who 'the people' are. Ideas of inclusivity and exclusivity actually start with who the government considers as 'the people' and who are 'the others'.

According to Butler, this is one of the main questions and terms we should analyse: 'When we say that inequality is 'effectively' reproduced when 'the people' are only partially recognizable or even 'fully' recognizable within restrictively national terms, then we are claiming that the positing of 'the people' does more than simply name who the people are' (2015, p6). Thus, it is already decided and established who 'the people' are and who can and who cannot use and shape the city. This fundamental disparity designates the society and then the city and eventually the very idea and use of public space. Harvey describes this disparity as common and deeply embedded but also highly demanding when it comes to use and inclusiveness of public and public spaces (2013, p73). 'The people' and 'public' are highly complex and complicated terms in Turkey. There are several understandings of and explanations for what can be considered as the people. What 'people' meant for the Ottomans completely shifted with the Republic. With the foundation of the Republic, 'modern' and 'secular' Turks who supported the new nation-state and its public spaces were considered to be 'the people' and 'the public'. The emergence of secularism meant secular public spaces where 'autonomous Islamic practices were disallowed' (Cinar and Bender, 2007, p159). As Yegenoglu describes, 'Islam was increasingly marginalized as the negative of the civilized national self; it represented a threat to the emerging secular, modern, enlightened Turkish nation' (1998, p135).

However, there was another shift with the AKP government. Who 'the people' were was gradually redefined alongside several political and urban transformations, and this shift can be explained as an approach towards a postsecular city and re-Islamification of public life. The Gezi movement in 2013 was exemplary of the ongoing contestation between Islam and secularism, such as the then Prime Minister Erdogan's statement: 'We are hardly keeping the

50% at home' implying that half of the country (his supporters who are mostly religious) stays at home but they are ready to take it to the streets if they were needed in order to halt the Gezi movement. A similar event occurred during the attempted military coup in 2016; millions of people scattered and took to the streets in order to halt the coup when Erdogan specifically asked them to. This was the materialisation of claiming the public space, not by the public, however, but by the government. Butler's account on assembly overlaps with the case of the right to public space in Turkey: 'The bodies that assemble together designate and form themselves as 'we the people,' target those forms of abstraction that would act as the result of neoliberal metrics and market rationalities that now act in the name of the public good' (2015, p186).

As Keyder describes, 'All the big ideological battles of recent years [in Istanbul] have focused on the control of public space and its symbolism of public morality' (1999, p25 cited in Secor, 2001, p195). Although there have been several uprisings against the government's projects and their interventions in the city, the transformation they have instigated has been mostly inevitable. The city's characteristics have changed due to urban redevelopment, and the changes have spread to the neighbourhoods, streets and public spaces. Cinar and Bender describe the background to the government's long-lasting interest in construction and to what extent this interest is ideological:

> Arguably, the prevailing understanding of modernity is undergoing yet another transformation at the turn of the century with the coming to power of the AK Party that broke off from the former Islamist Refah Party under the leadership of Istanbul's former mayor Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, marked by a search for ways to wed Islam and modernity. Each of these ideological shifts has been articulated in the use of and rearrangement of public spaces, erection of new monuments, building of new structures, relocation or sometimes even the removal of statues and monuments, or renaming of streets, avenues, and boulevards. In other words, each ideological shift in power brought a different sense of nationhood and modernity, similarity using the city and its spaces as the medium for their material manifestation (Cinar and Bender, 2007, p176).

Once the government has full control over public spaces in Istanbul, then they can be transformed and used according to the government's agendas. As Butler stresses: 'These places can be closed in the name of simply anything' (2015, p10). And it can be argued that the current government in Turkey is well aware of the 'power of place' and how certain places can hold collective memories, emotions and hopes for society and how characteristics of a city can be changed by transforming those spaces (Hayden, 1995 cited in Hebbert, 2005, p583). Thus, they have broken the chain of continuity in certain neighbourhoods and damaged urban collective

memory as there is little activity left to remember (Hebbert, 2005, p586). The public's constant struggle to claim the city is understandable as it is a way of providing meaning and preserving urban collective memory, and of course the right to determine how space is used, which is the very basic principle of their 'right to the city'. Needless to say, being in public has become a challenge for many, as the issue is not just who owns public space, but also who 'the people' are and who will grant them the 'right to the city'. 'The people' who are the supporters, practitioners and beneficiaries of the government are 'approved' by the government and have rights to public spaces without any risks or restrictions; the rest are not considered 'the people', so are not entitled to the same rights or to have equal access.

The following section in conclusion asks what the government might actually want by implementing laws to facilitate urban transformation and redevelopment and whether it is about financial gain, investment opportunities and/or materialising and finalising an ideological shift from a secular structure to a postsecular structure.

5.0 What might the government want?

This brings me to final part of the discussion, but before moving on to look more specifically at public space and how it is being reconfigured, I want to answer a simple question that in many respects answers much of what this thesis is doing – what does the current government actually want? Why are they seeking to rebuild almost 1,00,000 properties in the city and is it as simple as an end result of globalisation, neoliberalism, and postsecularism? As explained earlier, the election of the AKP materialised after the combination of an economic crisis and the 1999 Marmara earthquake. As a result, the AKP's main promises were to focus on safe housing and a secure economy with 'direct financial and administrative support from the IMF' (Unsal and Kuyucu, 2010, p54). Safe housing meant demolishing and rebuilding millions of new buildings (Eder and Oz, 2015). As Angell argues 'the uncertainty around earthquake risk has allowed government to justify its planned interventions' (2014, p676) and as Marquart echoes 'urban transformation was presented by the central government as an obligation for the creation of a safe and clean urban environment' (2014, p8). Unsal and Kuyucu similarly point out the earthquake and its impact on facilitating projects; 'to become a 'competitive' global city, and the grave earthquake threat are often presented by state actors as justifications to implement these mega-projects' (2010, p52). Karaman also highlights the AKP government's

determination to transform Istanbul, 'with the mission of increasing its earthquake resistance and promoting 'sanitary and planned' urbanization' (2013, p716). This has opened the gates for various urban transformation projects supported by the government and its law-making.

In the first instance, the developments discussed in the thesis have attempted to further embed the city within globalised networks, encourage international investment, and increase tourism while expanding the construction sector (Karaman, 2013). According to Erdi, the global motive behind these projects is 'to generate a spatial rent contributing to the development of neoliberal economic regime and to the transformation of metropolitan cities as global cities with zero security and urban problems, privileging their touristic, financial and commercial use' (2018, p100).

It might appear as though the government has focused on creating a construction boom and judging by the ongoing state of the country, specifically cities such as Istanbul, we now know the construction boom has led to the number of registered building companies doubling from 7035 to 13,733 between 2008-2011 (Celik et al., 2016). Urban transformation as a practice has created its own market and the subsequent redevelopment of Istanbul has not only become the central motive, but also one of the most profitable and efficient business sectors in the city:

> With the global capitalist force over many large-scale urban transformation projects, the city of Istanbul, as one of the infected cities of the neo-liberal economy, faces the capitalist forces heavily through new urban transformation projects such as creation of waterfronts, public spaces, shopping malls, inner city developments, and public transportation projects becoming the new symbols of the city. On the other hand, the city of Istanbul as a representing figure of the neo-liberal face of Turkish Republic, connectively hosts many critical implementations of non-participatory planning approaches (Mutman and Turgut, 2018, p165).

This is where neoliberalism, globalisation, and urban redevelopment, all under the auspices of postsecularism, come together and impact the redevelopment of Istanbul and its public spaces. Istanbul is the most populated city in Turkey and has not only been at the centre of the construction boom but also has been at the centre of the government's attention (World City Populations, 2020). The government's specific interest in Istanbul has its roots embedded in reviving Ottoman values including replacing Gezi Park with 'a neo-Ottoman style shopping mall' for example (Karaman, 2013 cited in Gokarisal and Secor, 2015, p26). As Dolcerocca describes; the AKP's neoliberal policies consist of 'inequality-inducing economic growth and 'progress', showcases a contrived and spurious embrace of Ottoman heritage, the basis of which

is consumerism, global capitalism and, neo-conservative and populist policies' which have been changing the built environment (2015, p1154).

Neoliberalism, globalisation, the 1999 Marmara earthquake, and the transition from secularism to postsecularism are different factors that have therefore shaped the character of gentrification in Istanbul. These factors are not only playing a significant part in transforming the built environment, but they are also highly useful to make sense of the ongoing urban transformation and understand the government's wishes. As this thesis argues, the overall transformation of Istanbul is not just about earthquake-risk and safe housing, as the government attests. Akcan perceives these as 'the main causes that necessitated a more forceful state-led intervention on urban development' (2015, p366) but it is also a transformation that represents a symbolic transition from a secular to a postsecular society and form of governance in the city. Akcali and Korkut explain this transition:

> […] the AKP-led urban transformation not only entails grounding neoliberalism in the material environment, but it also projects a neo-authoritarian vision about nationhood and national history through envisioning buildings that serve culture for the public. In this way, it challenges the modernist Kemalist vision of the early Republican fathers and fosters its own imagination (2015, p82-83).

This shift has been done through many direct interventions into Istanbul's urban collective memory including public spaces and various landmarks. The majority of these interventions can be read as symbolic as much they are physical, such as the transformation of Hagia Sophia into a mosque. Hagia Sophia was originally built as a church then converted into a mosque by the Ottomans and eventually converted into a museum and used as such from 1935. In 2020 it was converted back into a mosque and opened for worship. Other examples of this shift have mostly happened in Beyoglu and its surrounding areas including Taksim. As explained earlier in relation to Gezi Park, some of these interventions in Taksim completely erased historical landmarks and led to the construction of a mosque.

Although there has been a serious shift in Turkey to a more religious conservative conjuncture that has made an undeniable impact on daily life, there have also been some cases where secularists and Islamists have overlapping interest in the urban transformation of Istanbul. Potuoglu-Cook perceives this intersection in the name of neoliberalism; 'Secular and Islamist macro-investments, united in the neoliberal goal of improving Istanbul's urban face, are nevertheless fractured along the lines of image and content, economic gain and moral conduct'

(Potuoglu-Cook, 2006, p650). The case of Caddebostan in this research can be understood as a prime example of this intersection. As a highly secular area in Kadikoy Municipality, the multiple redevelopment projects have been supported and in fact reached record numbers by turning Kadikoy into a construction site with the second highest number of projects and the expected number of demolitions now standing at over 27,000 (Ozler et al., 2015; Sahin, 2017).

The findings of this thesis demonstrate that Istanbul has been undoubtedly transforming at a fast pace, however this change does not always overlap exactly with the government's wishes. Flagship developments, international investments and the spread of urban redevelopment projects do align with government's wishes as they can be regarded as practices of neoliberal policies and reflections of globalisation. Direct and subtle interventions to public spaces in the form of closing down, transforming or demolishing have all become common aspects of transforming Istanbul. Whilst these changes have been reshaping Istanbul, there have been many forms of resistance that have been working against the government's wishes.

The argument I want to present here is that despite all the changes the government have implemented, they do not always materialise as the government had wished. The findings of the fieldwork provide evidence of daily tension and resistance. The fieldwork covers three areas and in doing so offers a broader perspective in terms of different transformations, different publics, and different reactions. It is essential to therefore note that despite what might appear to be fixed wishes, the outcomes are not always clear. For example, there has been strong resistance to big scale urban transformation projects such as in the case of Balat. The proposed project was halted by the locals and the area has been experiencing a culture-led gentrification instead of a top-down intervention initiated by TOKI. Tension can also be read as another form of resistance in Istanbul, as in the case of Karakoy, where the locals are actively using streets and sidewalks to socialise amidst the construction of flagship developments. This tension often materialises in the shape of casual occupation of sidewalks in Balat and Karakoy and bench-moving in parks and waterfronts in Caddebostan and Karakoy. The scale of transformation of the built environment in Istanbul has been changing and reshaping the city and sometimes it can also drive and shape gentrification but even the form of gentrification is different depending on the area as seen in the fieldwork (for more examples see Chapter 7).

In the light of this discussion, it can be argued that the current government has got what it wanted in terms of erasing collective memory and financially benefiting from the extent of the construction work. With the increasing number of urban redevelopment projects taking place

in Istanbul, not only public spaces, but also what the public means and who the public are in Istanbul, has started to change. The more the neighbourhoods are being 'redeveloped', the more people's everyday lives are changing. Their existence in particular spaces in Istanbul are gradually taking a different form, as well as their relation to the public and public spaces and what these terms mean now, and for the future.

However, ultimately, the majority of the ongoing changes in Istanbul are unintended rather than an intended outcome of the government's wishes because public space cannot be determined. The outcomes of urban redevelopment and gentrification cannot be completely premeditated. Whilst government led gentrification has enough power to change public spaces, neighbourhoods and ultimately cities, we still need to think of gentrification as more than just a top-down intervention as all these changes depend on the people and their responses in the form of apathy, neglect, tension, or resistance. This study's main focus is to understand the overall impact of transformation on public spaces by emphasising, and as discussed in the second chapter, that public space can never be simply designed from the top-down. It is a set of relations rather than a physical space. We can refer to postsecularism, neoliberalism, globalisation, and the mass redevelopment as all part of the picture of redeveloping the city. However, public space, as will be argued, is never just a bounded geographical site but is always being made, unmade, reconfigured and produced. It is this subject to which I now turn.

Chapter 2: Public Space

As explained previously, the shift from the Empire to the Republic resulted in many urban changes in Istanbul and its use and understanding of public spaces. However, while the introduction of the Republic led to the creation of geographically-fixed public spaces modelled on European cities, more recently there has been a shift towards closing public spaces altogether. This is motivated by an intersection of political reasons and to accommodate urban redevelopment. In order to assess these twists and turns in more detail, this chapter will focus on what public spaces means for this research and will introduce important local terms such as *meydan* and *mahalle*. The significance of *mahalle* will be analysed to explain how a sense of belonging and community are essential aspects of urban life. After expanding on these terms, the case study areas for this research, respectively Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy will be briefly examined. As argued, the redevelopment of Istanbul is driven by a series of interwoven factors, but it is important to present how each neighbourhood is different, how they are home to different public spaces and how they have experienced urban redevelopment and gentrification differently.

As examined at the end of the previous chapter, an important question is what the government hopes to achieve in Istanbul. While this is an important question, what the government wants, and the outcome of their policies is not crystal clear. By conducting research on three areas, this study demonstrates that changes in daily life and the use of public space varies according to local context. This is important in highlighting how public space should not be considered in simple geographical or spatial terms, but as always the result of multiple influencing factors such as geography, economic and cultural differences, demographics, and the ways we understand and use the public realm. It is this topic which I turn to first.

2.1 Public Space

Public space has been defined in numerous ways and while commonly understood following the work of critics such as Habermas (1989) or Sennett (2002, 2010), geographers, sociologists, planners, and historians have all contributed to the ways it is conceived in academic research. In most common-sense accounts, public space is understood in quite rigid geographical terms.

Following this account, public space might be understood as a pre-determined space built for the purposes of the public who, by extension, are understood in a very general sense as 'everyone'.

A more recent account owes to the work of critics such as Massey (2005), Franck and Stevens (2007), Fuller and Low (2017), Watson (2006, 2015), Kneirbein (2014) and Jacobs (2010). Following their work, this research defines public space as relational and understands all spaces as relational regardless of their spatiality and materiality, be they waterfronts, parks or streets, alleyways, or sidewalks. In this sense, I am not understanding public spaces in terms of whether they are purpose built or geographically bounded, but rather in terms of how they are used and made by the public. This positions public space less as a noun than a verb; public space being something we do rather than something fixed in time and space.

Massey, for example, perceives space similarly to time, relational and open, something that 'is always in the process of being made' (2005, p9) and as therefore constantly transforming. It can never be 'completed' (2005, p107) because as Kneirbein and Domínguez describe **'**a person does not live, act or work *in* public space, but that we produce the space by *living, acting* and *working'* (2014, p70). Their definition of public space overlaps with the approach of this study:

> Public spaces are places where encounters, exchange and social and political manifestation are possible; places where the population celebrates its collective festivals and commemorations, in which neighbours have fun, play and also where conflicts are played out (Kneirbein and Domínguez, 2014, p76).

According to this approach, public spaces take the shape of the society they belong to and like liquid are always in a process of transforming. Jacobs supports this by underlining how public space and a culture's economy, religion, and geography makes and remakes public space (2010). In other words, as much as the public creates public space, public space also shapes the public in a continuous reciprocal cycle. Due to this constant unfolding, public space entails various meanings, experiences, and memories; Amin explains this as being 'marked by multiple temporalities' (2008, p12). Similarly, Low and Weidenhaus point out that 'space has to be understood through social practices as a relationing of objects, places and (groups of) people' (2017, p554). In this sense, public space is not a fixed bounded area, but something that is constantly in the process of being constituted by multiple factors. According to Loukaitou-Sideris and Ehrenfeucht sidewalks are one of the most actively used public spaces and 'facilitate social encounters among strangers and expose sidewalk users to a public gaze' (2009, p39).

Sorkin, for example, argues that 'public space is the lever by which urban design works on the city, by which the subtle relations of public and private are nourished' (2001, p7). Madanipour's account of alleyways is a further good example of this model as it centres the notion of subtle relations. It is also highly relevant to Istanbul: 'Alleyways become a sort of transition zone between the private sphere of the household and the public sphere of the street, where neighbourhood interactions can occur on a more intimate social scale and access is dictated by informal social norms' (2003 cited in Stanley et al., 2012, p16). This practice can be found in Balat where the neighbourhood is highly residential, but the private spaces are typically small. Here, alleyways become public spaces and there is a communal use of them for many social activities which creates a 'rubbing along', as Watson once described, which in turn, helps to build a sense of community (2006). As observed in Balat during the fieldwork for this research, due to the extensive and active use of alleyways, doorways, windows, and pavements, inhabitants typically know each other, and their acquaintanceship strengthens the sense of community and belonging.

As Kneirbein, public spaces can be both mundane and ordinary as well as the site for revolution and an 'emerging counter public' (2014, p42). This is why it is crucial for this study to acknowledge a fixed homogeneous public space cannot exist. Although public space is essentially a spatial, material, physical thing, this thesis does not just focus on the spatial experience, it focuses on the social aspect and how social relations and actors constitute various public spaces and how various public spaces can create various meanings and experiences and enable various uses.

This being said, it is necessary to remain critical towards a notion of idealised and romanticised public space that is open and equally accessible (Massey, 2005; Madanipour, 2010). Bridge and Watson encourage a more realistic approach 'to imagine public space as constituted by difference and [is] inherently unstable and fluid' (2003, p374). Public spaces are constituted when the public comes together occasionally or regularly, spontaneously or deliberately, momentarily or lengthily. That immeasurability and *not knowing* is the very essence of public space. Franck and Stevens (2007) explain this spontaneity or occasionality of public spaces as 'fluidity' and 'looseness' and it is not just the fluidity of looseness of space itself but the fluidity and looseness of its use that is *making* and *constituting* public space. According to Fuller and Low, similarly, spaces are 'relationally constituted' and 'processual' (2017, p476). There is no

fixity, but rather public space is a relational, continuous, fluid space that can be experienced in multiple ways.

For this account, social relations are therefore essential. Public space without a public is nothing and as Madanipour points out places need to be defined 'through social relationships and not the qualities of a piece of land' (1996, p23). In other words, public spaces become meaningful not through their geographical features alone but instead through uses and relations. As Amin explains:

> Public spaces marked by the unfettered circulation of bodies constitute such a field of emergence, constantly producing new rhythms from the many relational possibilities. This is what gives such spaces an edgy and innovative feel, liked by some and feared by others, but still an urban resonance that people come to live with and frequently learn to negotiate (2008, p12-13).

Drawing upon Amin's (2008) account, people use public spaces differently, depending on traditional markers of identity such as gender, race, and class. Different communities in different areas and different communities in the same area have different approaches and understandings of how to use and experience public spaces (Yucesoy, 2008). Those various uses might result in conflict, or what Weisman describes this as 'territorial dramas':

> In city streets, parks, and neighbourhoods, territorial dramas between women and men, rich and poor are enacted daily. Each group "appears" in public and claims and uses public space according to its socially prescribed roles (Weisman, 1992, p67).

As a result of these various uses and claims, public spaces can change from day to night, hour to hour, their uses shaped and reshaped throughout the day depending on the social relations and negotiations. This approach towards public spaces challenges the overall tendency to grasp public space as a 'shell or container', an account which overshadows its 'ever-changing meaning, contested uses, social conflicts, and more generally the fact that public space is an outcome of contextual and on-going dynamics between social actors, their cultures and power relations' (Kneirbein and Tornaghi, 2015, p5). Drawing upon this argument, Massey's (2005) account of relationality alongside Watson's 'rubbing along' (2006, 2015) it is necessary to reiterate that all public spaces for this thesis are understood as relational whether the places themselves are regarded as more fixed or more fluid. More importantly, drawing upon Kneirbein's (2014) approach this thesis is not trying to create a dichotomy/distinction amongst

various public spaces; it argues that by sharing and using public spaces, they are given their meanings and the process of reconfiguration is a relational continuous process that can occur differently for various publics. It acknowledges different forms of public spaces and specifically focuses on the relationality of public spaces and the ways in which they are constituted daily and continuously by social relations. To do otherwise would be do precisely as the movement is attempting to do in Istanbul – ascribe it fixed and determined meanings.

Importantly, focusing on relationality does not mean materiality and the spatiality of public spaces can be ignored. On the contrary, the materiality of public space, whether it is a secluded park, or a dark alleyway has enough power to shape its relationality because it can limit and regulate access and the use of that specific space. Additionally, the extent of the city's transformation whether it is in the form of urban redevelopment, gentrification and/or governmental control and regulation has undeniable impacts on public spaces. A central theme developed here is precisely that the ongoing redevelopment of Istanbul, its dirt, noise and forever changing markers, is as influential in how public space is lived and experienced as the shift towards a less secular culture and government prescribing new rules.

According to Oz and Eder, there is a link between the ongoing redevelopment of Istanbul and the increasing number of conflicts in the society:

> […] whether it is the Republican versus Ottoman legacy or the secularist versus Islamist divide or the rising tensions over national identity politics, polarizations and rising tensions in Turkey have naturally found their way into various urban sites as well. These conflicts […] may trigger resistance, as was the case in the 2013 Gezi Park protests mounted not only against massive urban transformations but also against excessive monopolization of power by the government (2018, p1031).

In other words, the ongoing redevelopment of Istanbul and its impact on space can be understood as a form of regulation of daily life by the government. Limits, regulations, and control of access are the increasingly common aspects of public spaces not just in Istanbul but almost everywhere else in the country. As argued by Butler (2015), Massey (2005) and Bridge and Watson (2003), public space is not equally open and accessible. According to Tonkiss public space, while marked by social relations, is 'organized through forms of control and exclusions' (2005, p72). As Madanipour argues, spaces that are open and considered public might have specific functions and/or limitations (1999, p144). Forms of exclusion and limitations can vary depending on gender, race, ethnicity, political views and even the time of the day. In some cultures, for example, women are denied access to public spaces after certain

times, or they ‘voluntarily’ prefer not to use public spaces at night (Ghannam, 2002). This exclusion is strengthened by the continuous fear of crime related to public spaces (Hillier, 2001). The city and its public spaces are areas for the reproduction of patriarchy (Ghannam, 2002; Rose, 1993), and just like the rest of the city, are controlled, used, and given access to dominant groups (Deutsche, 1996; Harvey, 2013).

A question for scholars is therefore how we might account for that sense of looseness and fluidity (Franck and Stevens 2007), while considering how different controls, meanings, discourses, norms and uses of public space overlap. By accepting the different forms of public spaces, this study is accepting the fact that depending on the specific public space, the level of looseness might also be regulated in the name of security, safety, or surveillance and that might manifest as ‘less sense of movement’ (Carmona et al., 2003, p141). Social relations that make public space do not do so in a vacuum (Kneirbein and Domínguez, 2014). Public spaces are not just spaces for the public to claim and reclaim but they are also the spaces to experience local movements for democracy such as ‘Syntagma Square in Athens, Tahrir Square in Cairo, and the Plaza de Catalunya in Barcelona’ (Harvey, 2013, p73). And at the same time, they are the spaces to exercise and measure the extent of control by state apparatuses. The clash between an idealised, accessible public space and its reality is supported by the ongoing discussion and concern over ‘the decline of public spaces’ (Massey, 2005, p152). Decline is either in the form of an actual loss and lack of public space or the transformation of public space into something else leading to ‘a deterioration of the city as a whole’ (Madanipour, 2010, p238). As Butler (2015) and Harvey (2013) point out, the public do not necessarily have a say in public spaces, these spaces can be closed in the name of anything, and this is another form of a loss of public space. The resistance against the proposed demolition of Gezi Park in Istanbul during the summer of 2013 is a good example of this concern over the loss of public spaces, even though, as noted, it was never truly accessible to all. As explained in Chapter 1, this thesis regards the Gezi Park intervention and the resistance as the tip of the iceberg of various interventions into managing and shaping the *relations* that are enabled and constrained in Istanbul. Kneirbein understands the Gezi Park movement in a similar vein: ‘urban development policies and resulting projects are seen as the initial or trigger point for public disobedience and related civic demonstrations’ and this way public space becomes ‘an important sphere in the re-politicisation of urban societies and entire countries’ (2014, p43).

It is important to see relationality therefore in terms of how the public plays a role in re-politicising or de-politicising public spaces. As a result of various publics' uses of public spaces, limits, regulations, and control are formed, exercised, and become crucial to its production. The political connotation (spaces for gatherings and protests) of well-known parks or *meydans* in well-known areas such as Taksim Meydan and Gezi Park are the very reason, they are being closed or demolished. Lesser-known streets, alleyways, and waterfronts in lesser-known areas (the areas this thesis investigates) in Istanbul can be closed or disappear altogether as well in the name of an urban redevelopment project that promises to prevent potential earthquake damage. What this tells us is the ongoing redevelopment has become part of daily life in Istanbul and have often resulted in gentrification, which has also been impacting public spaces in the form of demolition, transformation, or privatisation.

It is important to note that the privatisation of public spaces is understood and explained as a result of the de-industrialisation of cities and the increase in tourism and the service sector (Madanipour, 1999, 2010, 2014). This structural transformation creates a functional transformation for cities and the urban redevelopment of old industrial sites ends up gentrifying declined areas. Transforming old industrial areas into flats, art galleries, museums and hipster bars are typical examples of this practice. This model can be found in the Karakoy district of Istanbul, an old banking and commerce district that has been gradually transformed into a shopping, leisure, and entertainment area.

Following this line of thought, Madanipour clearly highlights that public spaces have lost their 'central roles in the social life of cities'. He argues this is to do with the 'treatment of space as a commodity' (2003, p200), echoing the earlier discussion of neoliberalism. But there is another aspect to the loss/decline of public spaces argument, other than the privatisation and commodification of actual physical spaces. As Fernando argues, in many cases public spaces cannot be used effectively because of the excessive restrictions in place, and they gradually become idle spaces in cities (2007). It can be argued that in this example, there is a link between gentrification and the concern over a decline in public spaces, but this has two aspects; the privatisation of public spaces and turning them into commodities or controlling and limiting the relations that occur to such an extent they cease to survive and eventually become neglected by the public.

The ongoing redevelopment in Istanbul can strip it of meaning which as discussed throughout this thesis, inhibits the very social relations make public spaces, and eventually a collective memory. Harvey has an argument in a similar vein where he does not specifically focus on public spaces but instead the overall city and how the right to the city is not only right to use it or even designated spaces but also the right to transform it (2013, p4).

2.2 *Meydan & Mahalle*

When it comes to understanding how people use space in Turkey, other than streets, alleyways and entrances and parks, there is a local concept called *meydan* which translates as 'a square' (Baykan and Hatuka, 2010, p51). *Meydan* is a public space, but its meaning and importance is derived from the public's relationship with this word, as well as its specific cultural connotations. *Meydan* is more than just a 'square' in the eyes of the state and thus not simply a public space in a geographical sense. Baykan and Hatuka describe how *meydan* is a secular space without religious connotations (2010, p15) and thus traditionally represents secular values. Cinar and Bender further explain to what extent secularism had power over religion in the public realm:

> […] the institutionalization of secularism involved not exclusion, but a tightly controlled inclusion of Islam in the public sphere. While official Islam was given a limited and closely monitored place in the public sphere, autonomous Islamic practices were disallowed (Cinar and Bender, 2007, p159).

Meydans, such as Taksim Meydan, purposefully symbolised the republic and secularism. As explained in Chapter 1, it has been 'the' *meydan* in Istanbul for protests, gatherings, commemorations, and resistance movements throughout the Republic's history especially when Istanbul was also affected by the general political climate in the world 'which the student, anti-war and leftist mobilizations of the 1960s and early 1970s had created, and by the political openings which governments (generally in the mold of a social-democratic compromise) allowed at that time' (Mayer, 2009, p363). In that sense *meydans* are symbolic spaces that are an important part of the urban collective memory.

However, it is important to note that with the shift towards to a more postsecular structure in Turkey, the ways in which *meydans* are used and what they symbolise has been shifting and

this shift has also been transforming the urban collective memory. Using public space with others creates a shared history, a sense of community and belonging, and an overall urban collective memory. Urban collective memory is something that is continuously created, and it is built up with shared experiences among strangers. The local concept that comes close to the sense of belonging and community alongside a sense of place in Turkey can be described as *mahalle* which translates as neighbourhood. *Mahalle* is one of the core elements of urban life in Turkey with its roots going back to the Ottoman Empire. The significance of *mahalle* does not necessarily lay in its geographical, physical realm but more about its emotional and relational meaning for the community that resides within it. According to Mills:

> While the mahalle is the urban residential space, the word also refers to a space of social memory in Turkish popular culture defined by familiarity, belonging and tolerance in a local place. The social memory relies, in part, on the complex social history of the mahalle in Istanbul and in other cities of the former Ottoman empire (in Arabic, mahalla) (Mills, 2006, p372).

Typical *mahalle* consists of social relations, networks, and locals with an attachment and sense of belonging to the neighbourhood and neighbours. This is often referred to as *mahalle* culture. *Semt* and *mahalle* are therefore important terms for this research. Although in some cases they can be used interchangeably, they mean slightly different things in an urban environment. *Mahalle* is considered a small area or 'a neighbourhood', whereas *semt* is larger and equivalent to a 'district' that consists of a number of *mahalles* [translated by author] (Donmez, 2019). It can be argued that *mahalles* and *semts* create and provide a sense of belonging as opposed to a generic anonymous space that mega cities offer. Furthermore Carmona et al., formalise the sense of place as neighbourhoods:

> [N]eighbourhoods are seen as providing identity and character, creating or enhancing a sense of place. While this may be a relatively superficial sense of identity with the area's physical character, it may also provide a deeper and more meaningful sense of identity with the place's sociocultural character (ie. through time-thickened experience of that place) (Carmona et al., 2003, p115).

Benson and Jackson similarly argue that, 'People do not merely select a place to live that matches their habitus; rather places are made through repeated everyday actions and interventions that work on both the neighbourhood and the individual' (2013, p794). Low also highlights the importance of neighbourhoods for a sense of belonging; 'The space of a person's 'own' neighbourhood can serve as an example. This space can be constituted by the street in which you live, the shops to the north of home where you do the shopping, and the river

embankment where you seldom go but that in your experience belongs to your own space' (2008, p42-43). It is important to accept that these are idealised expectations and not every neighbourhood can provide a sense of belonging or a community. Tonkiss, drawing upon Jacobs, argues that neighbourhood is sometimes just a shared space with other members, which is a common aspect of city life (Jacobs, 1964, p126 cited in Tonkiss, 2005, p21). In some cases, conflict and/or segregation can replace a sense of community. Similar examples were observed during the fieldwork in the shape of apathy in some *mahalles*. Or, as a result of segregation in *mahalles*, sometimes small homogeneous communities are shaped. This way *mahalle* life can be lived like a patchwork instead of a single community or communal space.

Drawing upon Massey, and as this research argues, a sense of place can offer locality, a 'refuge from the hubbub' and 'rootedness' (1994, p151), and *mahalle* can be read as a space of belonging and a sense of place where the traces of community can be found amidst the ongoing urban redevelopment projects, interventions, demolitions, and constructions. The extent to which individuals feel they belong or are attached to an ever-changing *mahalle* with the construction work taking place, can thus be a challenge. As an outcome of the ongoing process of urban redevelopment, *mahalles* in Istanbul are changing faster than usual and this change can impact the sense of belonging. Yucesoy argues that activities are also redefined by giving examples from daily life activities in Galata (a *mahalle* in Beyoglu, Istanbul) after gentrification:

> Though the actual activities, such as a group of women sitting on the entrance of the apartment drinking tea and gossiping, do not change, they should not seem foreign to the activity of sidewalk café visitors. Yet, the context is different, and there are reserved, prescribed zones of acceptable activities. Since the public/private relationship in the street has changed, the former may be considered an inappropriate activity. With the new activities and places defined due to the nature of the new activities, the traditions of boundaries and activities of public/private relationships, such as gathering in the entrance with neighbors, children playing in the street, watching the street for control, are abandoned (Yucesoy, 2008, p42-43).

The example of Galata has many commonalities to historic neighbourhoods that are being gentrified in Istanbul and it is important to remain critical towards an idealised and romanticised definition of *mahalle*. Once a *mahalle* goes through a transformation whether it is demolition, urban redevelopment, or gentrification, it eventually affects the community and it distorts the sense of place and belonging (Lak and Hakimian, 2019, p3). This will be discussed later on in relation to Istanbul in order to understand how urban redevelopment is contributing to the

reconstruction and reshaping of *mahalles* and changes the daily life of locals. In some cases, displacement can become secondary and the entire *mahalle* itself can change to such an extent, it might be erased from urban collective memory. This is seen as a common practice in Istanbul where constant change, a desire for spontaneity, belonging, and rootedness compete and overlap, albeit in ways not always determined by local residents.

Both *meydan* and *mahalle* are local terms to describe different forms of public spaces in Turkey but as explained they do symbolise different things. *Mahalles* are significant units for smaller communities where people live continuously, they are used as a stage to host various daily activities and they have significant importance in mental maps (Lynch, 1960). *Meydans,* on the other hand are mostly mundane places when it comes to daily life activities, but their existence can ensure urban collective memory. As mentioned earlier, however, the uses of *meydans* and the ways in which they represent secular values have been shifting.

2.3 Case Study Areas

By way of drawing out the themes discussed earlier, I want to now introduce the three areas examined in this thesis. This will allow for a brief introduction to the areas while also explaining how public space is used, experienced, and effected by the recent developments. The main motive behind the decision to look at three different areas was to understand and introduce various faces of Istanbul. As mentioned previously, this is why it is hard to understand what the government actually wants because each area, each neighbourhood is different with different public spaces and different uses of public spaces. This is also why each area has their own experiences with urban redevelopment and its impact on daily life. Gentrification is a common outcome of urban redevelopment in all three areas, but it has also taken the shape of each area and has been evolving accordingly.

2.3.1 Balat

Balat, as one of the oldest settlements in Istanbul, can also be considered as one the most traditional *mahalles* in the city not just in terms of its demographic but in terms of its

architecture, housing, and public spaces. In order to generate a picture of the area in 2004, KEDV (Foundation for the Support of Women's Work) conducted extensive research in the area (Turkun, 2015). Their survey results shed light on the use of public spaces: 'It was the extent of life in the streets for every member in the area, women liked to sit on their doorstep as long as the weather permits whereas kids preferred to play in the streets' (Akin, 2015, p28). As will be explored in Chapter 7, the findings of the fieldwork for this research demonstrated that the use of public spaces in Balat has not changed very much since then. However, just like much of Istanbul, Balat has been through various rehabilitation and redevelopment projects and the area has been gentrifying with the influx of the creative class.

All these changes have also had various impacts on the relations enabled in public in Balat. In addition to roads, sidewalks and alleyways, there is also a waterfront and a park. The majority of these public spaces in Balat were closed off for renovation during the fieldwork such as Balat waterfront. Others were simply neglected in a state of decline. As mentioned earlier, streets, doorsteps and alleyways, however, were actively used by the locals as extensions of private spaces to sit down and relax. Although Balat has been transforming and becoming a desirable spot for culture-led gentrifiers, the area previously attracted the EU's attention for renovation of historical houses and later on selected for top-down interventions by the government. The urban laws that could legally transform Balat, the various proposed projects and their different impacts on the area, are explained below.

As explained in Chapter 5, Law no. 5366, which was adopted in 2005 and is commonly known as the Urban Renewal Law, supported the plan of regenerating deprived areas to 'regain' and 'rehabilitate' them back for investment, and this law has specifically targeted Balat (Dincer, 2011; Gunay and Dokmeci, 2012). The transformation of the Fener-Balat district became legalised then gradually normalised and deemed as 'necessary' by other entities such as 'the EU, European Commission, UNESCO […] and neighbourhood NGOs' (Soysal, 2010, p304). As a result of Law no. 5366, Balat was declared a transformation area by the Fatih Municipality in 2006 and 'the Fener–Balat Coastline Renewal Project was assigned to the Calik Group-GAP Insaat in 2007', a private construction firm that was also responsible for Tarlabasi renewal project and known to have close connections with the government. This project can be viewed as the second renovation wave (Gunay and Dokmeci, 2012, p217). 'However even though the

project was assigned in 2007, the locals found out about the project at the end of 2009' [translated by author] (Sahin, 2015, p107). The aim of this project was:

> To create a safer and healthier environment that is integrated with the city, to improve infrastructure, to increase quality of life, to take precautions against earthquake risk, and to improve current patterns of use through tourism related facilities. The project covers an area of approximately 280,000 m2 including 297 buildings, 181 of which are listed civil architecture examples and 34 of which are monuments (Fatih Municipality, 2011a). As mentioned in the same report, the project proposes a mixed-use development including 53% residential, 12% commercial, 16% accommodation, 8% office and 2% cultural use. The estimated cost of the project is $200 million (FEBAYDER, 2011 cited in Gunay and Dokmeci, 2012, p217).

The main purpose of Law no. 5366 is to protect by renewing historical and cultural areas [translated by author] (Sahin, 2015). Many historical buildings in areas deemed to be in decline have been demolished under the name of renovation while their façades have remained intact (as observed in the case of Galataport project in Karakoy) or they have been extended to make them more 'comfortable' and 'habitable' for people who can afford to live in a renovated historical building. This was how the second project was planning to gentrify Balat by transforming the current buildings while only preserving the façade and adding underground car parks and luxurious roof top terraces. If this project had actually materialised the locals would have been displaced due to increasing property prices. However, locals of Fener and Balat came together and founded an association called FEBAYDER in 2009 (Akin, 2015, p38). Years of resistance, legal cases against the project, solidarity among locals and their determination to not sell their properties managed to halt and then cancel the project in 2012 [translated by author] (Sahin, 2015; Turkun, 2015). According to Soytemel's study of the Golden Horn, 'Urban interventions and gentrification have had a negative impact on belonging patterns in Halic neighbourhoods, especially in FBA [Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray]' and as a result of 'deindustrialization, gentrification and urban rehabilitation' there is a decline in working class culture (2015, p84). However, the collective resistance to 'save' the neighbourhood created a sense of solidarity amongst the locals of Balat such as 'neighbourhood-based small-group solidarity networks' that supports the groups 'who were facing income difficulties and housing problems' (Soytemel, 2015, p84-85).

Demonstrating the earlier discussion of *mahalle*, locals in Balat typically know and support each other. There is still ongoing gentrification in the neighbourhood but due to the cancellation of the project, the gentrification of Balat has remained culture-led. According to Mills, this can

be explained as a form of 'nostalgic gentrification' where a historical non-Muslim neighbourhood of Istanbul is rediscovered (2008, p387). Mills' approach is useful to explain the increasing interest of the creative class and hipsters towards historical and cosmopolitan neighbourhoods of Istanbul as these areas represent something that no longer exists. However, due to the fact that Balat was once a non-Muslim area, and now it has changed considerably, it can reproduce the very nostalgia sought. Thus, Balat is home to many narratives and multiple forms of nostalgia from the Jewish to Kurdish communities to the ongoing influx of the creative class.

2.3.2 Caddebostan

As explained in Chapter 5, the 1999 Marmara Earthquake created mass panic about the safety of the building stock, and this shaped the urban laws between 2004 and 2012. Law no. 6306 of 2012 was the law that accelerated the transformation of Caddebostan's building stock for houses constructed before 1999 as they were deemed with a high 'disaster risk'. This has resulted in the demolition and reconstruction of the majority of the building stock in the neighbourhood. The scale of reconstruction in Caddebostan can be understood as a form of super gentrification. As an already upper-middle class neighbourhood, it will possibly become unaffordable with the ongoing transformation.

Urban redevelopment projects have impacted how the public come together in Caddebostan. The waterfront of Caddebostan, for example, is a 2.2 km long park commonly known as *Sahil* (seaside in Turkish) and is now a popular recreational space. However, like many waterfronts in Istanbul, Caddebostan beach has been inaccessible since the 1960s, owing to pollution in the Sea of Marmara (Ozkan, 2008, p101). Although the waterfront was filled during the 1980s to gain space, as noted above, there was not a specific project to revitalise the beach area. The beach was only reopened in July 2005 after intervention from the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality (Ozkan, 2008, p101). The beach access was free for all when it first reopened in 2005 and it has increased the popularity of Caddebostan, creating a sense of nostalgia of the pre-1950s Istanbul. Currently, the beach is only open during the summer season and there is now an entrance fee. Seeing the transition of Caddebostan's waterfront is crucial to understand the uses of public spaces in Istanbul and to what extent it can change and can be changed for

various reasons. The year 2005 was a significant year, as after the reopening of the beach, another project regarding Goztepe Park was introduced:

> On September 15, 2005, under the chairmanship of the proxy mayor, Idris Güllüce, the Council of the Metropolitan Municipality of Istanbul passed a formal decision by a majority vote, proposing the construction of a mosque in Göztepe Park. According to the decision, the mosque would be built on one-fourth of the park's land, a plot with a total area of 10 acres (10.000 m2). A parking lot would also be included in the project (Simsek et al., 2006, p489).

This decision was taken to court immediately by the mayor of the Kadikoy Municipality. As a deeply secular and Kemalist area, the decision created a controversy and received criticisms from civil initiatives such as Caddebostan Environmental Volunteers' Platform and Kadikoy Health Solidarity Foundation. It was regarded as 'an entirely political event', signatures were collected against the project and the then mayor of Kadikoy, 'Selami Ozturk, brought suit against the project in the local administrative court' (Simsek et al., 2006, p492-493). Currently, there are not any mosques or any other proposed projects for parks in Caddebostan. Goztepe Park, which has been used as a park since the 1980s, underwent renovation in 2013 and it contains the area called Gul Park.

As opposed to Balat, public spaces in Caddebostan are more regulated and habitually used by the public. Streets, sidewalks, and alleyways, on the other hand, are not used as public spaces or as an extension of private spaces like they are in Balat or in Karakoy. They can be occupied by coffee shops on the other hand, as a part of increasing sidewalk café culture. In other words, the distinction between the public and private in Caddebostan is clearer, and spaces are more clearly used as public or private.

2.3.3 Karakoy

Karakoy as one of the oldest and busiest transportation hubs in Istanbul has witnessed a number of transformations over the decades. As a district, Karakoy consists of many small neighbourhoods and for this study two neighbourhoods located by Karakoy's waterfront were selected; they are Arap Camii and Kemankes Karamustafapasa. Increasingly after the early 2000s, Karakoy has started to attract both the creative class and redevelopment investors due its historic building stock and a convenient location. Just as in the case of Balat, Karakoy is also

affected by Law no. 5366 where some of the historical buildings were selected to be renovated. However, what makes the case of Karakoy unique is the fact that the area has also become home to a flagship development called Galataport, a waterfront 'revitalisation' project of 'the historic 1.2-km shoreline' (Karaman, 2008, p519) with an overall size of 112.147m2 (Mega Istanbul. 2020, np). During the fieldwork, Karakoy waterfront was divided into two sections by the ferry stations and both sections were closed off in order to accommodate construction work. Once constructions are completed, 1.2km of waterfront will be part of Galataport and the other part will become a renewed waterfront open for public use. In addition to the waterfront, streets, sidewalks and alleyways, there are three *meydans* in Karakoy; Tunel Meydan, Tramvay Meydan and Iskele Meydan. All three *meydans* are located next to a public transportation link which demonstrates how central and crucial Karakoy's location is for Istanbul. These *meydans* and the ways in which they were used will be explored in Chapter 7.

The current case of Karakoy is a combination of culture-led revitalisation and flagship development. With the support of various urban laws, cultural investments into the area were soon followed by flagship developments such as Galataport. As Ozkan explains, when the Galataport project was first launched in 2005, it impacted property prices and caused many inhabitants to leave the area (Ozkan, 2008, p208). However, the project could not start for another decade because of controversies, objections and legal cases against it (Mega Istanbul, 2020, np). The demolition for the Galataport project started in February 2016 and was due to be completed by April 2021. The project consists of a marina, shopping centres, luxury hotels and a cruise ship port. Once Galataport is finished, a significant part of Karakoy's waterfront will be privatised (Islam, 2010, p61; Karaman, 2008, p519; Polo, 2015, p1511-1512).

Galataport's old buildings are due to be restored and will be used alongside new modern buildings that are being constructed for the project. However, it is important to note that to accommodate the Galataport project, some old buildings were demolished in 2017, instead of being renovated. This included Karakoy Yolcu Salonu (Istanbul Cruise Ship Terminal) and the old Paket Postane (the customs and cargo office). Only the façade and side walls of the old Paket Postane were retained. The same fate occurred to Istanbul's Modern Art Museum which was located in a former warehouse by the port. Istanbul Modern had to move to the Union Francaise Building in Beyoglu for three years and following this, the warehouse was demolished in 2018. Once the Galataport project is complete, Istanbul Modern will move to its

new building in Karakoy. Karakoy is now considered a 'hot' investment area due to the promises of the Galataport project that will potentially speed up the transformation of Karakoy which will impact real-estate prices and the displacement of local businesses.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explained what public space means for this research and two local terms for public space: *meydan* and *mahalle*. In order to draw a clear picture of how different public space is and how it is variously understood and constituted in Istanbul, the three case study areas were introduced and described in relation to urban laws, urban redevelopment projects and the gentrification they enabled. The ways in which public spaces are understood and used was shown to vary according to the neighbourhood in question, and the redevelopment the neighbourhood is undergoing. The economic, political, ethnic, and religious make up of each area will be explored in detail in Chapter 6 including demographics and property prices.

In the following chapter, I will extend on how public life is experienced and understood in Istanbul focusing on the various elements that make the city including physical and sensory elements. What it means to live between construction work, and how this can be understood in terms of public relations, mental maps and urban collective memory will be discussed.

Chapter 3: The Sensory City & Life Between Constructions

The previous chapters explored the urban changes in Istanbul, what public space means for this research, to what extent urban redevelopment and gentrification impacts the use and understanding of public space, and introduced three case study areas. This chapter will focus on two key concepts for the research: 'the sensory city' and 'life between buildings'. The sensory city and experience of it is crucial to understand the effects of the construction work, as well as the smells and sounds they make, the dirt and dust they create, and the ways these further shape the experience, use and configuration of public spaces. The second guiding theme, 'life between buildings' is drawn from Gehl (2011), and it has been highly influential in this research. As in many mega cities, life in Istanbul is also 'between buildings', however, one of the main focuses of this research is ongoing constructions in Istanbul, its impact on daily life, and the extent to which it connects to public spaces. A central argument here is that life between buildings has been transformed into life between constructions. That is, urban life in Istanbul is experienced, not only between buildings, but in and around constant redevelopment, new or disappearing pavements, heavy construction equipment, scaffolding, safety fencing, and the resulting noise and dust of the building works. In brief, this chapter develops the framework developed thus far, especially about urban change and its effects on public space, but does so by extending how place is understood. In particular, it is how the sensory and experiential impact on *mahalles* and the more general sense of change that is occurring in the city that this chapter examines.

Urban design is fundamentally a human construction, a social construct and a historical product that has many layers both materially and culturally (Castells, 2003, p23; Massey, 1994, p265). It is important to note that the ways in which a city is designed and constructed has traces of that specific culture and that culture's understanding of public and private, as well as its urban history as Sulsters underlines: 'Urban composition, architectural style, housing typology, street life, facilities, use of public space or even regulations all contribute to the overall identity of an urban area' (2005, p3-4).

In other words, there is much more to the city than the public and private distinction and land policies. If a city has a long history of urban habitation, then its pattern might be irregular in terms of accessibility and liveability (Banerjee and Southworth, 1995, p45). The urban

redevelopment of a city over many years can create a lively or a lifeless city (Gehl, 2011). Therefore, analysing streets, squares and neighbourhoods is fundamental to understanding the city, how it has developed, its historical use, and the ways it might be used today.

As previously argued, cities are both material and relational 'sites of collective provision' and 'shared spaces' (Short, 2003, p23). Following Amin and Thrift, 'The city has no completeness, no centre, no fixed parts. Instead, it is an amalgam of often disjointed processes and social heterogeneity, a place of near and far connections, a concatenation of rhythms; always edging in new directions' (2002, p8). Cities as human constructions entail many planned and unplanned elements including spontaneity that shapes daily life (Gehl, 2010, p19-20). The spontaneity of cities is highlighted as one of the main aspects of urban life (Benson and Jackson, 2013). Jacobs sees this spontaneity specifically on streets and sidewalks and argues that they function in a highly ambiguous order: 'The ballet of the good city sidewalk never repeats itself from place to place, and in any one place is always replete with new improvisations' (2011, p109). According to Amin, spontaneity and ambiguity of daily life creates its own routine, becoming a habit which gives a space its meaning and purpose and also helps 'actors to make sense of the space, their place within it and their way through it' (2008, p12).

Planned and unplanned spaces can be explained with reference to the various elements which constitute 'the urban' such as paths, edges, nodes, districts and landmarks (Lynch, 1960, 1972). As this thesis argues, by using these elements, people make sense of their surroundings, create their own mental maps and through these repeated activities and routines an urban collective memory gradually builds up. In order to make sense of the city, the ways in which it transforms and the impact of these transformation to daily life and to public spaces, Lynch's elements (1960) is one of the fundamental themes that this research draws upon and it will be explored in the next section.

3.1 Elements

To understand urban structure and how cities function from the eyes of people, it is necessary to comprehend the various elements of the city. As listed by Lynch, these elements are paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks and they exist in mental maps (1960). These elements shape and are shaped by the urban environment and their uses can alternate and transform over

time because of various social, cultural and political factors depending on the city. According to Lynch, streets or any open space that can be used as channels are paths (1960, p47). Paths are fundamental elements of city design as they are used regularly by individuals. In the case of many cities, paths can be physically changed or can be removed altogether for different purposes. This kind of physical transformation has symbolic importance for individuals. Moreover, the purpose of paths can be ever-changing; a pedestrian path can be open to traffic or vice versa. Even the names and numbers of paths, such as roads and streets, can suddenly change, leaving individuals feeling lost in their own urban environment. This is a highly common practice in Istanbul, where the more the city expands and is rebuilt, the faster paths change. New roads are constructed with new names, while the names of old streets are changed for political *or* practical reasons. A road you were born and lived your entire life can be called something entirely different at any given time. Ayatac and Araz give some examples to this practice such as renaming 'Ayyaş Sokak' ('Drunkard Street') as 'Hacı Sokak' ('Pilgrim Street') or *promoting* 'Cezayir Sokağı' ('Algeria Street') as 'Fransız Sokağı' ('French Street') (2016, np). In some more serious cases (mostly socio-political), radical interventions can be applied on a bigger scale; the name of the entire neighbourhood and its streets can be changed such as the case of Old Tatavla, now known as the new Kurtulus neighbourhood in Sisli, Istanbul. With the foundation of the nation-state and the decline of multi-ethnic, multi-religious Istanbul, Tatavla as a heavily cosmopolitan neighbourhood was affected. In the early 19th century, its inhabitants consisted of Greek Orthodox, Armenian, Jewish, and British communities (Erin, 2014). In 1929, however, a disastrous fire broke out in the neighbourhood and the name was subsequently changed to Kurtulus, which means 'Salvation' in Turkish (Avkovan, 2019; Erin, 2014; Turker, 1998). Another example of the name changing practice in Istanbul occurred during the 1980s when: '[…] the name of the Ümraniye suburb 1 Mayıs (1 May) was changed to Mustafa Kemal (after the founder of the Republic) following the coup (Aslan, 2004 cited in Houston, 2015, p56).

It is crucial to note that every building in Istanbul has both a name and a number. It is also considered *normal* to find more than two or three door number plates on a building in Istanbul. This explains why addresses in Istanbul are given 'visionscapes'. This means that in addition to the actual address such as *Mehtap* street number 18, it is 'the red tall building opposite the kebab restaurant.' This is mainly because the names of the streets are often duplicated, thus, the number of the buildings can create confusion in some neighbourhoods with more than one

number plate on the door. However, with the ongoing constructions in Istanbul, visionscapes are changing rapidly and 'the building where the kebab restaurant is located' is precarious as it might be demolished in a few weeks and therefore, the visionscapes will then have to be updated. As a result, nowadays, not only are public spaces being transformed, but the name and access to private spaces are also being distorted.

Edges, on the other hand, can be regarded as 'boundaries' and/or 'barriers' that can break the continuity in an area or divide the area visibly such as walls or water (Lynch, 1960, p47). Edges are commonly considered physical and visible but the ways in which edges are structured and constructed have symbolic power over their uses in the city by highlighting borders. As Tonkiss explains, the material is shaped by the social: 'Modes of both separating and connecting spaces (borders, boundaries, paths, bridges) give objective form to a subjective understanding of space, and then serve to conduct the subject in space' (2005, p31). Therefore, the existence of edges continuously informs the people where they can and cannot access by drawing a line and in some cases, it can be regarded as an attempt 'to increase the privacy of a place' (Lynch, 1984, p213).

Walls and fences are more structured forms of edges and they require individuals to 'choose' alternative routes. This becomes especially important in rapidly transforming cities, where paths and edges are routinely changed, rebuilt or reconfigured. In the case of Istanbul, edges come in various forms. As discussed in Chapter 1, public and private space boundaries help to shape Istanbul's urban characteristics. The public-private distinction can be both clear and blurry in Istanbul depending on the location, the situation, and the historical uses through which it has been constituted. This explains the existence of various continuous edges that constantly underline boundaries. Pot plants on doorsteps can be regarded as an example of an edge that clarifies the boundary between public and private. The heavy use of shutters and curtains is another example of an edge that in being open or closed redefines and reinstates the boundary between public and private. Shutters and curtains inform outsiders that there is only so much they are allowed to look at, see and watch. Washing lines and laundry can also act as edges because their existence highlights the blurriness between public and private and the boundaries thus become reconfigured (Watson, 2015). Washing lines, just like balconies, are temporary edges where private spaces can manifest for a period of time. The same approach can be applied to balconies which can be regarded as *in between* spaces where the public-private distinction is

blurred. Even though they are the extension of private spaces, they do exist somehow in the semi-public domain. Many private activities can be conducted in balconies, as Probyn argues: '[…] people continue to actually live on them: television sets are installed outside, as well as arm chairs, sofas, herbs, flowers, or entire vegetable gardens, radios, awnings, and curtains—the whole resembling a tent city, without the veil of canvas, on upper floors above busy city streets' (1996, p4). However, in a gentrifying city like Istanbul, as is explained in more depth later, balconies are disappearing because of new architectural styles that favour high security, enclosed, residential tower blocks.

Districts, Lynch's third element, are larger areas that contain numerous paths, edges, nodes, and landmarks (1960, p48-49). Drawing upon Lynch, neighbourhoods or as understood here *mahalles*, can be considered as smaller districts with their own characteristics. A drastic transformation of a neighbourhood would also transform the city from micro to macro. Physical transformation would change the layout and the landscape, but it would encourage some people into the neighbourhood, while it discourages others. As discussed in Chapter 2, Istanbul's *mahalles* are significant examples to observe the overall transformation of urban redevelopment and gentrification. Caddebostan's ongoing urban redevelopment removed some old paths that were used as alleyways by the locals. Nodes and edges cannot be used to their full potential because of the damage caused by constructions and vehicles, and landmarks are disappearing because the entire *mahalle* is being demolished and rebuilt. During this period of mass demolition and construction, like in Caddebostan, the old layout of *mahalles* changed to such an extent the public and private was reconfigured; a public alleyway was replaced by a 15-storey building for example. Furthermore, many new and temporary edges in the shape of scaffolding can be created to help and support the ongoing constructions in an area. Scaffoldings can be considered as *concrete* and *hard* edges, as they simply function as walls and can be compared to pot plants on doorsteps. This is why the existence of scaffolding is an important reminder of the new boundary between the public and the private while it is reconfigured.

Nodes are one of the most important concepts in terms of urban design and of particular relevance to the research examined in this thesis. Lynch describes nodes as 'strategic foci' that the individual can use (1960, p72). Unlike edges, paths, districts and landmarks various locations and places can be nodes such as squares, piazzas, parks and, in the context explored

here, *meydans*. Nodes have the power to determine maps of accessibility in a city. Once these nodes are changed or damaged, public spaces are challenged and the accessibility and continuity in the city is affected and broken. Since nodes are systemically used in cities as linkages, their existence is fundamental for accessibility. As Banerjee and Southworth claim, a linkage can cover the entire region and can be memorised by inhabitants:

> If each node is recognizably placed within its proper linkage, as well as being recognizably part of the family of centers belonging to that linkage, then all places can be referenced by the nearest node, or by the nearest node in any given linkage (Banerjee and Southworth, 1995, p72).

In that sense, continuity is desired, but not always possible, especially in ancient cities with irregular patterns where damage or intervention to nodes occur for various reasons such as constructions, urban redevelopment, and gentrification.

Landmarks are another significant concept in order to comprehend the city and its many districts. Landmarks are considered physical like many other elements, but they also have symbolic power and are regularly used as 'point-reference' by people (Lynch, 1960, p48). Whether landmarks are distant or local, public or private, they become ingrained in collective memory and help to structure the mental maps of that specific city. Carmona et al., for example, explain the symbolic role of buildings:

> The symbolic role of buildings and environments is a key part of the relationships between society and environment. Power (and control) is often a key theme, with all manmade environments effectively symbolising the power to make or change the environment, and much critical attention focuses on how environments represent, communicate and embody patterns of power and dominance (Carmona et al., 2010, p118).

Depending on their emotional value in collective memory, each landmark might symbolise a different era, a certain historical event, or a distinct political view with its existence. Once landmarks are damaged, evacuated, or demolished, urban collective memory is erased or reconfigured.

Lynch's elements are fundamental for the fieldwork as they are used to explain the city structure. The extent to which elements are used in each area is useful to understand the severity of urban redevelopment in Istanbul and how constructions have affected elements, as well as the city as a whole (Denec, 2014). As explained above, not only paths, edges, uses of nodes and

districts are seriously transformed, but many landmarks in Istanbul no longer exist. A further useful concept that needs to be explained and which is connected to urban redevelopments of this size and which has demolition and construction at its heart, is 'urbicide' (Gunay, 2015). Although urbicide is generally understood in relation to war, genocide, violence and destruction (Campbell et al., 2007; Coward, 2009; Tyner et al., 2014), the mass demolition that is currently taking place in Istanbul can be defined as 'a micro urbicide' (Houston, 2015, p56). Houston describes urbicide as 'targeted destruction' or the 're-construction of urban environments' (2018, p343) and mass demolition and construction forces individuals to reconfigure elements and then the cityscape more generally. As mentioned earlier, not only are Istanbul's elements being reconfigured, but neighbourhoods and districts such as Kadikoy, are going through transformation and by the end of these lengthy, noisy, and dusty projects, the majority of these areas do not look, smell, or sound the same.

3.2 Sensory City

Lynch's work is a useful starting point for thinking about how cities are understood and experienced. As explained, they also help to make the distinction between public and private spaces legible. As well as the legal elements, as explored in Chapter 5, there are also sensory elements such as vision, sound, noise, smell, dirt and dust which are the basis of daily life and in coming together effect how the city becomes legible and the ways we inhabit and experience the 'sensory city' (Lynch, 1981). According to Holloway and Hubbard, 'The world is constructed through our **senses** – principally sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch' (2001, p40). The cityscape is where sensescapes are wide, intense and rich due to their large population, diverse communities and the great number of different neighbourhoods. In addition to the elements drawn from Lynch earlier, sound, smell and vision allow us to make sense of our surroundings and play a significant role in creating a sense of legibility, belonging and familiarity. Soundscapes, smellscapes and visionscapes are therefore other fundamental elements that constitute space, neighbourhoods, streets and cities (Holloway and Hubbard, 2001; Lynch, 1960, 1984; May, 2013; Middleton, 2010). This body of literature is especially important here, not least in terms of the role the senses play in enabling a sense of belonging, but in also understanding how these are reconfigured in the use and production of public and private spaces. According to Urry; 'Place should not be thought of as an abstract Cartesian

space that can be defined by various geometric coordinates' (2007, p79). Thrift takes Urry's argument one step forward by adding affect and emotion to materiality and spatiality of cityscapes and streetscapes. He asserts that cities entail 'particular affects' and these affects are central to everyday life of cities (2004, p57). Davidson and Milligan explain further, pointing to the extent emotions shape spaces and how they are used, imagined and lived in: 'Emotions can clearly alter the way the world *is* for us, affecting our sense of time as well as space. Our sense of who and what we are is continually (re)shaped by how we *feel*' (2004, p524). Different spaces in the cityscape are filled with many different emotions and we might find some places better than others.

Following upon the discussion of sensescapes, May argues our daily life, reality and expectations are shaped by culture as much the physical: 'Our sensuous reality is thus not only determined by raw sensations, such as visual or auditory input, but also by cultural systems of belief. We approach the world with particular expectations, in terms of what we can expect to see, hear and smell' (2013, p139). Sak and Senyapili echo May, arguing that individuals accumulate the sight of cities and sights are created through personal experiences and remain in our mental maps (2019, p344). It is important to note that our experiences are also shaped during everyday life and they cannot materialise without our gender identity and our social, cultural and class backgrounds alone (Massey, 1994). Thus, we create emotional geographies through personal and societal conditions as our priorities and experiences are mostly unique to us and our broader identities. Mills' account of gender and *mahalle* in Istanbul, for example, highlights the distribution of gender specific roles in the everyday life of traditional *mahalles* where 'gender roles for women as wives and mothers … place them at home during the day' (2007, p336). Mills' observation overlaps with Massey's argument where, 'the identities of 'woman' and of the 'home-place' are intimately tied up with each other' (1994, p180). Hence, the ways women and men experience public and private spaces are different and this impacts their mental maps. Similar examples can be found regarding class background, as also observed during the fieldwork (see Chapter 7 for more), where sound, smell and vision in low-income areas are found to be completely different to high-income areas.

Sound, be it music, conversation, laughter or noise, is a 'constant backdrop in our world' (May, 2013, p134). Sounds of urban areas are unique to their spatial layout, design, location, geography, and culture (Davies et al., 2009; Yelmi, 2017). According to Yelmi's research on

the soundscape of Istanbul, common soundscapes of daily life in different areas consist of the whistles of ferries, screams of seagulls, the hum of traffic, frantic car horns, the call for prayers from minarets and, more recently, loud noise coming from constant constructions; it is a *very* loud city (Yelmi, 2016, p306). As Werner explains 'When you think of Istanbul, silence is probably not the first thing that comes to your mind' (2014, p3). Though typically understood in terms of unwelcome noise and ill health, 'Soundscapes can shape and transform one's experience of the city and everyday life in complex ways' (Iscen, 2014, p126). The increasing number of construction sites in Istanbul has now become part of the daily soundscape. Even though soundscapes change over time, some sounds remain fixed in memory and their existence become strong reminders of the routine that preserves continuity and a sense of belonging:

> Sounds are, indeed, aural symbols of our daily intangible culture, such as what we eat, what we listen to, how we practice our religion, thus who we are. Sounds also connect people to their lands, by way of auditory experiences that invoke memories of their past lives and their families (Yelmi, 2016, p303).

Like sound, smell is also an important component of the experience of the urban, and helps to again provide legibility, and to mark public and private spaces. Smell is mostly regarded as being similar to taste (May, 2013; Rhys-Taylor, 2013), however in the city, we are exposed to various smells we cannot always taste. Smellscapes are as powerful as soundscapes in the sensory city when it comes to creating a sense of belonging. As Bridge and Watson argue, cities have many spaces where sensescapes intensify such as 'the Spice Market in Istanbul, or the street markets of Hanoi; or displeasure, as in the rush-hour spaces of underground stations' (2003, p8). Although the Spice Market is regarded as a typical example of smellscapes in Istanbul, it does not necessarily reflect the smellscapes of the city; it is a representation of a highly *orientalised* concept of Istanbul from a 'tourist gaze' (Urry, 2002). In a more everyday sense, the city instead smells of a range of different things, from the sea and coffee, to the now ever pervasive smell of dust of constructions.

A mixture of various smells and/or unfamiliar smells blur the public and private and can create alienation for the individual. Home on the other hand, is where we can identify a smell. However, it is crucial here to acknowledge the fact that the smell of a street and the smell of a home are highly cultural notions. As May argues, in the West, smell is more controlled and regulated and 'a lack of smells perhaps indicates 'home'' (2013, p135). In the case of Turkey, it can be argued that if smell is controlled, regulated or neutralised to an extent, then it does not

feel personal or even homely. However in Istanbul smell cannot be strictly contained and it is common to come across the smell of home in the streets of Istanbul to such an extent sometimes you can guess what specific dish is being cooked. This is another example of the extension of the private into the public where laundry, smoking on steps, or kitchen smells wafting from windows mix with the more public smells of traffic and construction.

As mentioned earlier, in Istanbul smellscapes vary from one neighbourhood to another depending on the location and socio-economic background of the area. In poorer areas, it is still highly common to smell coal during wintertime as it is a common material for heating, such as in Balat. Karakoy smells of seaweed and fish, Caddebostan, a much wealthier area, is commonly lacking in smell and that gives the area a 'neutral' and 'modern' reputation as Degen argues (2008, p137). In Istanbul, once an area is gentrified, smells start to disappear as smellscapes become more fixed and regulated, where home cooking is considered bad but the smell of a sourdough bread from a hipster bakery is considered good. Each areas' unique smellscapes ensure familiarity for locals, triggering memory and positive or negative connotations (Davis and Thys-Senocak, 2017, p725).

As discussed above, constructions in Istanbul not only creates sounds, but also serious amounts of dust which turns into dirt that can also be smelt and tasted. The volume of dirt and dust in Istanbul also causes a serious concern with pollution. One of the main concerns is the level of asbestos in the air due to ongoing demolition work. Although the use of asbestos was banned in Turkey in 2010 (Insaat Suclari, 2017, np), the current building stock in Istanbul might contain asbestos (Akboga-Kale et al., 2017, p698). Asbestos exposure on a regular basis is a threat to public health and random dirt and the dust of constructions can be strong enough to erase or inhibit daily smellscapes.

The amount of dust and dirt that is created due to the construction work in Istanbul deserves attention. Similar to the transformation of sensescapes in Istanbul, dirt itself can transform daily life. However, it is necessary to define what dirt is before discussing its impacts. According to Douglas 'Dirt is essentially disorder. There is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the eye of the beholder' (2002, p2) and she argues that dirt only exists in relation to other things (1966). For Campkin, drawing upon Douglas '[dirt] is a matter of perception and classification' (2013, p48), such that dirt also exists in relation to culture, and every culture's understanding of dirt,

is specific. As discussed earlier, private space is considered holy and sacred in Turkey because of the Islamic influence on daily life. Home as a private space is expected to be kept clean and private from the outside gaze. Many practices have been put into place to ensure the purity of private space and they can then become traditions such as, taking shoes off by the door and using curtains and shutters. This way the clean private can be protected from the dirty public. In the meantime, seeing dirt becoming part of daily life because of the construction can distort the taken for granted routine of the street, leading to the closure of windows, vacating balconies, and creating a more rigid distinction between home and public smells.

Although this draws a picture of a clear-cut boundary between the public and private, there are many alternative and erratic uses of the public and using the public as an extension of private is highly common. As observed in Balat during the fieldwork, (see Chapter 7 for more information), for example, doorsteps and entrances of buildings remain commonly used as public spaces, or as extensions of private spaces. Doorsteps can be used by strangers to stop off and rest or by locals to people watch and chat with their neighbours. However, what makes these practices significant was that entrances and doorsteps were washed and cleaned on a daily basis and used by people knowing that they were clean. One way of clarifying this is that we may consider something dirty because of its *out of placeness*, in other words, because it does not belong there (Douglas, 1966; Pickering and Rice, 2017). Considering the 'disorder' the construction has been causing in Istanbul, everything is either out of place or yet to find its place. Caddebostan with its high number of construction sites can be considered one of dirtiest and dustiest areas of the fieldwork. Walking around the area has become a challenge because scaffolding poles, bricks, cement mixers, glass windows and doors are often left on the sidewalks. Karakoy, as will be explained, is in a similar state due to the high number of construction projects being carried out by the waterfront. Here, excavators are often left in public spaces by the benches. This sense of *out of placeness* includes Lynch's elements of moving nodes, damaging paths and creating new and sometimes temporary edges (1960); this is how the transformation of sensescapes and elements come together, reconfiguring the city and its public and private spaces in new and complex ways.

Further to smell and soundscapes, vision or sight in the sensory city, consists of everything that we are physically surrounded by and can see. In this sense, visionscapes can be considered similar to Lynch's elements (1960). As May argues, vision helps us make sense of our

surroundings and it is only helpful if it is supported by 'other senses and our memories and speculations' (2013, p134). Landmarks and monuments are typical sights used to represent a city, but it is crucial to acknowledge that cities have many faces. More importantly, visionscapes of cities can change faster than other sensescapes. In Istanbul, sights are not only changing drastically from one neighbourhood to another, but they can also change from one day to another, as a result of constructions. In certain neighbourhoods, for example Caddebostan in Istanbul, the pace of change is so fast that the same street might look different in less than a week as 20-30-year-old tower blocks are demolished in a few days. Urban redevelopment of this size challenges visionscapes and alongside ever-changing sights and images, mental maps are constantly being reconfigured.

Understanding and analysing the cityscape through sensescapes is useful in order to grasp the current state of Istanbul on a multi-dimensional level and what it means for the configuration and changing patterns of marking public and private space. Because 'the city is experienced through multiple sensory modalities' (Degen and Rose, 2012, p3273). Therefore, the city is not just about spatiality, but about voices, smells, images and feelings in certain areas, as opposed to others (Degen, 2008, p3). This is the reason understanding the sensory and how it informs the public and private, and the role gentrification plays in further shaping their relations is as valuable for this research as understanding the spatial.

3.3 Mental Map

A further concept to be introduced is mental maps. A mental map is an abstract map consisting of images of an environment; mental maps are personal and subjective, they help us to make sense of our surroundings and to create a pattern of using and experiencing space (Graham, 1976, p259). Mental maps are individual maps of known spaces and are used regularly to reproduce a sense of place in our everyday life (O'Neill and Hubbard, 2010, p50). Watson's account expands on this description:

> How we imagine a place, space, city in large part creates the conditions of possibility for how we act, which itself creates the contours of that very space. The stories we tell ourselves as we walk down the street, the swirling of affect, the cacophony of noise, take us along one route or another, down this alleyway or highway, to this park, to this market and this street (Watson, 2006, p8).

This knowledge is gradually created and informed by our histories and identities, which make mental maps unique and personal. Mental maps do not only consist of visuals images, but also the ways a person uses and experiences a specific space through edges, nodes and other elements. It is important to note that elements are not clearly distinct from each other, a node for someone can be used as an edge for someone else (Holloway and Hubbard, 2001, p50). Mental maps also include the sensory and emotional relation one has with certain spaces such as 'the smelly street' or 'the dodgy alleyway'. Negative and positive connotations make our mental maps subjective and personal as they are 'learned through practical knowledge' (Jász**,** 2018, p285).

> These mental maps summarize each individual's knowledge of their surroundings in a way that is useful to them and the type of relationship they have with their environment. As such, these maps will be partial (covering some areas, not others), simplified (including some environmental information, but not all) and distorted (based on the individual's subjective environment rather than the objective environment) (Holloway and Hubbard, 2001, p48).

One might not realise every transformation occurring in the city unless it directly affects a part of one's own mental map. As previously discussed, there is an ongoing concern about the loss of public spaces due to various reasons such as privatisation, urban redevelopment, gentrification, construction, surveillance, and limitations by state apparatuses (Bridge and Watson, 2001; Butler, 2015; Inceoglu and Yurekli, 2011; Oncu, 1997; Ozdemir and Eraydin, 2017; Watson, 2006). These interventions to the urban environment and specifically to public spaces, not only transform an individual's relationship with the city, but also change the mental representation of that space for the individual.

These changes are as relational as they are spatial. They are relational because by demolishing a historical landmark, collective memory is erased and one's mental maps is changed. It is also spatial because that demolition transforms nodes and edges. These can be considered significant interventions to the city space and can be classed as evidence of the ways in which certain spaces are being used and changed in a short space of time. Even the smallest changes to one's neighbourhood can be quickly observed and alter mental maps, and it can also shift basic daily routine, as the spaces might be altered or might not exist altogether. This will eventually transform urban collective memory, as is explored next.

3.4 Urban Collective Memory

Urban collective memory cannot be explained without mentioning the importance of mental maps and memory. As discussed earlier, mental maps are personal guides, and they are created through lived experiences within cultural, social and historical contexts. According to Hebbert 'Human memory is spatial. The shaping of space is an instrument for the shaping of memory' (2005, p592). Thus, urban collective memory is the accumulated memory of masses about a city (Ringas and Christopoulou, 2013). It builds up spatially, relationally and sensorially in the physical urban environment. Because it is collective, it represents many aspects of the city space; it is multi layered and multi-dimensional. Urban collective memory can be regarded as the political, social and cultural story of a city:

> Individual and collective memory is inscribed on the sidewalks, brickwork, green spaces, and buildings that constitute the cities we inhabit and visit. For travelers, sites of memory are must see locations. For locals, memorials are defining features of their culture and heritage. For both, the built environment shapes individual and collective memory (Gould and Silverman, 2013, p792).

Urban collective memory is both collective and personal, and it contains symbolic, emotional, negative and positive connotations of the spaces in the urban environment (Harvey, 2009). Ardakani and Oloonabadi's account of collective memory overlaps with Harvey's description in that it is created through shared events that make it collective and social (2011, p986). Various connotations are given to certain spaces because of the collective events and experiences. This is how certain spaces of a city have 'the power of place' as these are the spaces that have witnessed more significant collective events (Hayden, 1996).

> Collective experience of urban space can be considered as the practice of social production that is realized through relations among people and between people and their environment. Both individual and shared experiences lead to attribution of meanings to the lived space and therefore to construction of individual and collective urban memories (Sak and Senyapili, 2019, p344).

Cityscape is ever changing, and collective memory will expand and/or adapt to these changes depending on the city. That said, the actual point of urban collective memory is that it functions as a bridge between the past and the present, the individual and collective, and it is a constant reminder of culture and the provision of continuity (Carmona et al., 2003, p199). According to Zukin 'A city loses its soul when this continuity is broken. It begins with little changes you

suddenly notice in your own neighborhood' (2010, p6). Sak and Senyapili support the necessity of continuity in an urban environment, but they also highlight the number of interventions that damages continuity: 'Urban collective memory, as a dynamic phenomenon, requires means of continuity in relevant experiences. Contemporary conditions cause different forms of ruptures in the urban experience' (2019, p351). Not finding the same paths or not being able to go back to the same districts, breaks the continuity straight away. These changes manifest in subtle forms that effect sensescapes such as not being able to hear the same sounds, a change of smells for better or for worse in a well-known area, or a feeling of emptiness or lack of people in certain places (Degen, 2008). And because they are sensory, they are strongly ingrained in our memories and can be remembered long after they are gone. Identifying a certain street with the smell of fresh bread, even after the bakery has left can be considered a typical example. Socially produced space holds a certain power over the community and depending on its power sometimes over the society, the city, and the overall urban collective memory. Although the continuity is broken, this is how many elements and places continue to live in memories and they remain in their ex-locations for the locals. This form of remembrance and longing creates a strong sense of nostalgia (May, 2017).

Some landmarks, monuments and spaces have stronger symbolic meanings for collective identity and some places or locations can be used as focal points in the city (Madanipour, 2006, p187). As mentioned previously, this has been the case with Taksim Meydan in Istanbul and the ways in which the area has been historically linked to protests. Gezi Park however has only become a space with strong political and indeed nostalgic connotations since the summer of 2013 after the resistance to its demolition. With the demolition of AKM and the construction of a large mosque by Taksim Meydan, these spaces have gradually become 'the most inescapable symbol of the square's domination by the Islamic political elites of the city and the country' (Oktem, 2020, p304). The secular and commonly left-wing connotation of that area in urban collective memory has changed. An urban intervention of this size not only reshapes mental maps, but reconstructs urban collective memory as spaces, smells, sounds and maps embedded in collective memory are lost – albeit remembered for what 'was'.

These areas are almost always public spaces and owned or controlled by the dominant groups. This can explain the ongoing mass urban redevelopment in Istanbul and its impacts on Istanbul's collective memory with the shift in power in the government (from more secular

governance to more Islamist governance). Sometimes resistance to intervention and redevelopment is a reaction to preserve urban collective memory that is heavily filled with emotions and nostalgia. Nostalgia in Istanbul manifests in areas where the sense of loss can be intensely felt such as Mills' account of Kuzguncuk:

> As the landscape of collective memory brings nostalgia to materiality, it performs the illusion of making a past way of life 'real' once again. The mahalle landscape of Kuzguncuk creates the illusion of belonging in place; it creates, in urban space, a collectivity that fills the void of alienation. In its very denial of the condition of being an 'other among others', it signifies cultural mourning for a loss of place in the city (Mills, 2006, p386).

The same nostalgia is also used to romanticise certain areas of the city with its past and help create an unrealistic narrative. As Massey highlights 'Places can be home, but they do not have to be thought of in that way, nor do they have to be places of nostalgia' (1994, p172). Soytemel highlights the impact of nostalgia on Istanbul, 'Nostalgia for the traditional *mahalle* life has made historical neighbourhoods of Istanbul popular sites for those who want to live in traditional places in contemporary times, where everyday actions of the collective and the individual actions of belonging define who is an insider or outsider' (2015, p67-68). In other words, it is important to be critical of the concept of nostalgia as there are multiple nostalgias across various neighbourhoods in Istanbul. This points to that sense of how collective memory is never just singular but builds up through collective and personal use and can be contested.

As Tonkiss argues 'The spaces of the city are overlaid by memory, by unbidden associations, by conscious or unconscious plots. All these inform or confuse the cognitive maps we use to navigate in space' (2005, p128). The resistance to protect urban collective memory is a representation of 'the people' claiming their rights to the city (Butler, 2015). However, as has become apparent in Istanbul, whoever holds the power controls the discourse and therefore holds the right to control the collective memory (Madanipour, 2017, p106). In Istanbul this control has manifested in redevelopment work that can transform, demolish and rebuild public spaces as well as closing down or limiting access to them according to the government's agenda.

3.5 Life Between Buildings to Life Between Constructions

As mentioned earlier, 'life between constructions' is a concept that is derived from Jan Gehl's 'life between buildings' and is used to understand to what extent physical and spatial design impacts life in city spaces (2010). For this research, the aim was to understand to what extent the physical and spatial transformation of Istanbul impacts public spaces and to observe life during and between constructions. According to Gehl, life between buildings depends on the urban design, in a poorly designed urban environment, the number of activities are limited, and private spaces might be preferred whereas in a successful design, various activities can materialise (2011, p11). Gehl describes life between buildings as 'an opportunity to be with others in a relaxed and undemanding way' (2011, p17). Gehl sees life between buildings as an outcome of a good design and something that can only occur in living cities so the space can be shared with others.

Life between constructions can lead to a city that needs to constantly reconfigure itself because of ongoing constructions like the case of Istanbul. Here, residents are constantly negotiating new and unexpected nodes, paths, edges and nodes. Therefore, life between constructions disrupts these nodes, paths and edges in districts, and in doing so changes or erases landmarks and damages linkages. Once the linkage is damaged, continuity that was once desired will gradually disappear. This is how a mental map is damaged, and urban collective memory is erased. Inhabitants would not be able to 'read the environment as a system of signs' (Banerjee and Southworth, 1995, p90). We gradually adapt and learn to read the transformed areas as a new system of signs; a process that leads to a constant erasure, but also constant creation of new elements and memories.

3.6 Conclusion

The impact of urban redevelopment projects, ongoing construction work and gentrification of public spaces and the overall city were discussed in previous chapters in relation to the urban history of Istanbul. Since the overall impact of urban redevelopment on public spaces both spatially and relationally is one of the main focuses of this research, it is necessary to understand what is happening to public spaces during the construction and the process of transformation.

Public spaces, mental maps and urban collective memory in Istanbul have been changing as a result of urban redevelopment. As Watson reveals in terms of the UK, public spaces are being transformed or erased altogether due to privatisation, poor designs and the building of securitised shopping centres and systematic urban interventions in the form of urban transformation speed up the entire process and can reconfigure public spaces rapidly (2006, p170). Continuous interventions to public spaces create an urban environment that is more fragmented, fluid, and subject to constant re-mapping. As a result, the city functions as a patchwork with many 'ghettos' and their own public spaces with limited transition points. Sidewalks are accidentally damaged by heavy machinery and streets are closed off by bulldozers so as to accommodate machinery. Parks and *meydans* are often used as car parks, demolished, or claimed by the current government for many reasons such as to provide security or as to avoid assembly, then closed. In other words, the city is lacking its 'sitting rooms' for optional activities and mundane 'rubbing along' practices. As Tonkiss argues 'the street, as the simplest form of public space in the city, is more complex than it looks' as the street can be used for various activities (2005, p69). Using public spaces to conduct various activities is very much a common practice in Istanbul, but it is important to grasp that the construction work has enough significance to impact daily activities. As a result of the said changes, the public need to adjust themselves by reconfiguring their surroundings and recreating their relation to their city both spatially, sensorily, and relationally.

The spatiality and relationality of urban environments have been mentioned several times in this chapter and they are two important concepts needed to understand and describe the uses of cityscape in terms of everyday life. Although cityscapes consist of physical elements these also function as paths, edges, districts, nodes, and landmarks (Lynch, 1960). As explained earlier, I used Gehl's life between buildings to influence this research and I have suggested life between constructions is the clearest way to describe the current situation in Istanbul.

Another important notion driving this research is the sensory city. It is valuable to make sense of the city through our senses such as smell, sound and sight. This way one can distinguish the cityscape and its smaller spaces and list the city's different characteristics. Smellscapes, soundscapes and visionscapes help in building mental maps and urban collective memory as much as Lynch's elements and Gehl's life between buildings.

However, with every transformation and/or urban intervention, the sensory city changes. The things we smell everyday might be replaced by dust, the sounds we hear every day might be replaced with construction noises, the sight we see every day might be replaced by cranes and trucks. While this is happening, elements of the city might be also changing; nodes are broken, edges disappear, and even some streets might be erased. With every transformation, sensescapes are transforming and this affects the ways in which public and private spaces are used, experienced and reconfigured. Mass construction projects in the meantime exacerbate the ways cities are changing and this would eventually mean reconfiguring mental maps on an almost daily basis.

Damaging urban collective memory has been discussed in relation to outcomes of gentrification in smaller spaces, for example neighbourhoods and how these changes mundane everyday life practices. In the bigger picture, on the other hand, urban collective memory is affected by various forms of change such as demolishing landmarks and monuments, constructing new landmarks, giving old structures, bridges and streets new names, transforming the uses of certain spaces (reopening old factories as nightclubs or university campuses), evacuating symbolic buildings by stripping them of their purposes and hollowing out the meaning of their existence. The continuity that urban collective memory requires is being damaged and sometimes erased.

This draws to a close the key ideas, tensions, and debates framing this research. We arrive here at a complex picture of Istanbul, one where it is recognised that cities change constantly, but at whose behest? To what degree does such constant change lead to the erasure of collective memory? Istanbul is a city where both public and private blur through smells, sounds, and the use of marginal edges between the public private. It is also a city where there are historical and religious factors that seek to distinguish more clearly between the home and public. I have situated gentrification and constructions as being central to the ongoing use and experience of public space, and how it also impacts the ways the city works and where boundaries are drawn. Having now concluded the literature review, the next chapter will explore the methodology and explain the methods that were used for this research to more clearly understand how these multiple shifting factors are shaping the use of public space.

Chapter 4: Methods & Methodology

This chapter explains the methods and methodology implemented to examine urban redevelopment, gentrification, and the reconfiguration of public spaces in Istanbul. The research questions will be explained, and the aims and objectives will be discussed in relation to themes that arose in the previous three chapters concerning urban redevelopment, gentrification, *mahalles* and public space in Istanbul.

Although both urban redevelopment and gentrification are well-known and well-debated phenomenon, they have many unique drivers and outcomes in the case of Istanbul. As discussed previously, the military coup of 1980, the 1999 Marmara earthquake, the presence of *gecekondus* and the role of government policy have all played a part in Istanbul's recent development.

As mentioned previously, Istanbul can be considered as a non-European, non-Western city and its urban redevelopment, its understanding and uses of public space and urban structure differs to the examples explored in Western literature. According to Jacobs (1993), non-Western cities are highly 'popular' in ethnographic research as they have been regarded as 'the exotic 'other'' which needs to be investigated, understood, and described by the West, typically, though, through Western concepts. As Jacobs argues, 'Non-Western cities, conceived as a hybrid of modern and pre-modern forms, were deemed appropriate for ethnographic evaluation' (Jacobs, 1993, p828). Istanbul, because of its 'in-betweenness', can be understood as a hybrid city and the combination of its urban history, the increasing number of constructions under the name of urban redevelopment, the various uses of public spaces, and their transformation, are all areas informing this research.

In order to understand the impact of urban redevelopment and constructions in Istanbul, I carried out fieldwork in three areas. It is not only the outcome of this work in the form of new developments which motivates this thesis, but the daily life and ongoing constructions that is taking place. That is, while much research on gentrification examines displacement, drivers, or the end product, my interest here is the experience of the construction work and the impact it is having on daily life and use of public space. The primary method used in my research was a case study, which entails fieldwork consisting of observational, sensory and the visual analysis of three areas in three different municipalities of Istanbul. An analysis of urban laws that were

implemented by the current government in Turkey to boost urban redevelopment are also integral. The three areas, Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy chosen for analysis vary significantly, culturally, aesthetically, architecturally, and economically. Their experiences of gentrification as a result of urban redevelopment and how public spaces are used and understood are not the same, and therefore provide a unique opportunity to conduct a comparative study.

4.1 Aims

The relationship between urban redevelopment and public spaces was discussed previously in relation to Istanbul. A key point to have emerged was that recent efforts by the government to redevelop Istanbul have resulted in the loss/decline and reconfiguration of public space. In turn, this has had an impact on urban collective memory. As also discussed in Chapter 2, public space is understood via the work of Massey (2005), Franck and Stevens (2007), Fuller and Low (2017), and Watson (2006, 2015). It is not simply public space as a physical geographical area, but the ways public space is made that interests me here; public space is not fixed but instead social, relational, and situational. In light of the top-down form of urban redevelopment occurring in the city, the ways in which construction work impacts on daily life in neighbourhoods and public spaces guides this study. The aims of the research are therefore:

1. To investigate the relationship between urban redevelopment and the loss/decline of public space in Istanbul.
2. To examine how public space is being reconfigured during the ongoing constructions.
3. To understand how spatial changes shapes and reshape relationality in public.

These aims will allow me to further develop an understanding of the critical links between urban redevelopment, gentrification, and how public spaces are used, experienced and reconfigured.

4.2 Objectives

It is important to accept that the relational and situational aspect of public space has created an opportunity to observe how the uses of public space are (re)produced. It can be argued that any intervention has the capacity to reproduce but more importantly reconfigure how public space is used. It also has the potential to create the discontinuity of historical traditional patterns of a cityscape. In order to understand the relationship between recent urban redevelopment and the loss/decline of public space in Istanbul, and examine how the public space is being reconfigured through the ongoing constructions and the overall impact of these changes on urban collective memory, and understand how spatial changes shapes and reshapes relationality in cityscape, the objectives of this thesis are:

1. To produce ethnographic data comparing three areas at different stages of urban redevelopment.
    a. The data will include economic, visual, sensory, and observational material.
2. To provide a detailed account of current redevelopment policies in Istanbul by examining the laws have been altered and been implemented since 2002, the year the current government was elected.
3. To measure and assess levels of public participation in the three named areas over a finite period.
4. To examine recent redevelopments and where they occurred in the case study locations.

4.3 Research Questions

One of the main problems of this thesis is with being able to understand mass urban redevelopment/constructions, the undeniable impact on a city's reconfiguration, and the current use and people's experiences of public space. In Chapter 3, Gehl's 'life between buildings' was changed to 'life between constructions' in order to highlight the severity of Istanbul's current state (2010, 2011). If public space can take on the social, cultural, economic, and spatial shape of the neighbourhood, it will appear different in different areas. In that sense, it is important to explore three contrasting areas in relation to the government's urban redevelopment agenda. Key questions which need to be answered are:

1. What agencies have been involved in urban transformation and redevelopment since 2002 (year the current government was elected)?

This question aims to analyse urban laws that have been implemented since 2002.

2. How do urban policies, specifically dealing with urban transformation and redevelopment, configure and reconfigure public space, enable or constrain participation in public space, and in what form?

This question is important especially when investigating types of urban redevelopment projects and their various outcomes. Since the chosen areas are architecturally, socially, culturally, and economically different, it is interesting to see whether or not the drivers and effects of gentrification are as diverse as the areas themselves.

3. How have urban transformation and redevelopment projects changed the three contrasting areas: Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy? How have the characteristics, demographics and public spaces of these areas changed? Is there an ongoing loss/decline of public space (this includes any damages/changes/limitations to the street and daily life practices) in these areas?

This question will address whether or not there are any discontinuities, changes in demographic and 'reconfiguration'. This will be addressed through fieldwork and quantitative research, as explained below.

In order to assess whether there is an ongoing reconfiguration of public space, methods including observation, sensory and visual analysis of photographs taken during the fieldwork will be employed. Again, this is important for gauging a sense of actual physical/spatial changes and how these then further shape, contour and impact public spaces and their use. This will include looking at new buildings, signage, roads, commercial and leisure establishments, lighting, greenery as well as sensescapes (sound, smell, and vision). The use of photographs will allow an insight into daily life in each area and public space.

4. What are the links between urban transformation and redevelopment projects and gentrification in both cultural and economic terms?

This question has been designed to examine current models of gentrification, and their applicability in Istanbul and, moreover, their use as explanatory models.

4.4 Research Methods

To address the above aims, objectives and questions, the research uses a qualitative multi-method approach that consists of three case studies, analysis of laws, and a micro-ethnography of sensory, visual, and observational analysis (Eberle and Maeder, 2016; Low, 2015; Pink, 2006, 2012, 2013, 2015; Rose, 2016). Qualitative research is the most suited to the nature of this research as it entails observing actors in their natural environment and context (Kirk and Miller, 1986, p9). It asks and aims to respond to 'what', 'why' and 'how' questions rather than 'how many' (Ritchie et al., 2014, p3). Qualitative research examines symbols, representations and practices which help us to make sense of society, and also what actors make of them (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011, p3 cited in Ritchie et al., 2014, p3). Quantitative research will be used, in the form of demographics, rent and house prices, however the project is primarily qualitative. The primary method is case studies.

4.4.1 Case Study

A case study is a qualitative research method which can embody fieldwork, ethnography, and observations (Yin, 1994). It is the primary method of this thesis because it is a way of investigating a particular area or a case in a real-life setting. 'Case study is a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence' (Robson, 1993, p52). A case study can be conducted on individuals or on a neighbourhood depending on what the question is. Since three areas will be studied, a multiple case study strategy has been adopted (Gerring, 2007). This is a type of 'community case study' as more than one case will be investigated (Stacey et al., 1975 cited in Robson, 1993). This way, different cases will be explored in various settings creating an opportunity to enrich the research and conduct a comparative analysis. As Bryman explains, 'Conducting qualitative research in more than one setting can be helpful in identifying the significance of context and the ways in which it influences behaviour and ways of thinking' (2016, p395). In this case, a comparison will be made of various urban redevelopment projects and how public spaces are used in the three areas.

There are many advantages of the case study method as the data and findings will be unique. Multiple case studies will provide real-life information about various cases which can be used as a comparative method to enrich the research (Yin, 2012). The case study can be combined with other methods to understand daily life and gather extensive data.

The reasons three areas have been selected is because it is crucial for this research to understand how uses of public space change according to context, and in relation to urban redevelopment, constructions, and gentrification. Each area might have different understandings and uses of public space due to architectural, social, cultural, and economic reasons. As discussed previously, neighbourhoods have emotional significance in urban collective memory in Turkey. According to Mills 'The traditional urban neighborhood is a space which extends the interior space of the family to the residential street; it is a space of belonging and collectivity' (2007, p336). They are therefore spaces where micro changes can be observed in context. This research therefore will provide an understanding of to what extent Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy's daily life and public spaces differ and to what extent their transformation has had various outcomes. The three areas have been experiencing urban redevelopment and gentrification for a while and have been transforming rapidly. More importantly, they have different 'publics' and thereby various uses and understandings of public space. Conducting a case study in each area will expand the data and lead to a comparative and critical approach by the end of the research.

Caddebostan is a neighbourhood by the waterfront in Kadikoy Municipality located in the Asian side of Istanbul. The area used to be a suburb of summer houses up until the 1970s. With the increasing population and urban expansion of Istanbul, Caddebostan has gradually transformed into a full-time residential area with an upper-middle class, secular, and republican majority. Its transformation is more recent and following Lees (2003) we might refer to this area as an example of super-gentrification where an already gentrified upper-middle class area goes through another wave of gentrification.

Both Balat and Karakoy are located in the European side of the city. They are historical areas and started to transform after the introduction of new urban laws from 2002 onwards. Although they have some differences in the ways they experience urban redevelopment on a daily basis, both areas were affected by the same laws and can be considered as the test beds for urban laws (Islam, 2010, p61).

Balat is an old traditional neighbourhood by the Halic waterfront in Fatih Municipality. It used to be the home to ethnically and religiously diverse communities mainly Jewish and Greek Orthodox groups (Akin, 2015; Turkun, 2015). Due to its diverse background, it has a rich and historical architectural character. Before its ongoing transformation it was a traditional, conservative, and mostly low-income neighbourhood and it still mostly is. Its transformation can be observed and analysed through the cultural gentrification model (Bridge, 2006; Zukin, 1987) as this poor and historical neighbourhood has been 'rediscovered' by members of creative class, mostly artists and 'hipsters'. Top-down initiatives, although there were some attempts, did not materialise due to resistance by locals.

Karakoy is an old historical district in Beyoglu Municipality located in the European side of Istanbul by the waterfront that consists of small neighbourhoods. The architecture of Karakoy was deeply influenced and shaped by Italian architects towards the end of the Ottoman Empire. The area was the heart of the banking industry and it remained a banking centre for almost one hundred years and comprised primarily commercial properties. The area went through serious deprivation after the headquarters of banks were relocated and consequently, gained a negative reputation for fear and crime. One of the oldest and largest sex work establishments is located in a street in Karakoy, and is closed to the public by gates and under police surveillance and protection 24-hours a day. The area started to transform with the opening of the art gallery, Istanbul Modern, in 2004, which has since been demolished due to the ongoing construction of the Galataport project. Karakoy was chosen as an ideal example of what was explored earlier regarding culture-led, flagship development led regeneration. Its transformation started off as cultural gentrification, but in its current state, it is more controlled by private investors that are supported by new urban laws, as will be discussed in Chapter 7.

4.4.2 Analysis of Legal Framework

This research explores urban redevelopment in Istanbul and its impact on public spaces. As discussed previously, without specific laws implemented by the government that focused on housing, redevelopment, renewal and disaster, the ongoing transformation in Istanbul would not have materialised. In order to make sense of the government's agenda, to understand what each law entails and means for Istanbul, it is necessary to analyse the legal framework. Each

law furthers various government discourses and shed a light on the overall agenda for the future of the country in regard to housing, renewal, and disaster management. In other words, this research sees each law as a form of discourse which only make sense in context. This is why it is important to analyse texts in their original forms as they can provide information about the context and society they belong to. Wodak and Meyer draw this out clearly; 'Discourses take place within society and can only be understood in the interplay of social situation, action, actor and societal structure' (2009, p26).

More importantly, discourses have the potential to determine power relations in a society and 'they institutionalize and regulate ways of talking, thinking and acting' (Jager and Maier, 2009, p35). As these laws are prepared and carried out by the state, they eventually shape the city and how we experience space. As Fairclough adds, these changes could be material like, for example, in this research; 'Changes in urban design, or the architecture and design of particular types of building. In sum, texts have casual effects upon, and contribute to changes in, people (beliefs, attitudes, etc.), actions, social relations, and the material world' (Fairclough, 2003, p8). Therefore, the discourse ends up becoming a practice implementing society's and actors' daily life. Legal discourses have been shaping and transforming Istanbul's architecture, the overall urban design and daily life in neighbourhoods, they shape not only the macro, but also the micro aspects of the city.

Depending on the geography and the culture, urban problems are 'identified' and, depending on the government's agenda, language is used to produce certain realities (Belsey, 1980 cited in Hastings, 2000, p131). In Turkey, for example, the main urban 'problem', as it is framed by legal texts, have always been *gecekondus* (Erman, 2001), illegal and/or insecure constructions primarily associated with poverty and, to an extent, the Kurdish, and Gypsy-Roma communities. Solving the *gecekondu* issue has been a long-lasting challenge and even though various policies and laws have been implemented by different governments, none of them could offer a certain resolution. Therefore, the overall discourse that is being created and used by the current government repetitively, underlines the necessity and importance of 'safe' and 'secure' housing while pointing out the dangers of 'risk' of collapse and natural disasters, especially to *gecekondus*.

Low's research on gated communities in the US is a useful example to understand how these areas are 'standardised' through a discourse privileging notion of safety, security, and fear (2001, p45). Mazza and Rydin's comparative analysis on British and Italian cities also shows

how differently issues are described and offered solutions; 'In some locations urban traffic is seen as a problem of congestion, in others as a threat to heritage conservation or the environment, and in others a question of access' (Mazza and Rydin, 1997 cited in Sharp and Richardson, 2001, p196). Discourses derive from urban issues and then they describe and name them. Not only do they facilitate and enable countless numbers of urban transformation projects, but they also have the power to change and recreate the meanings of certain concepts used in texts. In Turkey, the language is 'created' by the government and other state apparatuses, such as the legal profession and the media. As can be observed in Chapter 5, there are clear directions and implications for media to use certain methods to underline the importance of urban transformation and highlight the fear of natural disasters by constantly repeating the word 'risk'. This way, with the help of language, the urban is being governed and regulated according to the government's current agenda.

The meanings of concepts in texts vary according to discourses. Fairclough explains this arguing that:

> […] the lives of poor and disadvantaged people are represented through different discourses in the social practices of government, politics, medicine, and social science, as well as through different discourses within each of these practices corresponding to different positions of social actors (Fairclough, 2012, p455-456).

This is crucial for Turkey, as the concept of 'the poor' that is mentioned in these laws are never entirely clear as there is no economic or social clarification of what the state means by 'the poor'. Correspondingly, the lack of a welfare state is significant here. Without a welfare state, housing is not perceived as a social issue but instead a planning issue. Therefore, the solutions that are offered by the lawmakers promise to solve the *gecekondu* issue and restore the buildings if there is a risk of collapse due to earthquakes. This is the reason TOKI's persist in providing what they term 'safe', 'secure' and 'affordable' collective housing for 'the poor'. However, Perouse (2015) indicates that certain words that were used by TOKI and/or lawmakers cannot be translated directly, or do not mean the same as in the West: 'TOKI's idea of the poor is not exactly the same as what is meant by the socially excluded in English, for while both are constructs they are grounded in different bases' (2015, p178-179). The poor have to have certain conditions to be considered as 'poor' by TOKI but there is not a welfare state that provides housing. In this case, TOKI only helps property owners or the ones with capital to

afford the instalments. This is highly crucial for this research, as the laws I will be analysing are in Turkish and they represent the culture and society of Turkey. Discourses that were used in the laws represent and address the case of Turkey, and they can only be fully understood in that specific context (Wodak and Meyer, 2009, p26). Since these laws are enacted by the General Council of the Parliament of the Republic of Turkey, they do represent the state and the government; they contain and represent power.

The analysis of discourses will make sense of why these laws were designed in the first place, how they were legitimised and what were the main targets. In Turkey, laws and policies address a certain audience, for that reason, they are written in a specific language and form, which is 'sanitised' in order to avoid 'contestation' (Jacobs, 2006, p47).

The following documents to be analysed are:

1. Law no. 5162 – Amendment of the Mass Housing Law and General Staff and Management Concerning the Parts on Head of Mass Housing Association (TOKI) Law in 2004.
2. Law no. 5216 – Metropolitan Municipality Law in 2004.
3. Law no. 5366 – Law on the Protection of Deteriorated Historic and Cultural Heritage through Renewal and Re-use in 2005.
4. Law no. 5393 – Enactment of Municipality Law in 2005.
5. Law no. 5609 – Amendment of the *Gecekondu* Law in 2007.
6. Law no. 6306 – Law on Transformation of Areas at Risk of Natural Disaster in 2012.

4.4.3 Micro-Ethnography

Much of the literature on ethnography focuses on discussing what ethnography consists of or should consist of (Hammersley, 2006; Herbert, 2000). As Hammersley puts it, various approaches towards describing ethnography have created a definitional problem (2006). The same definitional problem has surfaced for this study and it is necessary to define what form of ethnography is meant here. Drawing upon Herbert, ethnography for this study means 'a methodology whereby the researcher spends considerable time observing and interacting with a social group' (2000, p551). Equally, it 'involves an engagement of the researcher's senses

and emotions' (2000, p552). Having been influenced by Herbert's approach this study has gathered visual, sensory, and observational data through participant observation in the fieldwork. Conducting ethnographic research in Istanbul between September and December 2018 provided the opportunity to experience these areas akin to Walter Benjamin's flaneur. According to Jenks and Neves, the flaneur is an important metaphor for an ethnographer as the flaneur is a representation of the 'ultimate desire to come to grips with the city, or city lives' (2000, p3). In that sense, the flaneur can be considered as an early version of an ethnographer. Duneier et al. define ethnography as a method that 'investigates people's lives, actions, and beliefs within their everyday context'. They go on to define the ethnographer as someone who 'seeks to understand life as it is lived' based on fieldwork (2014, p1-2). Drawing upon Duneier et al., the fieldwork for this study means 'entering the world of the people under study as a close observer or even as a participant over an extended period of time' (2014, p2).

The length of time spent in the field is clearly an important factor here and a key factor distinguishing micro from more general ethnography. For this study, and hence the use of the term micro-ethnography, the time spent in the field was limited and did not allow for longitudinal research hence, once again, the term micro-ethnography better applies to the research conducted. Conducting a micro-ethnography has many similarities with conducting ethnography, however micro-ethnography 'refers to the immediate, or small-scale, field of research' (Fenske and Bendix, 2007, p68) and can be also understood as 'focused ethnography' (Polit & Beck, 2010 cited in McFarland, 2015, p97). As this research specifically aims to grasp, observe, understand, and analyse micro changes in daily life, the use public spaces, and the transformation of daily life in different *mahalles*, micro-ethnography is again a more appropriate term to describe the research aims and process.

The three methods comprising the micro-ethnographical fieldwork are as follows:

a. Visual Analysis

Visuals of the areas during urban redevelopment are used to explore their transformation. This includes photographs of buildings, streets, and shops in the three areas. As Rose argues 'Visual research methods can use already-existing images, from the mass media for example; or images can be made by the researcher; or they can be made by the people being researched' (2016, p15). The aim of using visuals is to highlight the current state of these areas to enrich the data. All visuals used here were taken by myself. As Pink explains,

> Photography, video and web-based media are increasingly integral elements of the work of ethnographers. It could in fact be argued that it would be difficult to be a contemporary ethnographer without engaging with these media forms and environments and the practices associated with them. (Pink, 2013, p1).

This visual analysis component of the research supports the observational analysis. Maps of Istanbul are also crucial, as they help to visualise the city and the location of the three areas.

b. Observational and Sensory Analysis

The importance of visual analysis has been briefly mentioned as a method. However, for this research, the analysis of visuals alone would not be sufficient. Observational and sensory analysis are two methods anchoring the research. 'Sensory city' was explored in Chapter 3 in terms of how the city can be experienced and analysed through senses known as sensescapes, soundscapes, smellscapes and visionscapes (Degen and Rose, 2012; Holloway and Hubbard, 2001; Lynch, 1981).

Because of its nature, participant observation can easily work hand in hand with sensory analysis. Participant observation was used by Malinowski during his ethnographic research on marriage and family life in the Trobriand Islands (1929). It was also used to great effect in Whyte's research on street corner life, an ethnographic study of slums with observational data of daily lives (1955). Watson's research provides further guidance when she discusses the mundane objects in the city (2015). In her paper, she examines, the making and remaking of public spaces in two different cities through laundry practices and argues how daily life practices can reveal many embedded habits and traditions of a city. Her method informed this research in terms of selecting and adapting methods, and a multiple case study with an ethnography which compares findings. Karaman and Islam's (2012) observational ethnography into Istanbul's Gypsy-Roma neighbourhood is a further valuable guide for this research; they examined one of the first neighbourhoods in Istanbul to be demolished and evacuated and their method of participant observation has therefore been influential. Uysal's research on the transformation of Sulukule, which is a neighbourhood in Istanbul, examines two periods of urban regeneration and provides valuable guidance for this research's observational method and how things can change between two periods (2012).

In terms of urban analysis, participant observation is strongly associated with ethnography:

> While some caution is advisable in treating ethnography and participant observation as synonyms, in many respects they refer to similar if not identical approaches to data collection in which the researcher is immersed in a social setting for some time in order to observe and listen with a view to gaining an appreciation of the culture of a social group (Bryman, 2016, p377).

Observation is the final component of data collection for this research. To be able to gather adequate data, daily life practices were observed in each area (Bryman, 2016) following a list of criteria (explained below), narrowing down to the level of the street and any public/open spaces, defined in previous chapters as a *meydan*. These methods can be considered as a 'community case study' because I observed and investigated more than one area (Stacey et al., 1975 cited in Robson, 1993).

To use time efficiently and collect relevant data, I used several observation techniques including using my five senses for sensory analysis. Soundscapes, smellscapes and visionscapes helped me shape the overall observations of the field (Davies et al., 2009; Degen, 2008; May, 2013; Yelmi, 2017). Each neighbourhood had different sounds, smells and visions and even tastes which people are constantly exposed to. These shape memories and helps create an overall urban collective memory (Davis and Thys-Senocak, 2017; Low, 2015; Rhys-Taylor, 2013). The more the cityscape and streetscapes transform the more sensescapes change (Degen, 2010). The dust, dirt and pollution that are formed due to constructions are regarded as an extension of smellscapes and have become another crucial aspect of sensory analysis (Douglas, 1966; Pickering and Rice, 2017).

Due to the fact there were three different settings, as a researcher, I had different observational and sensory experiences in each one of them. I aimed to remain as an outsider without distorting 'the nature' of the field (Baker, 2006, p173). If I played the same detached role, I could be more invisible and gather 'unspoiled data'. I believed remaining loyal to the natural setting was essential in order to gather realistic data (Gorman and Clayton, 2005, p40 cited in Baker, 2006, p173). Being unobtrusive and taking a passive role was important in the case of Istanbul, as people, culturally, tend to get excited and/or be suspicious of outsiders and might share exaggerated information for attention. However, as an Istanbulite myself, I was aware of the fact that I could not be a complete outsider. I discuss this ambiguity and how it impacted the research in Ethics and Positionality below.

Observing three areas and their public spaces gave a clear picture of daily life and how recent transformations have changed the areas and to what extent daily life is affected by these shifts.

Observing who uses public spaces in these neighbourhoods was an indicator of who they are used by and whether they are used by certain groups at certain times of the day. As an observer, I was part of each area by witnessing and sometimes even joining in in daily life practices, drinking coffee, smoking, walking, window shopping, and taking photographs. During my observations, I came across different 'publics' and various uses of public spaces. As observations took place in different streetscapes, I got to between understand shifting public/private boundaries and to what extent they differed in each neighbourhood. In that sense, it was a street-style micro-ethnography, observing locals and passers-by, their relationships, and activities in the area.

The observation was supported by fieldwork notes and regular diary entries using a pen and a notepad and a digital tablet. This way data was recorded on a regular basis and helped data analysis later on. Taking notes is essential for the reliability of the research, but it needs to have a system for convenience and time efficiency. Since my fieldwork took place in Istanbul, I had limited time to collect data and whatever I could access, needed to be relevant to the research aims, objectives and questions. Comprehensive notetaking in the field was the ideal strategy for this research and to be able to do so I followed a list of criteria, discussed below, that I prepared for the field (Wolfinger, 2002, p90; Spradley, 1980). However, it was again my job to decide what to write and what to include in my notes, as well as what to miss but it helped me to put events in an actual timeline (Wolfinger, 2002) and to structure the observation.

As someone born and raised in the city, I knew that taking notes in the field might seem suspicious and end up disturbing locals. My plan was to keep a systematic and structured diary to take small notes on my smart phone in the field, and then write them down every time I took a break throughout the day. I managed to update my diary on a regular basis to avoid the possibility of forgetting an important piece of information. I also took photographs daily and filing photographs helped me to memorise the field. These were edited later in a 'safer' environment (Watson and Till, 2010, p128). In the field I observed daily life practices according to a list of criteria I designed beforehand:

- Signs (such as no spitting/no ball games/no drinking etc.)
- Pedestrian, car access.
- Uses of sidewalks.
- Existence of CCTV and their location.
- Sitting arrangements (where do people prefer to sit? /where do they avoid sitting?)

- Uses of buildings and balconies for laundry.
- Uses of curtains/shutters.
- Specific smells (food, smoke, fresh laundry, fragrance etc.) that erase the public/private binary
- Existence of outdoor plants, pot and plants on windows or door stoops, etc.
- Existence of tables, chairs, benches.
- Existence of fountains.
- Existence of street food sellers (What do they sell? Do they have many customers? Who are the customers?)
- Exteriors of buildings (visible air conditioning, washing on the line, shrugging).
- Existence or non-existence of police, private security, military.
- Existence of flags.
- Interaction between people (What kind of manners do they display? Is there an order?)
- Who is using these neighbourhoods? Who is outside? Who is hanging out? Is it more women, men, children, etc.?
- Condition of bins.
- Types and loudness of sound/noise.
- PDA (Public Display of Affection). Does it exist? If it does to what extent it is tolerated.
- Eating, drinking, smoking.

The list of criteria helped me to elaborate, understand and analyse each area in their own context and understand how public spaces are reconfigured. The observation was conducted between 10.00am to 1.00pm, then again between 3.00pm to 7.00pm. Both periods were chosen to observe the beginning and end of construction work for the day. By 10.00am, the workday had also begun, and the areas took on more of their normal daily rhythm. Between 3.00 and 7.00pm it was also possible to observe people returning home and the areas becoming more domesticated. The combination of both periods was used to obtain an overall idea about an ordinary day in life in each area. The hours in between the two periods were spent taking notes and typing out the findings. A total of three weeks was spent in each area across the two trips. The days selected were as follows: Fridays as this is the traditional religious day, Saturdays as this would be the busiest day and then three days midweek. The fieldwork took place between September and December 2018.

In summary, the aim was to examine the ways public spaces were used, constituted, configured, and reconfigured in relation to recent urban redevelopments and ongoing constructions. The research especially focused on life between constructions, how materiality impacted relationality, how people occupied space, and the invisible and visible norms and constraints on the streets.

4.5 Sample/Access

As explained earlier, the fieldwork took place in Istanbul, Turkey so I had to travel and spend a period there to conduct the research in order to gather the data. Since three areas were studied, it was important to be time efficient. I spent three weeks in each area for observation and collecting visuals between September and December 2018. The fieldwork overall lasted nine weeks, and I made two trips to Istanbul and divided the fieldwork into two periods. This way, I had the opportunity to observe the areas at different times and had the chance to see the transformation between the two visits. During each trip, I spent around four to six weeks in Istanbul. The aim was to study every area during both visits. I visited the field and spent the day observing public spaces and daily life, 'the public' and 'the street', 'the activities of people, the physical characteristics of the social situation, and what it feels like to be part of the scene' (Spradley, 1980, p33).

4.6 Data Analysis

By the end of the fieldwork, observational, visual, sensory data were collected, as well as the legal framework, and I had a large volume of data that needed to be analysed. The main issue at this stage was to distinguish which data to analyse, why and according to what. This can be explained as a way of interpreting data which 'involves attaching meaning and significance to the patterns, themes, and connection that the researcher identified during analysis; explaining why they have come to exist; and indicating what implications they might have for future actions' (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999, p5). To keep the research as reliable as possible, I used the data linked to the research criteria (see 4.4.3), unless there was something greatly unexpected. This way, the data analysis could work as a selective process. The comparison was

also important, not just to highlight the differences between these areas and their transformation processes, but also to enrich the research as a whole. 'The value of comparative qualitative research is in understanding rather than measuring difference' (Ritchie et al., 2014, p65). For the consistency and continuity of the research it was crucial to analyse the data on a regular basis (Spradley, 1980, p33-34) by using grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) which consisted of 'constant comparative analysis, development of theoretical concepts and statements, and theoretical sampling' (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p1). By analysing data regularly, I could be more self-aware and reflective of the process as a whole and could act to improve the research if it was necessary (Bryman and Burgess, 1994, p7).

4.7 Limitations

Like in any qualitative research, this fieldwork has its limitations, advantages, and disadvantages. As explained earlier, it is a multi-method research which heavily depended on my observations in the field. However, I anticipated limitations accessing certain spaces such as construction sites, roads and waterfronts that were closed or issues where I would be considered as an outsider or stranger such as in some gendered commercial premises including *kahve* and *kiraathanes*. this is explored in Chapter 7. Additionally, like any research, unintended consequences in the field had to be solved and dealt with in a relatively short period of time. 'Limitations might also be related to the types of practices the researcher seeks to understand, due to constraints of time and other practical issues impacting on the working lives of ethnographers as well as those of research participants' (Pink, 2015, p6). This is because a researcher ultimately aims to investigate, understand, and analyse social surroundings. As Hammersley and Atkinson clearly describe, this method

> […] involves the ethnographer participating, overtly or covertly, in people's daily lives for an extended period of time, watching what happens, listening to what is said, asking questions – in fact, collecting whatever data are available to throw light on the issues that are the focus of the research (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995, p1 cited in Pink, 2013, p34).

Having conducted the research in Istanbul, a city that can be best described and understood as 'in-between', in-between the West and the East, in-between the Europe and the Middle East,

had its challenges. Western literature on urban studies does not always necessarily apply to Istanbul and gentrification as a Western concept came to Istanbul in the late 1980s and can be considered as a still relatively new practice. Non-Western literature and research on urban studies has been helpful in certain aspects as there are many overlaps and similarities especially when it comes to the ways in which the public and private are distinguished and used.

Nevertheless, various research models, methods and concepts mentioned above have been useful and influential in designing this research and the in-betweenness of Istanbul has helped to enrich the research even more. Considering the fact that Turkey declared a state of emergency in 2016 following an attempted coup, and an overall unrest in the country, the research had to apply methods that were achievable and could ensure both the researched and the researcher's safety. This meant not doing interviews first and foremost, because to conduct interviews, consent forms are needed and have to be signed by interviewees. However, it would not have been realistic to expect people to sign consent forms. Signing documents is already regarded as suspicious in Turkish culture and people would not have been prepared to do it given the political climate of the country at the time. Therefore, observational, visual, and sensory analysis in the field was chosen as the main methods of the research. The observational, sensory, and visual data was collected from three areas and then analysed in relation to the legal framework, and the figures (demographics and property prices) about each area.

4.8 Ethics & Positionality

Istanbul is my hometown, where I was born and raised, and spent the first 25 years of my life before moving to England. Like many people from Turkey, I have mixed feelings towards Istanbul. As pointed out earlier, Istanbul is a city that is described as 'the bridge' between the West and the East, Europe and Middle East but this gives Istanbul the characteristics of 'in-betweenness'. Moreover, it is the largest and most populated city in Europe with an estimated population of over 15.1 million (World City Populations, 2020).

It is a city that keeps growing without a structure, it is divided into municipalities and then into neighbourhoods. Its neighbourhoods have completely different demographics which makes it impulsive and full of surprises. As previously discussed, *mahalle* is a significant concept in Turkey, it can be read as a space of belonging and in that sense is an important unit for the

urban collective memory. One can learn many things about society in Turkey simply by studying *mahalles*, public spaces and daily life. I decided to study Istanbul once I realised my memories of the city, and indeed my own *mahalle,* were being erased as the city was transforming in such a fast pace due to recent urban redevelopment projects. It started off steadily but has spread to almost every neighbourhood since 2005 with the introduction of new laws.

As briefly mentioned earlier, in the summer of 2016 while I was preparing for this research, a military coup was attempted in Turkey. The event understandably created panic and uncertainty and the government decided to declare a state of emergency. Considering the political and social climate of the country, I realised that I needed to minimise risks by designing the best possible methods for the research. As Ryen argues, it is common for ethnographers to find themselves in between 'the ethical', 'the acceptable' and 'the workable' (2016, p35). It is therefore crucial to design research by taking social constraints into consideration. In the case of this research, this would mean not conducting interviews as it would not be realistic to expect people to participate in research about urban transformation, public space, and Istanbul only 3 years after the Gezi Park movement. However, that decision took the research to another unexpected and more colourful route; I decided to do observations in the field as a passive participant, but I included visual and sensory analysis to be able to enrichen my research and to see the impact of constructions on daily life. This research therefore echoes Delamont's approach towards participant observation, 'It is important to participate enough to be able to write feelingly about the nature of the work: its pains and pleasures, smells and sounds, physical and mental stresses' (Delamont, 2004, p206). Participant observation in three neighbourhoods of Istanbul was the most ethical, acceptable, and workable method as it helped me to grasp and observe the ordinary.

Having lived in Caddebostan for 13 years I am very familiar with the neighbourhood. Karakoy is the area that I used to visit when I wanted to socialise, visit art galleries and the Istanbul Modern. I worked in and conducted a small research project in Balat when I was doing my undergraduate degree. These areas do not have much in common apart from waterfronts, construction work, and gentrification. My positionality and subjectivity are essential for the reliance of the data collection, data analysis and overall outcome that can impact data collection and data itself. In order to minimise my subjectivity and to be able to conduct the research systematically, a list of criteria was created for the fieldwork. This way I knew what to observe

and what to focus on and I was fully aware of what to include in my notes as well as what visuals to take and what sensescapes to recognise and distinguish. As Lee points out, fieldwork can be a difficult experience because of the fear of being a stranger (1993, p121). In my case I was a researcher in *my* city, I was at home, I was familiar with the neighbourhoods, I could speak the language of social actors and I knew how to act and interact in the field, so I did not think I was a stranger or an outsider but instead an inbetweener. Kleinman's account in that sense completely overlaps with my research experience and the very idea of *becoming* an outsider:

> The ethnographer, no matter how successful she is in participant observation, either is or becomes an outsider – even if she begins as an indigenous member of the community she studies. She feels the tug of local obligations and the push of local practices, but for all of that she is never so completely absorbed by what is most at stake for community members that their world of experience is entirely hers. Her engagement is always subverted by her inner awareness of her separation from those around her because of her task (description and interpretation of the lifeways of others) and her interests (scholarly and personal). In fact, she may well feel the undertow of currents in her own local world ("at home") as yet another source of separation (Kleinman, 1999, p77).

I do believe having lived abroad for years and being back *home* as a visitor to conduct a qualitative urban fieldwork determined my positionality and at the different stages of the research, I was a stranger, insider/outsider and ultimately an in-betweener. As Madison underlines, 'Positionality is vital because it forces us to acknowledge our own power, privilege, and biases just as we are denouncing the power structures that surround our subjects' (2012, p8). According to Duneier et al. this complexity is a common aspect of the ethnography to one's own society as 'the modern metropolis is full of strangers […]' (2014, p2). This in-betweenness however, has provided a sense of fluidity that allowed me to observe, understand and analyse the field as someone who is part of that society and who investigates it as a researcher.

Unintended consequences are always a possibility in fieldwork, but risks that might arise depend on the nature, form, and location of the research, as well as the researcher's approach. Having been influenced by Duneier et al.'s account of urban ethnography, I observed social actors in their daily contexts including 'various unstructured situations' which provide the ethnographer indications about how 'they construct and make sense of their world' (Duneier et al., 2014, p2). I selected the areas that were in the process of transformation with minimal danger or threat. Field notes were taken by me in the field and were recorded and kept in a safe environment. The notes document my interpretation of the field and were used as reminders

between the two periods of fieldwork (Coffey and Atkinson, 1996; de Laine, 2000; Rosaldo, 1994).

4.9 Contribution to Knowledge

This research will achieve a broader understanding of public space in Istanbul in light of recent urban redevelopment. It addresses the research aims by examining the articulation of urban redevelopment, gentrification, public spaces, and the timeline of urban changes in Istanbul in a short period.

Previous studies on urban redevelopment in Istanbul mostly focus on gentrification and therefore the end result. The research presented here on the other hand, not only looks at case studies in different areas, but also the areas that are more in a state of transition and/or in the process of being gentrified. Another common feature of existing research in the city is to select the same areas to conduct case studies, such as Sulukule and Tarlabasi as these were the first areas that were chosen by the municipalities to be demolished after the enactment of various policies. Karaman and Islam's research on Sulukule is a case study that provides an insight into how state-led gentrification abolished a community and damaged traditional uses of public spaces (2012). Islam and Sakizlioglu (2015) conducted a similar comparative case study on both Sulukule and Tarlabasi focusing on these areas' rapid transformation after the enactment of urban redevelopment laws. State-led gentrification and the enactment of urban redevelopment laws highlight the importance of discourse that are used for urban redevelopment laws and how they are being legitimised. Lovering and Turkmen's case study explores state-led gentrification and displacement in poor neighbourhoods (2011), while Islam's research on several neighbourhoods in Istanbul focuses on urban transformation and how it is presented as a solution to every social problem including crime and poverty (Islam, 2010, p60). Akin's (2015), Bezmez's (2008), Gunay and Dokmeci's (2012) and Soytemel's (2015) studies on the Golden Horn have given some insight about the culture-led regeneration and rehabilitation of Balat, Istanbul's waterfront and neighbourhoods. Akkar Ercan's (2011), Denec's (2014), Dincer's (2011) and Mutman and Turgut's (2018) accounts on Istanbul's historic urban space and urban renewal have also been highly helpful. I built on their work by looking at various impacts of urban renewal in different neighbourhoods. Berkmen and

Turgut's (2019) study on urban transformation and Bagdat Street, Ceker and Belge's (2015) research on urban redevelopment and gentrification, Ayatac's (2007) and Enlil's (2011) research on planning and urban change in Istanbul have been extremely influential for this thesis by providing numerous useful and important information about Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy. Arslanli et al.'s (2011) study that specifically focuses on the transformation of public spaces, Ozgur et al. (2017), in their recent study on public spaces in two neighbourhoods argue that privatisation and state-led gentrification damages publicness. Baykan and Hatuka underline the political and symbolic significance of public spaces in their study on Taksim Square in the 1970s and how it has become a political symbol (2010). Another research project on public squares in Istanbul was conducted by Ekdi and Ciraci who compared six squares to give an insight to how they hold different meanings (2015).

This research specifically takes a more relational understanding of public space than the existing geographical approaches. In particular, I am more interested in the micro-uses of public space during daily life and how social actors reconfigure and 'make' public spaces alongside the construction work than existing research which tends towards geographically-fixed public spaces. My thesis also contributes to ongoing research about Istanbul's urban transformation and its impacts on public spaces, by combining the analysis of urban redevelopment laws and observational, sensory, and visual methods. All these researchers take public spaces as given spaces that belong to the public and should be used equally by the public. As I argued in the previous chapters, cities are living mechanisms that are being recreated constantly and then they shape their public (Gehl, 2010, 2011; Gehl and Svarre, 2013). Thus, public spaces are products of the society they belong to and throughout the urban history of Istanbul, keep transforming.

My approach argues that public space is constituted through changing discourses and ongoing constructions. As discussed earlier, public space reflects the state ideology in Turkey and this research points out that with the changing ideology from secular to postsecular, public space has also transformed. However, it is not just about public spaces that are geographically-fixed and where there might be an assumption that they have pre-determined meanings. The 'right to the city' through participation and spontaneity were the primary values that create public spaces in cityscapes, rather than just fixed geographical sites.

The main purpose of this research is therefore to capture and explore the continuing process of urban redevelopment and the increasing number of constructions and their impact on the uses

and reconfiguration of daily life and micro uses of public space. Displacement, the *gecekondu* issue, the lack of housing and gentrification have been intensely and increasingly studied in Turkey. This research therefore aims to add to the literature by focusing specifically on the aspects of life taking place between constructions and its impact on the reconfiguration of public spaces. In that sense, this research can offer an alternative perspective that observes, analyses, and explores the process during the process of change. Having now explained the methods and methodology of this research, the next chapter will explore six urban laws that were implemented between 2004-2012 in Turkey.

Chapter 5: Legal Framework - Design & Analysis of Urban Laws between 2004-2012 in Turkey

This chapter will investigate six laws that have affected and changed the process of mass urban changes, urban redevelopment and housing development in Turkey. This chapter is important in highlighting the impact of law-making on urban redevelopment and exploring the extent to which law-making, state apparatuses and institutions shape daily life in Istanbul. Housing development in Turkey has been the responsibility of Mass Housing Association (TOKI) since the 1984, the year TOKI was founded. Recently, a number of urban redevelopment projects have been awarded to TOKI, increasing the power and authority of the institution. This chapter examines the legal context for the redevelopment projects occurring in Istanbul, with a focus on the role of this new institution.

The 1999 Marmara earthquake drew attention to Turkey's long-lasting housing issue, for instance, the lack of sustainable social housing and *gecekondu* settlements. 17,000 people lost their lives and a serious economic loss occurred. 300,000 buildings were also destroyed or damaged (JICA & GIMM, 2002 cited in Kocabas, 2006, p121). In less than three years, after this disaster, the AKP was elected – and is currently in power – with many promises, including urban reforms and new housing that would-be earthquake proof. Urban redevelopment was on the agenda for the AKP, but, as part of its neoliberal framework, heavy bureaucracy around it was argued to be too restrictive and needed to be loosened.

There have been many alterations to the legal context since 2002, the year the current government was first elected, the six laws discussed below have each played a significant role in shaping redevelopment and gentrification in Istanbul and, correspondingly, the cityscape. Although Gezi Park and its surrounding areas can be considered as well-discussed examples of urban redevelopment in Istanbul, the rest of the city has been also transforming, including the majority of neighbourhoods. Without new laws implemented by the current government, the urban interventions and transformations explored in this thesis would not have been possible. These laws are crucial to understanding the ongoing *kentsel donusum* (urban transformation) projects in Istanbul and how they replace older laws with more 'progressive' and 'rapid' methods for redevelopment. A key point to emphasise here is that urban laws in Turkey are mostly concerned with the lack of safe and adequate housing, and the growing number of illegal

settlements. That said, the new legal framework and succession of laws, have introduced new concepts and discourses to advance urban redevelopment.

Many laws designed in the last 15-20 years have aimed to transform Turkey's largest cities. This chapter examines the laws that were implemented between 2004 and 2012 and underlines their role in transforming parts of the city including the use and understanding of public space. As will be explained, one law facilitates the conditions for the next, and together they work like a puzzle. The chapter begins by focusing on TOKI and its role in urban redevelopment. It then explains six laws and their impacts on public space. The laws were analysed in Turkish then translated into English.

5.1 TOKI

As explained earlier, housing has often been a social and economic problem for large cities in Turkey and has been complicated by migration and poverty which has led to illegal settlements. Illegal settlements continue to be an issue as a social housing policy still does not exist in Turkey, which leaves few options but to build *gecekondus* on whatever land can be found (Erman, 2001 cited in Lelandais, 2014, p1792). *Gecekondus* (literally 'built over night') are one storey illegal houses built on any available land by people who cannot afford to rent or buy any legal accommodation. This has become a common practice in Istanbul and some areas have come to be known as *gecekondu* neighbourhoods. What makes Turkey's urbanisation process and housing experience different from Europe and the ex-Soviet states is that that the concept of a welfare state that provides social public housing does not exist (Turkun, 2011, p63). *Gecekondus* therefore can be regarded as inevitable 'solutions' to a non-existing welfare state and the lack of social housing. *Gecekondu* inhabitants vary ethnically, but commonly represent 'the poor' and almost 'the under classed' groups in society. According to government figures, '84 percent of the squatter settlement in Turkey are inhabited by migrants from rural areas' (Karpat, 1976, p2). This might include Gypsy-Roma groups to Kurds that were forced to leave their towns and ended up in cities. However, it was not until the 1980s that the government came up with more established laws:

> [T]hese settlements have been spread over more than 40 cities, and therefore a new approach needs to be considered to prevent the use of *gecekondus* as a tool to earn money by the squatters via implementations

> of transformation projects. The primary purposes of the new approach would be upgrading the unplanned and unhealthy illegal settlements, and thus providing economic, social and cultural improvements to urban areas (Uzun et al., 2010, p206-207).

The most important intervention was the 1984 Municipal Code which enabled municipalities to define the rights of the cities with the privatisation of services including housing and planning (Dossick et al., 2012, p10; Eraydin and Tasan-Kok, 2014, p117-118). TOKI, which translates as The Mass Housing Association, or The Administration for Collective Housing, was established in 1984 and aimed to address the long-lasting housing issue of low-income people by offering them cooperatives with affordable credit (Turkun, 2011, p65). To fund housing cooperatives the 'Collective Housing Fund' was founded alongside TOKI in 1984 (Perouse, 2015, p172). Between 1984 and 2003, TOKI directly constructed 43,000 houses and 940,000 units were given a credit opportunity by the Mass Housing Fund (Gunay et al., 2015, p223). As Ozdemir explains, up until 2001 TOKI's role and responsibility was still minor with fewer than 1,000 employees. The organization was weakened even more when the TOKI fund was transferred to the national budget, meaning TOKI did not have its own budget nor independence (Ozdemir, 2011, p1104-1105). However, in 2004 Law no. 5162 replaced the Mass Housing Law of 1984 and put TOKI in charge of the collective housing of 340,000 units and an increasing number of urban redevelopment projects (Mutman, 2013, p101). Between 2003 and 2011, 510,000 dwellings were constructed and in Istanbul, TOKI outsourced its management to a private company called Bogazici Yonetim A.S (Perouse, 2015, p174-175).

New and altered laws facilitated the process of urban redevelopment and in effect made it easier to declare many neighbourhoods as what was termed 'transformation/redevelopment zones', which covered various concerns from disaster risks to *gecekondus* and other illegal settlements. The government encouraged urban redevelopment projects by empowering TOKI and creating new investment opportunities with public-private partnerships. TOKI's goals were 'to renew the poor neighbourhoods in cities, to transform some parts of the cities and city centres to accommodate them to the changing needs of the day, and to clear and rebuild houses which are deteriorating and build new houses in their place' (Bayraktar, 2007, p45 cited in Ozdemir, 2011, p1105). To make this redevelopment process more organised and controlled, a new sector was founded within TOKI called the Urban Transformation Department which collaborated with municipalities and chose urban redevelopment areas (Ozdemir, 2011, p1105). TOKI's goal was to 'clean up' Turkey through various construction projects (Perouse, 2015, p181). Cleaning up

might address *gecekondu* areas also known as 'the slum problem' in big cities of Turkey (Karaman, 2013, p722).

TOKI came up with a collective housing fund in the name of helping the urban poor. This legitimised and sped up the urban redevelopment processes but the housing for the urban poor 'only represented 6.5% of the units put on sale' (Perouse, 2015, p177). Once an area went through urban transformation and the urban poor were evicted, they were given TOKI housing in various locations, often in the outskirts of the city. However, the housing was only available as long as the monthly payments were made, and if there were not, TOKI demanded the housing back and placed it on the market (Perouse, 2015, p177). This approach towards collective housing led to double exploitation of the urban poor.

The areas that are deemed upper-middle class are not controlled by TOKI to the same degree. Their transformation is planned and provided for by private companies or they have become hosts to public-private partnerships. In some cases, private construction companies with the approval of the state carry out urban redevelopment projects. As Turk and Altes explain, 'Urban renewal projects, both public initiatives and private sector projects, are market-oriented. That is, projects are dominated by expensive, profit-generating housing or commercial uses' (2014, p391). Galataport project, a flagship development by Karakoy's urban waterfront, can be understood as an example to this practice.

The AKP, currently in power, designed and/or altered the laws that are explored in this chapter and the most common term they used was 'urban transformation'. Urban redevelopment and transformation have been chosen as the main terms for this research to minimise confusion, as there are various other terms both in Turkish and English such as 'urban renewal' and 'regeneration':

> The term 'urban transformation' has been at the centre of the public authorities' urban discourse since the start of the 2000s – a magic term used by politicians at all levels as a tool to justify how they organise the physical sphere. The policy rhetoric surrounding it is quite persuasive, promoted as it is to the general public as a solution to almost all of the city's ills: it helps to avoid earthquakes, reduces crime, decreases segregation, removes stigma, increases poor living conditions and even combats terrorism! The highly convincing nature of such political discourse has contributed significantly to the formation of a legitimate base and support among the mainstream population for the concept, and its easy translation into Istanbul's urban space (Islam, 2010, p60-61).

To make these changes fast and practical, the laws had to be transformed, redesigned or recreated. This has triggered and legitimised the urban redevelopment and transformation of Istanbul. Between 2004 and 2008, 11.543 buildings were demolished in Istanbul and the goal was to 're-create' the city (Yonucu, 2013, p225). '11 historic zones in Istanbul's Beyoglu, Fatih (in Historic Peninsula), Eyup, Zeytinburnu and Tuzla districts were declared as "renewal sites" between 2006 and 2010' (Gunay, 2015, p102). Another 40 areas in Istanbul were notified as urban transformation sites between July 2012 to December 2013 [translated by author] (Yalcintan et al., 2014, p13).

5.2 Law Making

As explored in Chapter 1, Istanbul was disregarded and neglected after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire with the rise of the new capital, Ankara. Despite this, in the 1950s with industrialisation in the big cities and migration from rural to urban there was an increase in the number of illegal settlements in Istanbul. Years of neglect and then the increasing number of illegal settlements added to Istanbul's decline up until the elections of the 1950 when the then elected Democrat government promised to invest in Istanbul's urban planning with liberal policies. As Gul describes 'This period saw the demolition of thousands of buildings, the expropriation of many properties and the construction of gigantic boulevards, both within and outside the Istanbul Peninsula' (Gul, 2009, p140). The construction of avenues in the 1950s were attempts for the 'clearance of deprived areas' and they were introduced as a part of a 'modernity project' (Gunay, 2015, p98). The Democrat government at the time used a very similar discourse to the current government in terms of the importance of religious expression, and they underlined the value of the Ottoman past for Istanbul (Gul, 2009, p131). However, the interventions were not significant enough to completely transform Istanbul, and the government's main concern was to solve the issue of the *gecekondus*. As Uzun, et al., explain: 'The Demolition of Illegally Built Structures Law No. 5431 [*Kacak Yapilarin Yikilmasi Kanunu*] and the Gecekondu Law No. 775, enacted in 1949 and 1966, respectively, ruled to demolish slums and *gecekondus* and to prevent the construction of new ones' (2010, p205). These laws, however, did not succeed as they did not provide any solution to the long-lasting housing issue and they were not linked to other urban policies, other than the building of avenues.

The military coup of September 1980 transformed the constitution and supported neoliberal economic policies with new laws. During this period some legal changes were made with regards to urban planning, and local governments were given authority and power, this included the foundation of TOKI and the Mass Housing Fund (Celik et al., 2016, p30). The foundation of TOKI and the creation of the Mass Housing Fund were the most radical solutions to housing issues; the most problematic and long lasting one being the illegal *gecekondu* settlements on public lands. As mentioned earlier, renting or building *gecekondus* on any empty land was historically an organic solution to the lack of social housing and reliance on private ownership. The pace of migration from rural to urban areas led to the construction of more *gecekondus* and Istanbul's population increased from 1.166.477 in 1950 to 14.657.434 in 2015 [translated by author] (Gokburun, 2017):

> While urbanization was steadily increasing during 1950s-70s, it was during the 1980s that Turkey experienced a major surge of rural migrants to cities, causing rapid expansion of informal areas in urban settlements. Thereafter, a permissive tenure regime granted squatters on urban public land legal status that prompted both households and host municipalities to invest in their dwellings and neighborhood infrastructure (World Bank, 2015, p669).

In order to offer a radical solution to the long-lasting housing issue, the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, Habitat II, was held in Istanbul in 1996 and the main aim of the meeting consisted of protecting historical sites. Istanbul is known to be home to both historical sites and illegal settlements, and the members of the Conference concluded that Istanbul should conserve its urban structure by maintaining and rehabilitating the city's existing housing and solving the *gecekondu* issue (Gunay et al., 2015, p223).

Only three years after Habitat II, in August 1999, an earthquake with a magnitude of 7.5 hit the Marmara region which is the most populated and dense area of the country consisting of eleven cities including Istanbul. The disaster killed 18,243 people and destroyed 376,379 homes in a region that already had long-lasting housing issues (Gunay, 2018, p131). It was followed by another major earthquake with a magnitude of 7.2 the same year on 12 November in Duzce, which is 240 km from Istanbul.

These disasters undoubtedly damaged Istanbul and the Marmara region, which is the industrial heart of Turkey (Gunay, 2018, p131). The earthquakes were later regarded as major push factors to realising how important safety in the construction sector was. This created a serious public

demand for stable, secure and earthquake proof housing and became the main reason for the destruction of insecure buildings. This also helped in legitimating urban transformation projects in the name of safety. Law no. 5366, 6306 and 5393 are all designed on the basis of prospective earthquakes. These laws will be discussed in detail later in this chapter.

The economic crisis in 2001 was the end result of a political crisis and the aftermath of the 1999 earthquake; it caused the bankruptcy of many companies and increased inflation and unemployment (Celik et al., 2016, p30). The government of the time lost its popularity, and this created further political and economic uncertainty. In 2001, the AKP was founded by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the former mayor of Istanbul from 1994 to 1998. The crisis also created an immediate need to invest in different sectors with construction posed as an answer to the earthquake and safer housing. This boosted the establishment and success of the AKP (Lelandais, 2014, p1792). The AKP's promises consisted of making Istanbul a global city with international investments, ending the housing crisis, including offering a permanent solution to the long-lasting *gecekondu* issue, providing earthquake-proof buildings, and rectifying the financial crisis. In 2002, the AKP came into power with plans to materialise these promises.

> The solution has been found in the promotion of planning and development projects by accelerating the construction industry, which was already boosted during the 1990s via the emergence of Real Investment Trusts and the privatisation of a number of urban public constructions (Enlil 2001 cited in Lelandais, 2014, p72-73).

The AKP carried out many reforms and made urban planning the state's responsibility (Lelandais, 2016, p292). Correspondingly TOKI was presented as the government's tool to carrying out urban redevelopment projects. In other words, the AKP government made the decision to take responsibility for the country's long-lasting housing issue and illegal settlement which were highlighted by the 1999 earthquake. To make these changes legal, the following laws were implemented.

5.3 The Laws

5.3.1 Law no. 5162

Date of Acceptance: 05.05.2004

Toplu Konut Kanununda ve Genel Kadro ve Usulu Hakkinda Kanun Hukmunde Karanamenin Eki Cetvellerin Toplu Konut Idaresi Baskanligina Ait Bolumunde Degisiklik Yapilmasi Hakkinda Kanun **(Amendment of the Mass Housing Law and General Staff and Management Concerning the Parts on Head of Mass Housing Association (TOKI) Law)**

Law no. 5162 is the first law to make radical changes to the Mass Housing Law that was first introduced in 1983. Many articles of this former law were amended, and the structure and the contents of TOKI were transformed. One of the most significant alterations and at the core of this law was 'to transfer Mass Housing Authority (TOKI) to the [then] Office of the Prime Minister' (Gunay, 2018, p131). This amendment made TOKI a powerful authority that became a monopoly in terms of planning and was directly controlled by the state rather than local governments (Balaban, 2012, p30-31). This is crucial to understanding the relationship between government and urban planning in Istanbul. TOKI's overall control might have slowed down the first wave of gentrification which was accidental and led by individuals. However, the more recent wave of gentrification was 'designed' and led by the government, with the increasing power that was given to TOKI.

The law also enabled private investors and public-private partnerships to be able to work with TOKI in *gecekondu* areas to conduct urban transformation projects with the use of construction companies such as Agaoglu, Tasyapi, and Calik (Cavusoglu & Strutx, 2014; Gurek, 2008 cited in Lelandais, 2016, p293; Lelandais, 2014, p1792). Since 2008, the number of construction companies has risen from 7035 to 13,733 in 2011 (Kurtulus, et. al., 2012 cited in Celik et al., 2016, p32). This can be regarded as a neoliberal intervention to *gecekondu* areas by preparing them for any type of transformation by private, albeit state sanctioned investors.

This 2004 law highlighted the transformation of *gecekondus* and *gecekondu* lands in case of 'natural disaster' (*tabiî afet*) by underlining the power and authority of the presidency. The same law also gave the presidency the power to confiscate any land regardless of whom it belonged to. There is a direct sense here that TOKI is a top-down and hierarchical institution with a strong authority to declare any land a transformation zone and, with that, to be able to determine the fate of chosen lands depending on the type of project it proposes. Although the

details remain vague, the law gives the Ministry the power to determine the housing prices, the form of payment and the period of payment.

5.3.2 Law no. 5216

Date of Acceptance: 10.07.2004

***Buyuksehir Belediyesi Kanunu* (Metropolitan Municipality Law)**

This, the second key law to be analysed, is related to the previous one and gave municipalities rights to authorise urban redevelopment projects and select areas for transformation (Lelandais, 2014, p1792). The power that was centralised in TOKI became decentralised in local areas. However, TOKI was still more powerful than municipalities. The local governments had more power when deciding a neighbourhood's transformation. However, to make a project materialise, municipalities needed to find construction companies, be those public or private. TOKI's approval of projects was necessary, which made TOKI even more powerful. This law functioned as an umbrella by gathering small municipalities and linking them to TOKI in the terminal stage. The law therefore changed the function and responsibility of municipalities and their relation to TOKI completely. Municipalities in Turkey are considered akin to local governments that are responsible for neighbourhoods and their transformation. With this law, even if municipalities did not approve some of the projects, TOKI could still conduct them and act as a higher authority.

This law is highly detailed and one of the lengthiest ones, consisting of seven parts. There are many articles in this law mentioning construction and the creation of 'places' for the public, such as car parks, sports and cultural facilities, and some articles dictate the uses of the outdoor spaces (squares, streets, roads). These articles are important in terms of the urban realm as it plans and regulates what the public means, what it entails and how it is regulated. For example, the Metropolitan Municipality Law was the first to mention the regulation of the urban realm and public space. However, the law mainly frames the urban as an area that needs to be built and be regulated. The term tends to see the urban as given, and almost as a blank slate without taking society or previous occupants and uses into consideration. This law does touch upon the protection of certain historical places that hold value of historic and heritage value, but it does

not provide further information on what cultural and natural heritage means for the government and lawmakers. The language is also quite vague as all the terms and concepts are not clarified; historical cities are not defined or listed, for example. This law gives the municipalities the right to evacuate and demolish buildings that are found to be 'risky' (*riskli*) in the case of a 'natural disaster' (*tabiî afet*) and become a 'danger to the safety of life' and 'the safety of property' (*can ve mal güvenliği açısından tehlike oluşturan*), effectively meaning any building, whatever its heritage value, can be destroyed.

5.3.3 Law no. 5366

Date of Acceptance: 16.06.2005

Yipranan Tarihi ve Kulturel Tasinmaz Varliklarin Yenilenerek Korunmasi ve Yasatilarak Kullanilmasi Hakkinda Kanun **(Law on the Protection of Deteriorated Historic and Cultural Heritage through Renewal and Re-use)**

As previously mentioned, the 1999 earthquake created demand for urban policies about safety, and Law no. 5366 proposed to check buildings and investigate the ones deemed to be under risk of a disaster. The same law also aimed to transform and redevelop deprived inner-city areas that consisted of old buildings (Gunay et al. 2015 cited in Gunay, 2018, p132). With this law, TOKI was empowered to conduct urban redevelopment projects not only in areas found to be risky in case of a natural disaster, but anywhere considered as 'deteriorated' (*yıpranan*), which had 'begun to lose its characteristic' (*özelliğini kaybetmeye yüz tutmuş*). This typically happened in historic inner-city areas (Lelandais, 2016, p292). The purpose was to 'protect by renewing' (*yenilenerek korunma*). This makes the law vague as there are no clear standards on how to define deteriorated historical and cultural immovable assets. The main method used is selecting old buildings and/or historical neighbourhoods and highlighting the precautionary measures against a 'risk of a natural disaster' (*tabiî afet risklerine karşı tedbirler alınması*) so the immediate transformation would be legitimised and approved. This can be considered the first law to enable a systematic transformation, not only in *gecekondu* areas but anywhere that falls into the deteriorated category. This raises a whole series of questions as to what constitutes 'historical and cultural immovables' as used in the law, or how it is constituted through this law. A series of interventions and demolitions of public spaces and historical buildings in Istanbul materialised after the enactment of this law, and even created reaction and resistance

from the public, the most famous of which was the Gezi Park movement of 2013 (Celik et al., 2016, p54). The resistance movement started after the government decided to demolish Gezi Park and build a replica of an Ottoman Military Barracks (*Topcu Kislasi*) that was demolished in 1940. Prior and following this, many other demolitions took place. These demolitions did not necessarily include historical buildings from the Ottoman-era, but they included several cultural centres such as the AKM which was built in the 1960s and the Emek Cinema which was built in the late 1880s; both buildings were emptied in 2008 and 2010 respectively and demolished in 2018 and 2013 because of a risk of collapse in case of a natural disaster.

As Ahunbay points out, the term renewal 'poses an interesting contradiction with the concept of conservation' (Ahunbay, 2008 cited in Turkun, 2011, p66). This law made many big urban transformations and redevelopment projects happen in historically deprived areas such as Tarlabasi, which saw the removal of Kurdish people, trans people, and other minority groups; and Sulukule, which was discussed in the literature review with regards to the displacement of local Gypsy-Roma community:

> The threat and pressure of urgent expropriation makes citizens feel powerless in negotiations and makes it tempting to them to sell to third parties who offer more than the amount offered by the municipality. The reality of this threat was made evident in Sulukule, one of the oldest districts of gypsies in Istanbul, where a renewal project was realized according to Law No. 5366. The result was the demolition of almost all the houses and displacement of all the inhabitants. Tarlabasi, a run-down area of immigrants near the city centre, was another declared 'renewal area'. The municipality intends to convert the buildings into gated hotels, shopping spaces and residences, with the goal of triggering a complete physical change and gentrification in this densely populated poor area (Turkun, 2011, p67).

The term renewal in the context of this law means restore and upgrade any form of housing that includes clearance of not only deprived areas, but other neighbourhoods of Istanbul (Gunay et al., 2015, p225 cited in Gunay, 2018).

Terms that are repeatedly used in these laws include 'deteriorated' (*yıpranan*) and 'begun to lose its edge' (*özelliğini kaybetmeye yüz tutmuş*) with more positive terms that are presented as solutions like 'protection' (*koruma*), 'reconstruction' (*yeniden inşa*) and 'restoration' (*restore edilerek*). Therefore the overall language used promises to protect areas that are in undesirable conditions. There is also assurance of providing housing which is crucial for Turkish society. Natural disaster risks are mentioned to ensure the government and lawmakers acknowledge that Turkey is an earthquake prone country, and it is wise to take measures to prevent damage.

Throughout this law there is no mention of demolition and/or displacement. Instead, the language is protective by highlighting the importance of renewal and necessity of safe and secure buildings for the public. Though it led to the destruction of many historical sites in the name of safety, it did not propose renewing or reconstructing them.

This law does not question or elaborate on the criteria which is used to deem some areas as renewal areas. However, it allows both public and private companies to conduct the projects, without a specified criteria. It gives the impression that private entities could be anyone. This practice can be observed in Tarlabasi and Karakoy where redevelopment projects occurred and the structure of the old buildings were preserved, while the interior was mostly renovated. This is why the term renovation is used in this law, it aims to reiterate the main goal which is to protect and to repair. However, the law allows intervention if there is a risk of natural disaster and it has the power to legitimise large changes for the sake of safety. This article also gives municipalities the authority to intervene in these projects if they are subject to risk. The terms used for the types of interventions include 'making regulations', 'prohibitions' and 'liquidation'. This includes regulating and/or demolishing public spaces and controlling the public realm with various strategies, such as developing new highly secure buildings and limiting spontaneity in streets by redesigning public spaces.

5.3.4 Law no. 5393

Date of Acceptance: 03.07.2005

Belediye Kanunu **(Enactment of Municipality Law)**

Law no. 5393 is the alteration of Municipality Law that gives more responsibility and authority to municipalities in terms of structuring the urban. This allows urban redevelopment to become localised and left to municipal council's decision-making organs. However, it is still top-down, as the municipal council has links to TOKI and the government. According to this law, municipalities are public legal entities that are responsible for the needs of residents in the area that have a population of 5,000 or more and a municipality consists of the municipal council, municipal committee and the mayor (TBMM, 2005b, nd). 'The municipality may adopt urbanization and development projects in order to reconstruct and restore the ruined parts of the city; to create housing areas, industrial and commercial zones, technology parks and social

facilities; to take measures against the earthquake risk or to protect the historical and cultural structure of the city' (Turkun, 2011, p66). 'Ruined' (*eskiyen*) parts mean commonly the inner-city areas with older buildings that are not structurally secure and/or have not been restored for a long time. Some of these buildings might be deserted or partly ruined. If not, they might simply be perceived to be at risk of collapse in the event of a natural disaster.

This way, TOKI and the municipalities became authorities with the ability to change the city. That said, TOKI has the ultimate power to carry out urban redevelopment projects even without the approval of municipalities. The municipalities' main role is to identify the areas that need intervention and, from there, work alongside TOKI and/or private investors. Although the municipalities were given power to detect areas to be redeveloped and transformed, TOKI has much greater authority, including carrying out projects without the municipalities' approval.

The municipalities are also responsible for detecting the ruined parts of the city to rebuild and restore. However, the language of this article is also vague as it supports the construction of residential and/or commercial areas under transformation and redevelopment projects. It offers two different options under the same article; to take measures against earthquake risk, while also seeking to protect the historical and cultural heritage of the city.

5.3.5 Law no. 5609

Date of Acceptance: 22.03.2007

Gecekondu Kanununda Degisiklik Yapilmasina Dair Kanun **(Amendment of the *Gecekondu* Law)**

Law no. 5609 from 2007 alters and amends various older laws including The Law on *Gecekondu* dated 1966. As noted above, TOKI was announced as the main body to select areas for construction and became in charge of selling public lands in 2007 with this law (Lelandais, 2016, p293). This law replaced the Gecekondu Law (No. 775), whereby the tasks and duties of the Ministry of Public Works and Settlement concerning squatter housing areas were transferred to TOKI. Squatter housing in the case of Turkey consists of *gecekondus* and illegal settlements without the government's legal recognition. These houses are illegally built and then occupied. 'Accordingly, TOKI is now able to determine the boundaries of "squatter

housing rehabilitation areas", "squatter housing clearance areas" and "squatter housing prevention areas". The law requires that municipalities prepare development plans under the guidance of TOKI, which has the right to approve or object to those plans' (Turkun, 2011, p69-70).

Almost every part of this law took power away from the Ministry of Settlement and gave it to TOKI. This way TOKI became more powerful than Ministries that are responsible for Housing, Development and Settlement. The *Gecekondu* Fund was also transferred to TOKI and in summary, the rising authority and responsibility of TOKI was reassured. However, it is important to note that even though TOKI has turned into an important institution for urban redevelopment and collective housing, it still needs approval from the Ministry of Finance when it comes to buildings and properties and the *Gecekondu* Fund.

5.3.6 Law no. 6306

Date of Acceptance: 16.05.2012

***Afet Riski Altindaki Alanlarin Donusturulmesi Hakkinda Kanun* (Law on Transformation of Areas at Risk of Natural Disaster)**

It can be argued that Law no. 6303 is on a similar vein to Law no. 5366 in terms of redeveloping the areas which are prone to earthquakes. However it takes the previous laws one step forward by making certain alterations. The law was introduced with the slogan *making slums history* (Gunay, 2013, p5). One of the main reasons for the transformation is described as 'buildings within or outside risk areas that have completed their economic life, or which are scientifically and technically proven to be at risk of demolition or high damage' (Gunay, 2018, p132). 'Completed their economic life' (*ekonomik ömrünü tamamlamış olan*) would mean that a building can no longer house anyone and therefore cannot provide any financial benefits. This term can be read alongside the term 'ruined parts' in the Law no. 5393. Both terms refer to an area or a building that cannot be actively used and might be at high risk of collapse. As mentioned earlier, illegal settlements and unsafe buildings are common aspects of daily life in Turkey which surfaced with the 1999 earthquake, but with this law the government had the power to carry out urban redevelopment anywhere that was selected. The law also facilitated agreements with private investors and public-private partnerships, though TOKI has to be the

main body controlling, approving, implementing and supervising and making more land available for urban development, while representing the state and creating a positive discourse on how 'modern' the city would become (Perouse, 2015, p182). This process has many similarities with Imrie and Raco's observation of the 1980s and 1990s in Britain's urban policy that also focused on property-led transformation, while originally supporting 'global corporate investors' (2003, p3). In Turkey, privatisation became an ordinary practice after the introduction of neoliberal policies in the 1980s (Gunaydin, 2006, p6). TOKI, as a public institution works with private investors and many public land and buildings are privatised, these include green areas, woods and parks with the support of the current government. One of the most highlighted aspects driving redevelopment in Istanbul is the risk of natural disaster and specifically earthquakes. The majority of demolitions in Caddebostan were carried out because the buildings were considered to be 'risky' (*riskli*) in the event of a natural disaster. As discussed in Chapter 1, the risk of an earthquake specifically can be regarded as an excuse to conduct any demolitions/construction work.

Knowing that earthquakes are prevalent in Istanbul, disaster assembly stations were designated in the city. Depending on the structure of the neighbourhood, these stations can be squares, parks, roundabouts and/or playgrounds. Of the 2016 states, it is claimed by the government that there are a total of 2354 assembly stations in Istanbul, but this number is somewhat questionable (Demirtas, 2019, np). In 2019, The Union of Chambers of Turkish Engineers and Architects (TMMOB) and Istanbul City Defence informed the public that there were only 77 assembly stations left in the city (Bianet, 2019, np). The Urban Planners Association claimed that there were 480 medium size stations and 270 of them had been transformed into Shopping Malls and Luxury Housing Projects (Demirtas, 2019, np). Many other assembly stations have already been transformed such is the case for the Ali Sami Yen Stadium where the assembly station was switched to the Torun Centre and the land belonging to 17th Regional Directorate of Highways was switched to the Zorlu Shopping Centre (Finans Gundem, 2018, np). By privatising these areas, the current government creates a competition between investors so these areas can be rented, sold or used for governmental purposes, and not by the public. The idea of accessible public space has been challenged once again, and this is a significant example of perceiving public space as *given* to the public, not owned by it (Butler, 2015).

The redeveloped areas further increase in value as the process pushes up land and property prices, including the areas provided solely by TOKI. 'To give but one example, land belonging

to the Zincirlikuyu Public Works Office (Besiktas/Istanbul), which went on sale at $150,000 in 2001, was finally sold in 2007 for the sum of $800,000' (Perouse, 2015, p171). This can explain the direct initiative that was given to TOKI and the encouragement private investors are given when it comes to Istanbul's public lands and urban redevelopment projects. However, the area needs to be considered as 'risky' (*riskli*) in order to be selected and approved for transformation. Once an area is selected and defined as risky, the locals then have to sell their properties to the municipality and leave the area to redevelopment (Cavusoglu and Strutz, 2014, p147 cited in Lelandais, 2016, p293).

The language of this law is clearer compared to other articles in other laws. Instead of urban transformation and redevelopment projects, the term 'renewal' (*yenileme*) is used. The language aims to legitimise renewal by implying that it would be better, especially in areas that are under risk of disaster and/or considered risky. Risky structure means a building that is not strong enough to survive an earthquake or is located in a risky area and might collapse. This law is also the first and only law that mentions the public service announcement of disaster risk and urban transformation. Not only must warnings be published regularly and repetitively, but they also offer urban transformation and redevelopment as the ultimate solution to natural disasters.

According to this law, the government planned the steps to be taken and the language to be used in the public service announcement that can be regarded as a warning for prospective natural disasters. This way it can create a public belief in the urgent necessity of transformation. Renewal, transformation and redevelopment are presented as necessary solutions in the areas that are deemed to be under the risk of natural disaster. The General Directorate of Infrastructure and Urban Transformation Services is responsible for carrying out the steps to prepare an area for transformation and redevelopment. Once projects are carried out in selected areas, their physical, social, economic and cultural structures change as they are either located in open areas (forests, green areas, public spaces, parks) or in *gecekondu* communities. This article does not specify what happens to these areas or their inhabitants after renewal.

5.4 Outcome of Laws & Conclusion

As explained above, these laws can be understood as connected, with each law preparing the base for the following. The common point of these laws is the constant encouragement for intervention in the cityscape. Although each law has a different focus, they each aim to facilitate change by giving various institutions high levels of power and authority, such as TOKI, Municipalities, the Ministry of Environment and Urbanism, and the Ministry of Finance. Once these laws materialised, not only did *gecekondu* areas change, but transformation and redevelopment expanded to many areas and neighbourhoods in Istanbul. The combination of these rapid changes on the cityscape has had an impact on practices of daily life, as is further discussed in the following chapters.

The promises of the AKP and the language that was used in the 2011 elections was a more radical step towards creating cities to accommodate not only tourists, but also business centres and leisure activities (malls, residences) which were not always sensitive to social and cultural characteristics of the areas (Dincer, 2011 cited in Lelandais, 2016, p295). As of 2012, urban redevelopment in Istanbul has become more systematic and thereby more visible.

The language that is used in these laws highlights the power of TOKI and the Municipalities, but the language of the laws is vague when it comes to types or outcomes of projects. There is little in the way of detailed information given. The overall discourse enables the legitimation of transformation and the regulation in public with new housing and/or TOKI projects under multiple guises. Terms such as risky and under the risk of natural disaster are used extensively to identify and select transformation areas. This means any area that falls under any of these terms can become a redevelopment zone. Many large projects have been made possible after these laws, including restoring and renewing historical buildings, landmarks and nodes (Lelandais, 2014, p1794).

The current situation with regards to the redevelopment in Istanbul is a combination of several agendas. There is an economic aspect which is deeply profit orientated and regards the cityscape as a business investment arena with the help of the booming construction sector. Ultimately this might impact daily life, streets, *mahalles*, public spaces and the city with ongoing constructions. These outcomes are observed in three different areas of the fieldwork in Istanbul, which I turn to next. It can be argued that there are communities that might become disadvantaged after the areas complete their gentrification. However, there are many who would profit and benefit.

More importantly, the overall process of transformation and the number of constructions it creates have a tremendous impact on public space and to what extent it is understood, used, and reconfigured. I have now explored six important urban laws designed or altered between 2004 and 2012 and explained how they enable the urban redevelopment and constructions in Istanbul, and their subsequent impact on the use of public space. The next chapter will explain the three areas in which the fieldwork was conducted.

Chapter 6: Descriptive Analysis of Case Study Areas

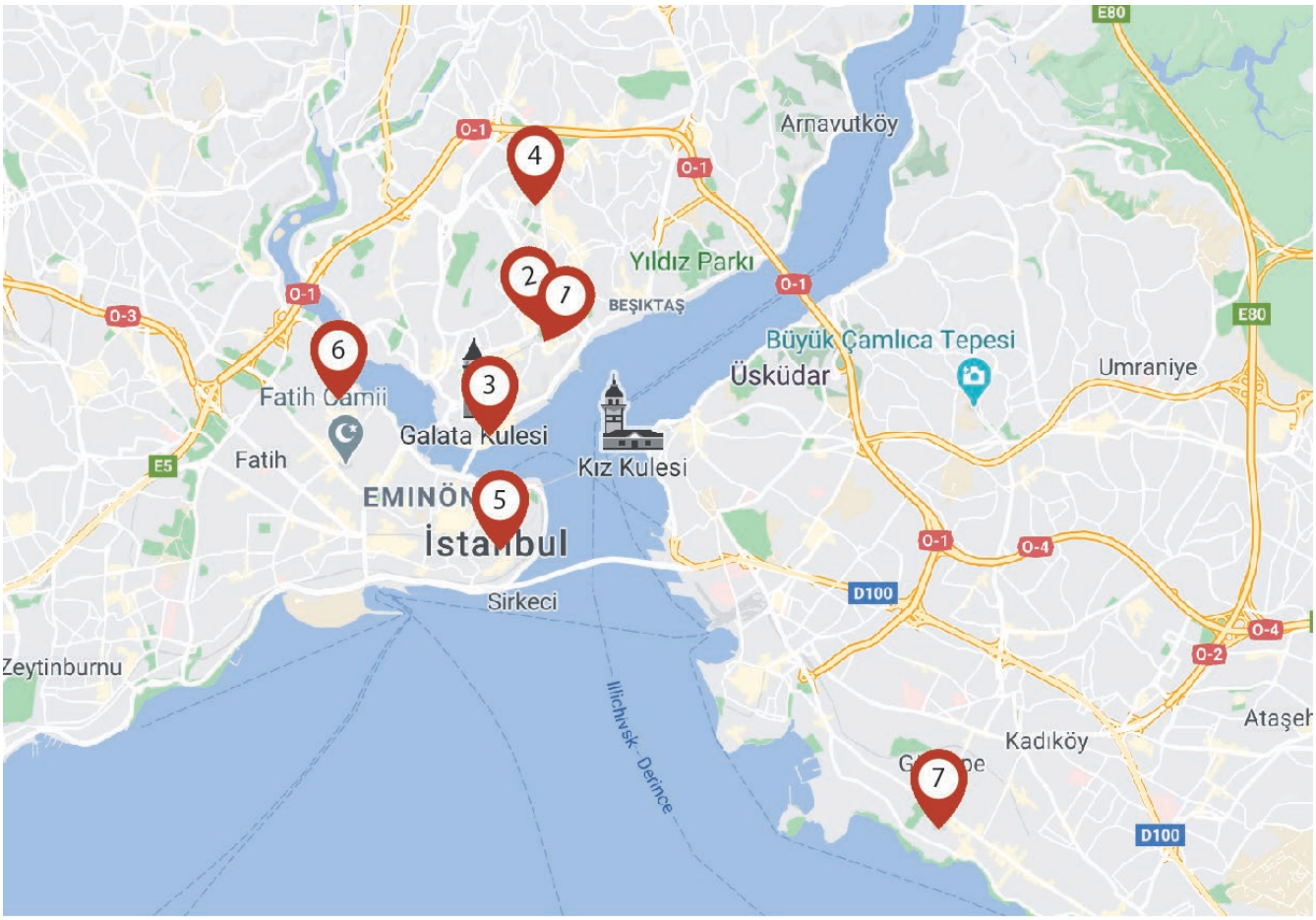

Figure 6.1 Map of Istanbul sourced from Google Maps, (2020a)

1. Taksim Square
2. Gezi Park
3. Karakoy
4. Bomonti
5. Hagia Sophia
6. Balat
7. Caddebostan

Previous chapters have introduced the three areas that were selected for the fieldwork between September and December 2018. This chapter, drawing on themes and questions raised until now, explores each area in more depth. It will also expand on existing literature on gentrification and public space in these neighbourhoods, and more generally, across Istanbul. The aim is to introduce each areas' historical, cultural, economic, political, ethnic, and religious

context as well as the local demographics. The areas are Balat in Fatih Municipality, Caddebostan in Kadikoy Municipality and Karakoy in Beyoglu Municipality.

6.1 Balat

Figure 6.1.1 Map of Balat sourced from Google Maps, (2019a)

The concept *mahalle* was introduced in the previous chapters as essentially meaning 'neighbourhood' in Turkey. The first *mahalle* to be introduced was Balat. Balat is an old traditional *mahalle* by the Halic waterfront in the municipality of Fatih and as of 2019 had a population of 13.091 (TUIK, 2019, np). Fatih is a traditional municipality with religious/conservative politic tendencies and where the question of secularism and postsecularism is very much apparent. The results of November 2015 general elections were 75.25% in favour of the AKP (Secim Atlasi, 2015a, np). However, the recent local elections of June 2019, saw significant changes for Istanbul with the municipality of Fatih voting 49.51% CHP (The Republican People's Party)[4] and 49.37% AKP (NTV, 2019a, np).

[4] The Republican People's Party is the founding party of Republic of Turkey and founded by Ataturk himself (Ciddi, 2008).

Historically, Balat was home to a Jewish community which was relocated to the neighbourhood from Spain during the 15th century (Akin, 2015; Bezmez, 2008; Ergun, 2004; Turkun, 2015). As Turkun states 'The majority of the non-Muslim community gradually left the neighbourhood because of the Wealth Tax in 1942' [translated by author] (2015, p156), the foundation of the State of Israel in 1948, the Greek Pogrom in 1955 and forced migration of Greek citizens to Greece in 1960 (Dincer, 2011; Gunay and Dokmeci, 2012). Just like in many mega cities, once some groups move out, other groups immediately move in and the first wave was from the Black Sea region between the 1950s and 1960s (Ergun, 2004; Soytemel, 2015).

Between the 1950s and the 1980s, the area was an industrial centre with many 'industrial factories, iron, steel and lathe workshops, textiles, leather and press industries, as well as the main shipyard of Istanbul' (Soytemel, 2015, p68). The area was accordingly attractive for working class families, however, excessive industrialisation polluted the Golden Horn and damaged its historical allure (Gokturk et al., 2010; Gunay and Dokmeci, 2012). As Akin explains, 'There were a number of demolitions by the Golden Horn waterfront between 1984-1986 in order to clean the water from pollution, and Balat's waterfront was also affected by mass demolitions and lost buildings around the waterfront and that section was left with plain green areas' [translated by author] (2015, p22). These spaces became part of Istanbul's mayor, Bedrettin Dalan's, waterfront revitalization project and 'after expensive and extensive efforts, the water was cleaned and industry was moved out' (Gokturk et al., 2010, p16-17). Once the shipyards over to Tuzla, a common picture of post-industrial decline began to emerge with poverty and the decline of existing buildings (Turkun, 2015, p157). By the 1990s, groups of Kurdish people from the East and Southeast of Turkey who were forced to leave their homes moved to Balat [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015), demonstrating further how the social fabric of the area has constantly changed:

> […] Balat and Fener-former Jewish and Greek neighborhoods on the Golden Horn-have long been described by the city municipality and in the language of common knowledge as run-down and not desirable. They refer to the marginality of the current inhabitants of these areas, the Gypsies, Kurdish migrants, refugees from countries in Central Africa and Asia, or other poor inhabitants (Mills, 2005, p446).

Balat was 'rediscovered' in the late 1990s. The first rehabilitation project for Fener-Balat started in 1998 and was funded by the EU after the Habitat II Conference in 1996, and continued until 2008 (Akin, 2015; Atik, 2015; Islam, 2005; Turkun, 2015). Since the area became known

to the EU, further projects followed. Balat was 'reinvented' during the 2000s with investments from the EU with the purpose of renovating the old houses. 'By the 2008, 121 buildings from the 19th century had been restored; 84 of these were houses and 33 were shops' [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p160).

The KEDV's survey results verifies Mills' (2005) and Turkun's (2015) accounts of the social fabric of the neighbourhood: 'There were not any non-Muslim families and 50% of the participants were from the Black Sea Region and had been in the area for the last 30-40 years' (Akin, 2015, p27). In another research project conducted between 2007 and 2008, 21% of the respondents in Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray areas were of Kurdish origin (Soytemel, 2015, p69). Unemployment was significant (Soytemel, 2013, 2015), and the sole earner in families, at 98%, was the father [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p168). The KEDV results indicated that while some 'women were happy about the social relations and neighbourliness in the area, and mentioned there was a solidarity network amongst migrants, relationships between neighbours were less highly regarded and cultural differences were cited as an issue by 89%' [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p164). In terms of housing security, further research also found that '60% of families were renting, 7% were living in one-bedroom houses, 46% were living in two-bedrooms households' [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p167). Another important issue that was highlighted by locals was the small size of the apartments and their state of decline (Akin, 2015, p28). It is important to note that old houses in Balat with 2-3 storeys are built on a narrow footprint and have 1 or 2 rooms on each floor (Akin, 2015, p97). These houses were built to accommodate one family but were typically converted into flats to accommodate a family or two on each floor. This points to two important issues in Balat; the accommodation available is not typically fit for families (Turkun, 2015) and many of the flats are in need of rehabilitation. Second, large scale urban transformation projects in the area are not regarded as highly profitable investments. There was considerable resistance to regeneration following the EU funding and instead of demolition, much of the urban change is now 'renovation' (Akin, 2015).

In regards to public space, the small apartments and large families commonly found in low-income areas like Balat can explain the uses of alleyways, sidewalks, entrances of buildings and doorsteps, as extensions of private spaces, and as public spaces at the same time. The KEDV's survey describes how public spaces were used actively in Balat and noted women

sitting on doorsteps while children played in the streets and alleyways (Akin, 2015, p28). This use of the public and private results in a constantly negotiated blurring. This blurriness can be observed in many shapes such as having a cigarette on the sidewalk, drinking tea in a doorway, chopping vegetables for dinner on the doorstep or knitting with neighbours in the alleyway.

There was further data in the KEDV's survey about the social structure of Balat and its reflections on daily life, notably that the area has a patriarchal and conservative structure. There were many Quran courses, domestic work and grocery shopping were entirely done by women and girls [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p168). Bezmez's account also portrays Balat as a religious area; 'There is also one well-organized religious order in the upper parts of the district, a couple of streets away from the coastline, which has quite an influence on the community' (2008, p824).

It is crucial to underline that Balat is one of the oldest settlements in Istanbul. Because of its historical architecture, multi-ethnic past Balat became the target for urban rehabilitation. As explained in earlier chapters, however, top-down projects and urban interventions were not accepted by the locals and were cancelled. Balat then gradually grasped the attention of the creative class. The inner-city location, affordable rent and the idea of living and/or working in 100-year-old buildings has encouraged the arts community and hipsters to relocate to the area. Glass, ceramic, creative writing and barista workshops are commonly held in Balat throughout the week. Some workshops also have coffee shops to accommodate visitors. Vintage cafés, second-hand shops and coworking spaces are making Balat ever more popular. Many eateries and bistros are designed to attract hipsters with an overall theme of nostalgia and neo-bohemia, and this theme is further supported with visual features such as graffiti, recalling the work of Lloyd on neo-bohemia and a 'grit as glamour' aesthetic (2010). In that sense, the case of Balat also overlaps with Mills' account of a nostalgic led gentrification (2008).

Current property prices in Balat are between 160.000TL for a 1-bedroom flat (Ozguc, 2019, np) to 1.690.000TL for a 5 storey 6-bedroom recently renovated historical house (Remax, 2019a, np) (£20K and £216K using 2019 exchange rates). What makes Balat highly interesting is the gap between renovated and declined properties. Renting in Balat has a similar pattern; for historical and renovated flats and house rent is between 3000TL per month for a 4-bedroom house (Hurriyet Emlak, 2019a, np) to 6500TL for a 6-bedroom house (Hurriyet Emlak, 2019b,

np) (£384 and £833 using 2019 exchange rates). Other properties in the area that are not in historical buildings and flats are relatively cheaper; 900TL for a 1-bedroom flat (Sahibinden, 2019a, np) to 1650TL for a 2-bedroom flat (Sahibinden, 2019b, np) (£115 and £211). Properties in Balat that are for rent and sale are mostly in old buildings aged between 16 to 170 years old. Many old houses have been converted into small flats and have 1 to 3 bedrooms and are up to 140m2 (Hurriyet Emlak, 2019c, np). Renovated houses, on the other hand, are larger as they are often sold as an entire house instead of converted flats with some of them up to 260m2 (Remax, 2019b. np). Often, they are presented as 'historical' and 'ideal for artists', and these promotions show the extent to which the area is ready to accommodate the creative class and cultural gentrifiers.

6.2 Caddebostan

Figure 6.2.1 Map of Caddebostan sourced from Google Maps, (2019b)

The second *mahalle* to be described is Caddebostan, a neighbourhood in Kadikoy Municipality, on the Asian side of Istanbul with a population of 20.453 as of 2019 (TUIK, 2019, np). In the last local election of June 2019, Caddebostan voted 82.36% in favour of CHP, the oldest political party in Turkey with the founding ideology of nation-state, secularism and Kemalist values (NTV, 2019b, np) and in the general election of 2015, 69.36% voted again for CHP

(Secim Atlasi, 2015b, np). Traditionally, Kadikoy is known to be one of the strongholds for republic and secular values, so much so that Bagdat Street 'became home to the Republic rally in 1995' (Lotfata and Ataov, 2020, p147). In the 1920s, Caddebostan had one of the few beaches on Istanbul's Asian side and reflected the new 'beach culture' (Gurel, 2016, p31). In the 1930s, the neighbourhood was a suburb full of summer houses (Bahar Bayhan, 29 Kasim 2012 cited in Mutman, 2013, p101).

The Caddebostan neighbourhood covers a part of the famous Bagdat Street (see figure 6.2.1). Bagdat Street and its surrounding areas were transformed, however, from the 1950s onwards when the former Prime Minister, Adnan Menderes, set out to 'beautify the city' and introduced places to update the transport system (Lotfata and Ataov, 2020, p1738). This period also saw the first significant wave of development in the area, where 7.289 buildings were demolished. With the Expropriation (*Istimlak*) Law No. 6830 issued in 1956 to facilitate the acquisition of parcels for the municipalities' reconstruction implementation plans, demolitions of the buildings have become easier (Gutekin, 2017, p405). In order to beautify the city; 'The tramway and 'phaetons', which were used intensively in the summer seasons, were removed from the streets in 1958, after which, buses, minibuses and taxis became the predominant modes of transport in Bagdat Street' (Lotfata and Ataov, 2020, p1744). It is important to mention that the modes of transport in Caddebostan have remained almost exactly the same since 1958 and mostly consists of taxis and shared taxis (*dolmus*[5]) and buses as modes of public transportation. There is the ongoing construction of a new metro line M12 by Gul Park which started on April 28, 2017 (Metro Istanbul, 2019, np). According to the project plan, when the construction is complete there will be a Metro Meydan, two basketball courts and a children's playground for traffic education (IBB, 2019, np). The construction has been halted several times due to the annulments of tenders and then cancelled completely. However, according to Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality's web page, as of August 2019, the construction of Goztepe Metro has restarted (IBB, 2019, np). Once the metro line is complete and opened, it will possibly reshape the rhythm of the area.

[5] Dolmus meaning 'filled'; is a hybrid public transportation model, a vehicle in between a shared cab and a minibus. Dolmus in Istanbul looks like a yellow minibus and it can take up to 9 passengers. It runs a set route but can be hailed at any time as it does not have fixed stops. Passengers can get on and get off as they wish. The price of the journey varies according to the stop passengers get on and where they wish to get off. Only cash is accepted, and passengers need to hand the money to the driver himself by informing him of their destination, this way the fee will be calculated.

Up until the 1960s, Caddebostan and its surrounding areas, including Bagdat Street, remained a suburb for summer homes (Belgesay and Yucesoy, 2018). Although the neighbourhood has always been located by the sea and used as a summer suburb, its waterfront has gone through several transformations. The direct linkage between the sea and the neighbourhood were mostly broken by a highway which functions as an 'edge' between the neighbourhood and the waterfront. As Laarhoven describes:

> Istanbul's embankment was seen as the solution for the congested traffic veins throughout the city in the 1960's. Since this period, the city banks have been extended by using land-fills to create space for the implementation of a littoral drift. Besides the morphological change of the shoreline brought along by this new infrastructure, the surrounding waters were no longer used as they were before. The implemented coastal highway separated the city from the water and caused the loss of what used to be a lively waterfront culture. The typical bustling fishing harbours, the beaches, the water related architecture such as floating pools, platforms and piers almost all disappeared and were replaced by a tabula rasa (Laarhoven, 2007, p9).

The neighbourhood started to change materially and relationality in 1973 with the opening of the Bosphorus Bridge[6] and the Asian side of the city became more accessible for both settlement and industry [translated by author] (Belgesay and Yucesoy, 2018, p440; Berkmen and Turgut, 2019, p158). Since the commute and access became easier, new groups chose to move to the area, and summer houses lost their original purposes and started to be used full time. The original inhabitants of the area consisted of high-income groups that could be considered as the urban elite; a group that was wealthy enough to own a summerhouse in the first place.

> High-income groups have internalized the region since 1970s. Within this period, housing demand increased in the linear line between Minibus way - Bağdat Street and the coastal road also with the effect of high levels of living. Green texture decreased gradually, population density increased and finally it became a texture which has highland values with detached apartments (Ozler et al., 2015, p52).

Bagdat Street became 'the city's most exclusive shopping street' in the 1980s after the military coup and with the help of increasing neoliberal policies and a rise in consumerism (Arslanli et al., 2011, p1070).

[6] The name was changed to 15 July Martyrs Bridge after the attempted coup in July 2016.

One of the most radical transformations of the Kadikoy municipality which has directly impacted Caddebostan waterfront, took place under the mayor of Istanbul, Bedrettin Dalan. Land reclamation in 1984 of 900,000 m2 resulted in a coastal road and further leisure space. The opening of the second Bosphorus Bridge (Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge) in 1988 further cemented the value of the area [translated by author] (Berkmen and Turgut, 2019, p159). The late 1980s and the 1990s saw global brands replacing local ones, and the reputation of the area changed from a cute suburb with beaches, pubs and cinemas to a shopping and consumption spot (Lotfata and Ataov, 2020).

As mentioned in Chapter 5, the area's urban transformation has been ongoing but developed further after 2012 with the implementation of Law no. 6306, also known as the Urban Transformation Law, which concerns the transformation of areas under the risk of natural disaster (Berkmen and Turgut, 2019; Ozgur, 2018; Ozler et al., 2015; Pektetik and Koramaz, 2019). According to Arkitera, '80% of buildings were declared as 'damaged' on Bagdat Street in 2012' and this finding heralded a new wave of redevelopment in the area. (Bahar Bayhan, 29 Kasim 2012, cited in Mutman, 2013, p101). The number of licenses for redevelopment also increased in this period from 185 in 2010 to 1000 by 2017 [translated by author] (Berkmen and Turgut, 2019, p165). As Belgesay and Yucesoy point out, Law no. 6306 has made urban transformation 'a legal obligation' to provide earthquake proof housing (2018, p439). According to Cushman and Wakefield's report on urban transformation as of 2014, Kadikoy Municipality now has one of the highest numbers of urban transformation projects in Istanbul; with 1070 buildings reported as risky (*riskli*) and with 121 buildings, Caddebostan alone is considered one of the riskiest *mahalles* (2014 cited in Ozler et al., 2015, p357). As Ozgur explains 'According to the statistics from the Information Technologies Directory of Kadıköy Municipality, 3684 buildings were demolished between 2012 and 2017' (2018, p175). Berkmen and Turgut, however, highlight that Caddebostan is actually a low-risk area compared to the rest of Istanbul when it comes to natural disaster risk [translated by author] (2019, p157). Ozler et al., echo this statement by explaining that Kadikoy has the second highest number of construction sites especially after 2012, although there is no urgent need for redevelopment and transformation in the area (2015, p366).

> While the aim of Law No. 6306 is the reconstruction of buildings against a possible earthquake, the results are increasing building and population density and the loss of some historic buildings and the urban environment. Because the whole process is driven by the demands of the real estate market, some of the

> buildings not profitable for developers are not included. Moreover, there is no urban planning decision or direction except for building ratios. The emerging built environment is denser and buildings are higher than before. However, without guiding planning and urban design, decisions on what the future environment might be are left to the capacity, budget, and aesthetic sense of the developer (Ozgur, 2018, p179).

The architecture of Caddebostan does not necessarily have historical value, and this means demolitions are easily carried out. As of 2017 only 10% of the buildings that were deemed risky were demolished in Kadikoy, but the expected number of demolitions is over 27,000 (Sahin, 2017, np). Property prices increased by 25-30% between 2014 and 2015 (Surmeli, 2015, np). Since then, the transformation has expanded under the name of 'regeneration and renewal', and prices started to drop by an average of 30% after 2016 (Sputnik Turkiye, 2018, np). There are several reasons for the price decrease in Caddebostan: a number of new buildings with high prices did not attract as many buyers as planned, and more properties were constructed than needed. The new buildings typically have 10-15 floors and offer 20-30 flats while the buildings they replaced were typically 4-7 floors with 8-14 flats. Time will tell whether this will result in a failure to super-gentrify Caddebostan or if there is a temporary price decrease.

Current property prices in Caddebostan are between 950.000TL for a 2-bedroom flat (Oncuoglu, 2019, np) to 5.950.000TL for a 5-bedroom flat (Remax, 2019c, np) (£128K and £804K using 2019 exchange rates). For comparative purposes, the average price for a flat in Istanbul was 387.200TL (£52K) in 2019 (Endaksa, 2019, np). Renting in Caddebostan is also higher than average, and the area has the highest number of properties that are listed for rent. Rent per calendar month is between 3800TL for a 3-bedroom flat in an 'old' building (26-30 years) (Sahibinden, 2019c, np) to 10000TL for a 3-bedroom flat in a new building (Hurriyet Emlak, 2019d, np) (£513 and £1350 using 2019 exchange rates). Properties in Caddebostan that are for rent and sale are mostly in new buildings aged between 0 to 3 years. They are therefore presented as 'new' and 'secure' in case of an earthquake. All of the new buildings have underground carparks and air conditioning, most of them also have security guards and alarm systems and some of them have swimming pools and gyms. It is also important to mention that flats in Caddebostan are typically large and are up to 350m2 (Remax, 2019d, np) and it is the most expensive area examined in this research.

6.3 Karakoy

Arap Camii Neighbourhood

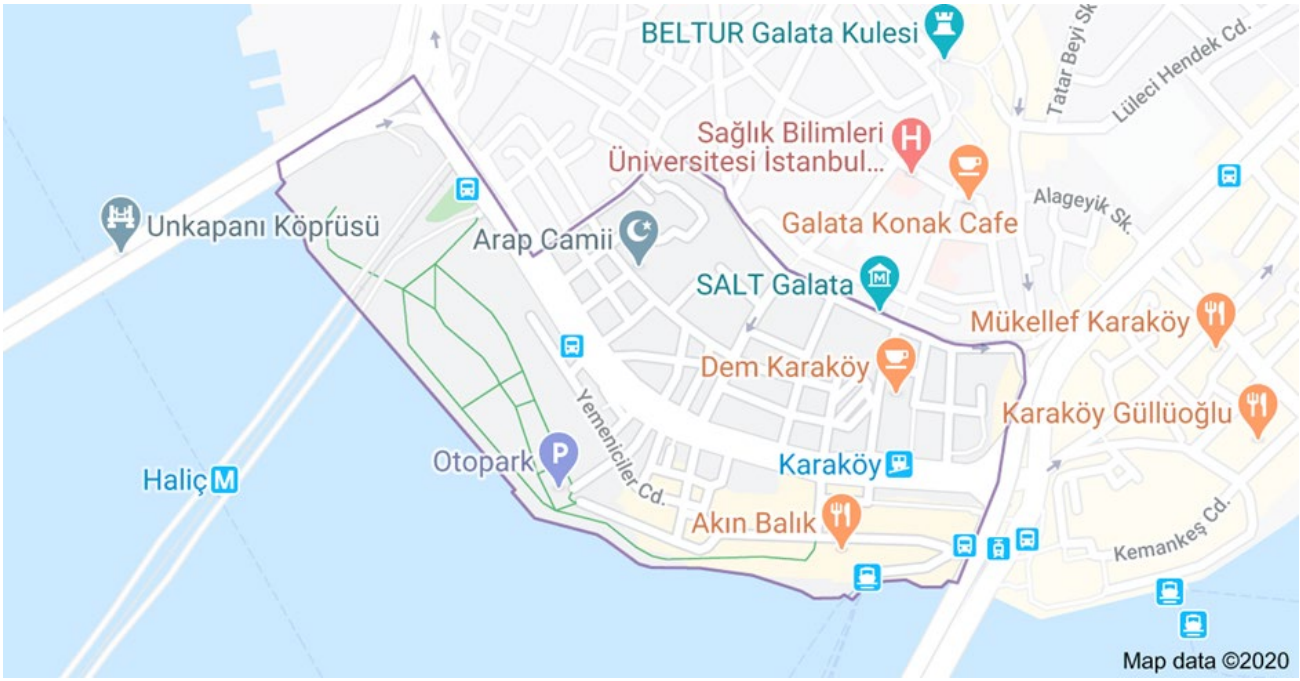

Figure 6.3.1 Map of Arap Camii sourced from Google Maps, (2020b)

Kemankes Karamustafapasa Neighbourhood

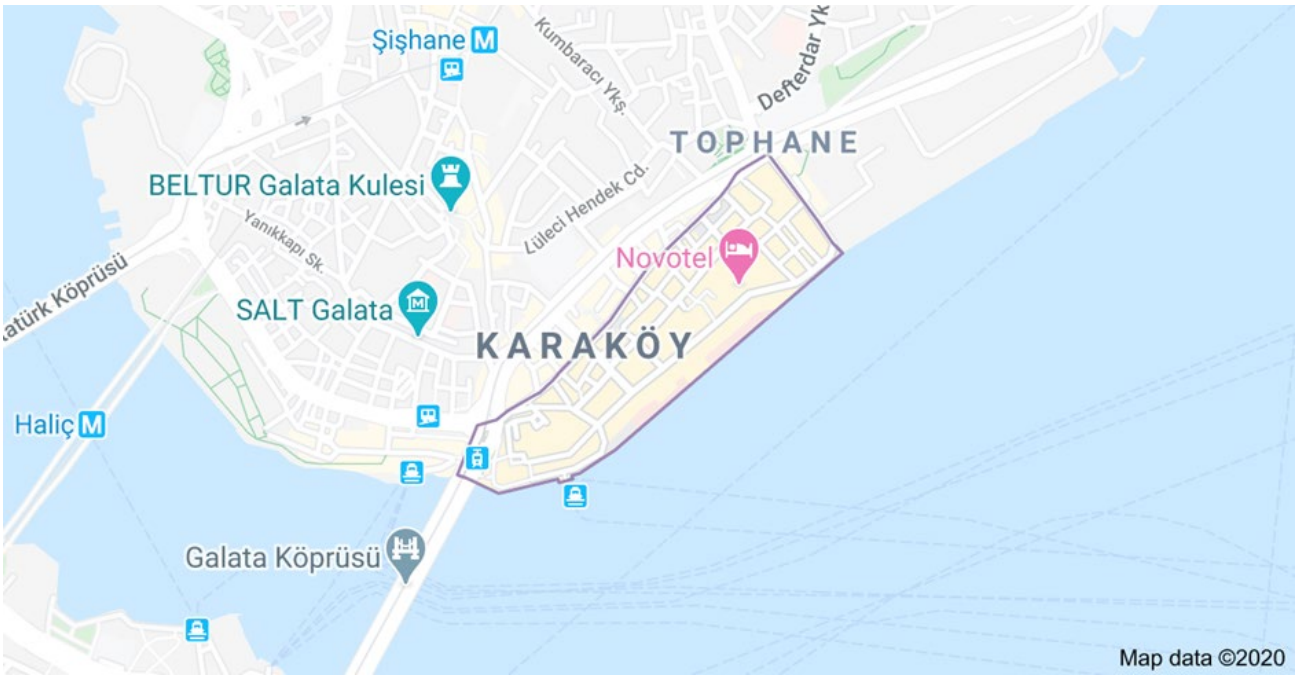

Figure 6.3.2 Map of Kemankes Karamustafapasa sourced from Google Maps, (2020c)

The third and final area examined is Karakoy. As mentioned previously, Balat and Caddebostan are *mahalles,* whereas Karakoy is a *semt* (district in Turkish) and consists of small *mahalles* in Beyoglu Municipality. For this research, two *mahalles* in Karakoy were studied. In 2019, Arap Camii *mahalle* had a population of only 122 and Kemankes Karamustafapasa *mahalle* 112. The two areas represent a total of 234 (TUIK, 2019, np). Although Karakoy is a busy central area, it is a commercial district, which is why the overall residential population is very small. Both *mahalles* are located by the waterfront on the European side of Istanbul. 50.9% of Beyoglu Municipality voted for AKP in the 2015 elections (Secim Haberler, 2015, np).

Karakoy was founded and continually used as a trade centre and an international port from the Byzantine to the Ottoman era (Clavio, 1970 cited in Arslanli et al., 2011, p1079). From the 19th century onwards, the area was mostly connected with business and banking. From Karakoy along to Tophane and Kabatas, the area was essentially a commercial area on the waterfront (Tokatli and Boyaci, 1999, p184). During the 20th century, it became a business, trade and commerce centre and home to the headquarters of various banks (Ayatac, 2007 cited in Arslanli et al., 2011, p1079; Celik, 1993; Rosenthal, 1980). The majority of the area has historically valuable architecture mostly designed by Italian architects.

Karakoy's timeline of transformation can be described in three periods; urban redevelopment projects that were planned and conducted by the Menderes government especially after the second half of the 1950s, waterfront revitalizations as part of top-down urban interventions by the mayor of Istanbul Bedrettin Dalan (between 1984 and 1989) and therefore known as 'Dalan's interventions', and the current redevelopments that have occurred since the mid-2000s. Starting from the Menderes period, in 1956 Law no. 6785 was introduced to transform Istanbul with the aim of renovating historical landmarks and solving the traffic issue. As explained in Chapter 1, many projects were planned and implemented that consisted of demolishing older buildings to create boulevards and larger spaces between the 1950s and 1960s (Karsli, 2015). Karakoy was one of the areas that was chosen during that period and witnessed mass demolition of their roads.

According to Tokatli and Boyaci, Karakoy remained 'part of the central business district' up until 1980s and in 1980 the area was where '11.6 per cent of wholesale and retail establishments were located' (Tekeli, 1994 cited in Tokatli and Boyaci, 1999, p187). The 1980s witnessed Dalan's interventions that consisted of land reclamation to expand the waterfront, as seen in the case of Caddebostan. His plans also led to eradicating industry from the waterfront, as also occurred in the case of Halic. Finally, there were plans to revitalise the declined waterfronts, as witnessed in Karakoy:

> In the late 1980s, waterfront revitalization projects carried out by the municipal government were successful due to Karakoy's strategic location, historical buildings with an identity and amenities of the Bosphorus. There was always a heavy load of pedestrian traffic since it was always an important exchange centre of different transportation lines and had different types of stores, restaurants and coffee shops (Arslanli, et al., 2011, p1079).

Like in many areas of Istanbul, Karakoy started to further change after the introduction of neoliberal policies in the 1980s, which not only included waterfront revitalisations, but the expansion of the city itself. With the expansion of Istanbul towards the north, new business districts were formed around the Zincirlikuyu-Maslak area and this affected Karakoy's prestige and resulted in further decline (Dokmeci et al., 2007, p157; Karsli, 2015, p2902). While inner-city centres gradually lost their original purpose, and Karakoy as the banking and commerce centre lost some of the bank headquarters, the area acquired a dangerous and negative reputation.

As noted elsewhere, the common framing of gentrification as a 'back to the city' phenomenon did not really apply to Istanbul, but there is evidence of it in Karakoy, especially after the mid-2000s with the implementation of Law no. 5366, publicly known as Urban Renewal Law (Dincer, 2011; Gunay and Dokmeci, 2012). The area's popularity has risen since the opening of the first contemporary art gallery in 2004, and Istanbul's Modern Museum, which was a public-private development by the old port (Erek and Koksal, 2014, p307; Polo, 2015, p1511). Several old and historic bank buildings were also transformed into museums and art galleries (Oz and Eder, 2018). A prime example of this practice was Salt Galata, an art space, cultural centre with a study zone, and a library in the old headquarters on the Ottoman Bank (Karsli, 2015; Oz and Eder, 2018).

The current state of Karakoy can be analysed in three ways; a declined area that has been left untouched, a gentrified area that has undergone a cultural transformation and become popular mostly because of historical and architectural value, and finally as a 'cleansed' area resulting from top-down urban interventions to 'organise' and 'regulate' the area under the name of urban 'transformation'. This new gentrified area is very similar to many gentrified spaces in Western cities with third-wave coffeeshops, cafés, bistros, restaurants, bars, rooftop terraces and hotels, as well as museums, art galleries and exhibition spaces. As a result of culture-led revitalisation like in Balat, Karakoy has attracted the creative class and hipsters. However, it remains a highly mixed and diverse area that is still in transition:

> Plumbing part suppliers and art studios are located adjacently in the area. The daily life, where classes seemingly incompatible and of different communication and interaction levels according to their scales and ways of thinking, define a regular irregularity. The combination of an upper-middle class urbanite that owns a designer boutique and an urbanite that owns a mechanical part supply shop in the area melt down the approach of urban transformation based on separate social stratums (Karsli, 2015, p2904).

The mixture of various projects has impacted public spaces in Karakoy. As explained in Chapter 2, *meydans* in the area are commonly not used due to a lack of seating arrangements or ongoing construction work which creates a significant amount of noise, dust and dirt. Some *meydans* are used as car parks during the evenings and construction vehicles, such as excavators, are also parked and left by the benches.

One of the most important projects in Karakoy is the Galataport project, a flagship development aims to transform 1.2km long waterfront. The official website of Galataport claims the project

is laden with high-end associations, it is portrayed as a luxury spot in the city that can only be visited and experienced by wealthy groups (Galataport, 2020, np). However, the same website underlines the importance of waterfront access and access to public space and claims that Galataport will be able to change this, it then goes on to explain the necessity of the waterfront revitalisation for Istanbul and proposes this project as a refresher of an old, declined port (Galataport, 2020, np). Goksen's research is informative in that sense to understand a locals' approach towards the transformation of the area:

> The long-term shopkeepers also thought that *Galataport* was going to be good for the neighbourhood and tourism, although they knew that this would not make any difference for their businesses. A pump repairman, who was operating his father's occupation for forty-nine years, described the current position of his as he was "waiting to appraise his shop as a result of the change of the neighborhood as is". He described the situation of his neither as "stagnation of his business" nor as "displacement". While describing his position, he was referring to the revaluation of the land in Karakoy and had the imaginary that his shop would become either a café or a restaurant and that he was incapable of doing such, since he had no capital (Goksen, 2015, p38-39).

The properties for sale mainly consist of entire buildings suited to the use of hotels, and were mostly in old buildings aged between 31 to 100 years old. More interestingly, there were not any properties for rent in the area at the time of this research. This is largely because both neighbourhoods were not residential, as can be seen in their low population. Therefore, the existing building stock on the market were offices, shops and entire buildings, as investment opportunities. As of 2020, the average property price prices in Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhood were between 2.800.000TL (Hurriyet Emlak, 2020a, np) to 25.500.000TL (Hurriyet Emlak, 2020b, np) for historic buildings (£358K and £3.269million using 2019 exchange rates). In the Arap Camii neighbourhood, the properties for sale were similar between 2.250.000TL (Hurriyet Emlak, 2020c, np) to 32.500.000TL (Hurriyet Emlak, 2020d, np) (£288K and £4.166million using 2019 exchange rates).

6.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced the three areas which were used for the case study of this research: Balat, Caddebostan and Karakov. I also gave a brief historical overview of each area. The economic, political, ethnic, and religious contexts were investigated through secondary research. Demographics and other numerical data such as rent, and property prices were also

noted. It was noted how each area fits into different models of gentrification and that they are being transformed in different ways. As described earlier:

Balat was 'discovered' by the EU for redevelopment, which then grasped the attention of the creative class. The neighbourhood is still in transition and can be considered as an example of the cultural model of gentrification.

Caddebostan, as an old summer suburb, has always had upper-middle class property owners and is going through super gentrification where the inhabitants mostly remain the same. Displacement is not the main issue, but the properties are being revalued and there is a huge potential for profit. The overall process can be explained as an economic model of gentrification.

Karakoy as a commercial district, represents both cultural and economic models of gentrification; the declined sections of the area were 'discovered', and culturally transformed with galleries and museums. This made the area a popular spot for the creative class, and then attracted investors for projects such as Galataport and hotels, which in turn have prepared the area for tourism. The state of Karakoy is in a similar vein to Western models of gentrification of the 1990s and 2000s where gentrification was more planned, as a result of neoliberal urban policies and globalism.

The ways in which public spaces are understood and used also vary according to the neighbourhood in question, and the redevelopment the neighbourhood is undergoing. In order to draw a clearer picture of the case study, the current state of each area was described in relation to urban laws and urban redevelopment projects they enabled. The next chapter will explore and analyse the key findings, based on my own ethnographic fieldwork in each *mahalle*.

Chapter 7: Findings

This chapter introduces the key findings of the fieldwork that took place in the three areas in Istanbul (**Balat**, **Caddebostan** and **Karakoy**) between September and December 2018. The research presented below describes, analyses, and compares the three areas. The collected data is presented and analysed in relation to the key themes of the research; public spaces, sensescapes; elements and the lifestyle in each area. The methodological framework and methods of this study have been informed by Pink (2013, 2015), Lynch (1960, 1972, 1984) and Gehl (1989, 2010, 2011), together with the work of Degen (2008), May (2013), and Middleton (2010) and their critical work on senses and the city. The research does not only observe and compare the areas, but it also focuses on the process of redevelopment itself and analyses smell, sound, vision, dirt, dust, and waste resulting from the process. As explained previously and as will be explored again in this chapter, urban redevelopment and the ongoing construction work has had various impacts on different areas of Istanbul. This research focuses on micro uses of public spaces in different areas of the city, instead of generalising Istanbul's multi-layered and complex urban redevelopment.

7.1 Fieldwork

As explained in Chapter 2, public space for this research is not only the geographically-fixed public spaces, such as the widely documented Gezi Park, but it is also the impromptu spaces that are made 'public' and remade through everyday interactions, behaviours, and practices. Public space has been understood here as both a noun and something easily quantified and defined, and a verb, in the sense of 'doing' public space and given meaning by various *publics*. That does not mean traditional public spaces and their use was disregarded in this research, however.

As explained in Chapter 4, the reasons these three specific areas were chosen is because they are historically, economically, socially, and culturally different, yet have been going through a similar process with various outcomes. A key question of the thesis has been to understand the ways in which urban redevelopment and ongoing constructions are transforming areas, public spaces, and daily life, not just before or after but during. A point of departure in answering this question was Lynch's work, and the ongoing transformation of various elements such as paths, edges, nodes, districts, and landmarks (Lynch, 1960, 1972, 1984). **A particular finding of this research was the role of sound, smell, polluted air, dirt, dust, waste and how they can make urban environments more congested**. More importantly, these factors can reshape the ways in which public spaces are used, hence the material shaping the relational. According to Gehl, public spaces, both spatial and relational, can be welcoming or unwelcoming (2011, p113*).* In Istanbul, the main structure that regulates the city and public spaces in the present it's the ongoing construction work. The city and its 'sitting rooms' such as streets and *meydans* may not be as walkable and/or sittable, which inevitably causes abandonment and creates deserted spaces.

As Wall points out, similarly to the case of Istanbul with redevelopment projects:

> […] landscape techniques are employed to redesign public spaces. The prioritization of views of public spaces and the adoption of public realm as controlled settings which frame new urban developments frequently denies the lived qualities, the potential for politics and the unpredictable nature of shared spaces (Wall, 2018, p155-156).

An anchoring point of the research is the **public-private boundary** in Istanbul can sometimes appear as a public-private blurriness. As a brief example, one of the findings of this research was that the public-private boundary in Istanbul is becoming clearer after being affected by the urban redevelopment that tends to clarify the edges between what is the public and the private. Interestingly, at the same time, however, there is an unpredictable use of public space, due to the taken for granted cultural habits that can blur the boundary between the public and private and the ways the constructions transform urban space.

7.2 Key Findings

Before explaining these in more detail, the key findings of the research are as follows. These points are returned to later but are introduced here in order to guide the discussion towards the eventual conclusion:

1. The division between the public and private is taking a sharper form due to ongoing urban transformation and redevelopment projects.
2. Overall, there is an erratic way of using public space in the three areas examined. This is mainly to do with cultural habits and also significant ongoing constructions that has resulted in reconfiguring nodes, blocking streets and demolishing/transforming landmarks. Public spaces can still be used as extensions of private spaces in certain neighbourhoods in Istanbul (this is the case of Balat), but this is, as explained below, constantly transforming.
3. Gentrification in Turkey is not exactly the same as gentrification in the West. It leads to commercialisation, but it is also more interiorising and mostly implements the government's ideology of neoliberal conservative Islamism. That said, the level of impact from the government's ideology on public spaces varies according to the area.
4. Everyday life is being shaped around constructions in all three areas. All spaces are relational and constantly changing due to competing discourses and uses, but there is a materiality to this as well: smell, sound, dust, dirt, and waste, play a significant role in how the city is experienced and lived. As will be explained, materiality shapes relationality.

5. Due to these projects, what the public shared and considered ‘collective life’ is now transforming as public spaces are being emptied, isolated or have disappeared. A contention of this thesis is that urban collective memory is being erased, mental maps are being reshaped, and historical and cultural continuity is ruptured as the city is reconstructed, transformed, and reconfigured.

Having summarised the fieldwork and some of the key findings, the chapter will now describe the data collected in each area in more detail.

7.3 Balat

It was a gloomy fall morning when I first visited Balat for the fieldwork. It had been 10 years since my last visit to the area and just like the rest of Istanbul, Balat had also changed. As discussed in Chapter 6, the planned urban transformation for Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray was cancelled owing to the locals’ resistance. Thus, Balat’s current state can be defined as cultural gentrification, after a combination of top-down and bottom-up gentrification forces: top-down, because of the renovation of historical houses by the EU during the late 1990s, and later on by private investors, and bottom up because of the creative class that ‘found’ the area historically and culturally valuable (Florida, 2014; Turkun, 2015). Cultural and economic models of gentrification do overlap and depending on the area one model can lead the other. In Balat, the ‘rediscovery’ of the area has turned into a reinvestment towards the architectural structure. In that sense, it was driven by an economic model of gentrification that consisted of renovating historical houses in one of Istanbul’s oldest neighbourhoods. This occurred in a similar vein in Smith and Williams’ account of residential gentrification and how it ‘refers to the rehabilitation of working-class and derelict housing and the consequent transformation of an area into a middle-class neighbourhood’ (2007, p1).

To clearly analyse the findings of the fieldwork, three key themes are introduced here: Public Spaces, Sensescapes & Elements, and Lifestyle. I start with Public Spaces in order to introduce a picture of the area.

7.3.1 Public Spaces

Figure 7.3.1.1 Balat Waterfront, Author's own, November 2018

Figure 7.3.1.2 Balat Waterfront, Author's own, November 2018

Since the use and understanding of public spaces is one of the main focuses of this research, various forms of public spaces in Balat were observed and analysed. As explained in Chapter 6, there are two geographically-fixed public spaces in Balat; Balat waterfront and Balat Park

The waterfront was the only section in the neighbourhood that was undergoing heavy construction and was closed off for a tram line extension. Access to the waterfront was therefore impossible during the fieldwork. The tram line extension was functioning as an edge that broke the connection between the neighbourhood and the sea (see Figure 7.3.1.1). During the fieldwork, I tried to access the waterfront several times to walk by the water, and to see what was left in the form of public space, but it was not possible. The only accessible node was Fener Ferry station with a green square and two benches which was completely surrounded by the extensive construction. The pathway between the road and the station had been heavily affected and a temporary floor was installed on the asphalt which was uneven and bumpy due to leftover concrete (see Figure 7.3.1.2). It was not comfortable to walk on due to the accumulated dirt and dust, and some parts of it were damaged. The extent to which Balat waterfront will be transformed and how it will be used once the construction is complete is important, as it will

undoubtedly reshape and reconfigure the inhabitants' and the neighbourhood's relationship with the waterfront.

Figure 7.3.1.3 Balat Park, Author's own, October 2018

Balat Park was more of a small green space than an actual park and is located between the neighbourhood and the waterfront surrounded by heavy traffic. Balat Park was mostly empty during the day and there were several reasons for the lack of use from my observations. The location of the park was not safely accessible as it was surrounded by busy roads. The heavy car traffic made the park a very noisy and dusty space. Furthermore, the structure of the park was not welcoming as there were no benches or children's playgrounds, and the park was not maintained or cleaned regularly. However, what I realised after a while was that the park was mainly used by bus drivers. Since Balat is a historical neighbourhood, it attracts many tourists who visit the neighbourhood in big groups by coaches, and after parking the buses around the park, bus drivers use the green space to have a picnic and drink tea. The park was being used very comfortably by two men who had brought their own table, chairs, teapot, barbecue, and they had even put a tent up and, on some occasions, used the park to take a nap (see Figure 7.3.1.3). This form of using public space can be defined as semi-private, where public spaces can be used as extensions of private spaces. However, it is important to note that in Turkey, semi-private spaces are linked to private spaces, such as entrances, doorsteps, alleyways etc. and as explained previously, these spaces can be considered 'blurry', which allows them to be used semi-privately. Geographically-fixed public spaces, on the other hand, are commonly more maintained and regulated. Therefore, the activities in these places are also more limited and consist of learned activities such as sitting on benches, having a cup of coffee, or jogging.

Balat Park in that sense had a different setting

and was being used almost like an extension of a private space. This was mainly because of the lack of structure that would normally remind the public that it was a public space. A non-regulated and non-maintained space without any seating arrangements can help create an

environment that is more personalised and therefore makes various activities possible. It can be argued that a lack of regulation in public spaces can allow more freedom and more expansive right to the city.

The park was also used to consume alcohol, and despite this is a common practice in public spaces of Istanbul, if a neighbourhood is religious and conservative like Balat, consuming alcohol, public displays of affection, and the visibility of women and LGBTQ people is usually not as common. Although Turkey is still a secular country, the public realm has become increasingly de-secularised with the encouragement of the conservative Islamist government. As Komecoglu (2016) and Rosati argue this shift can be explained as 'the making of a postsecular society' and the 'transformation of the notion and practice of secularism' (2016, p62). It is important to note that the shift towards a postsecular society is sharper and stronger in some neighbourhoods than others. By enabling alcohol consumption, Balat Park seemed like an unregulated space. Due to the limited number of pubs and bars in the area and a few shops selling alcohol, consuming alcohol was not a typical social activity. Instead, it has become privatised, personalised, and gendered, albeit in public parks by men rather than in outdoor cafes. As a semi-private space, Balat Park is used to conduct personal activities that could not be conducted elsewhere in the neighbourhood, functioning almost as an external lounge room. More interestingly, public drinking was not happening during the daytime, but instead at night. Because the park did not have any fences, gates, or opening hours, it was always accessible.

The waterfront and the park aside, almost the rest of Balat, can be described as public space. During the fieldwork I observed that locals used the streets, sidewalks, doorsteps, and entrances of buildings as extensions of the private. This common use of space underlines the difference of public/private use in Turkey, as opposed to the examples of the West where places are more clearly public or private (Hubbard, 1996). As broadly discussed in the literature review, the public and private distinction in Turkey is not as sharp and it can be described as being 'blurry' and constantly being made and negotiated. This blurriness can manifest when public spaces are used as extensions of private spaces such as hanging laundry between buildings and/or by the windows, shaking carpets out of windows, sitting and peeling vegetables on the doorstep, playing backgammon on the sidewalks, spending time in front of buildings while people watching, and sitting at doorsteps smoking.

Figure 7.3.1.4 Streets of Balat, Author's own, October 2018

These practices can vary depending on the space and the activity. Only in Balat did I come across the very old urban tradition of dangling a basket from the window with a rope for shopping (see Figure 7.3.1.4). The aim there was to buy some products from the shop. This is an old traditional way of grocery shopping in Istanbul when there were more street vendors. It was not only practical and time saving, but it also ensured that women stayed in private spaces. This way, the amount of time women were likely to spend in public spaces for shopping could be limited, or even controlled, which echoes the traditional view of 'the construction of 'home' as a woman's place' (Massey, 1994, p180). In a traditional neighbourhood like Balat, where there were many street vendors, this tradition has managed to survive and still practiced by some residents. This activity is not doable any longer in transformed neighbourhoods because of the changed architectural structure, such as the tall buildings and lack of street vendors or local shops beneath the buildings.

It is important to mention that in Balat, this tradition was slowly disappearing, and women were actively using public spaces to do their daily chores. Household chores and grocery shopping were considered a women's responsibility in Balat [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p168). This was highly visible during the fieldwork where women would go out to the markets - mostly in groups - in the morning to do their daily shopping. Going to the market for groceries seemed like a significant part of the daily routine and a social activity amongst women, as they would go with their neighbours. They walked to the shops and back and because they had to carry all the food, they would sometimes sit on random doorsteps to rest. Throughout the day, many

people would sit in front of their doors to smoke, eat, rest and people watch (see Figures 7.3.1.5, 7.3.1.6, 7.3.1.7 and 7.3.1.8).

Figure 7.3.1.5 Doorsteps of Balat, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.3.1.6 Doorsteps of Balat, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.3.1.7 Doorsteps of Balat, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.3.1.8 Doorsteps of Balat, Author's own, October 2018

The neighbourhood layout, the historic architecture and walkability between places, preserved some traditional practices of public space in Istanbul including street vendors. Street vendors were clear examples of the ways in which the streets of Balat can be reproduced on a daily basis (see Figure 7.3.1.9). Hall's definition of the street is worth reciting here as 'a space for stopping as much as for moving, a place to pause, to meet friends, post a letter, to buy goods. It is an amalgam of interior rooms and sub-worlds off its edges in which forms of belonging are sustained through everyday conveniences' (2012, p7). The materiality of Balat is integral to shaping and reshaping relationality.

Figure 7.3.1.9 Street vendor, Author's own, October 2018

Having analysed public spaces and the ways in which they are used in Balat, the findings now move on to analyse the data on sensescapes and elements.

7.3.2 Sensescapes & Elements

The sensescapes and the elements and the ways in which they shape a city were explained in Chapter 3. Since this research looks at the ways in which materiality shapes public space and its use in cities, understanding the sensory city was crucial to grasp the state of each area. This way a clearer picture of the areas could be drawn and to what extent the ongoing constructions impact the sensescapes and the elements could be understood and analysed.

What makes Balat stand out in this research in terms of senses is the smell. Each area has its unique sensescapes, but Balat's smellscapes were more distinct than visionscapes or soundscapes, in fact smell was the very first thing I encountered on the very first day of the fieldwork. It was the strong smell of coal and wood. Knowing that the majority of the country does not have a central heating system and radiators, I assumed this was an indicator of the use of a coal burning stove coming from the chimneys, hence poor conditions. According to the KEDV's survey of 2004, 64% of households in Balat use coal and wood burning stoves [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p166-167). The burning coal and wood not only have a distinct and lingering smell, but they also create a serious amount of pollution that sticks in the air in the shape of black fumes. As May describes: 'Smell is, of course, closely linked to taste. We taste and smell the air we breathe, and the food and drink we consume. Just as with smells, tastes can also evoke strong memories and emotions, and are an important way in which we experience belonging' (May, 2013, p136). If it was a cold day and many households were burning coal, the smell could be tasted in the form of smoke.

Another distinct smell in Balat was the smell of sewage in some parts of the neighbourhood. This was another indicator of poor conditions and according to the KEDV's survey of 2004, the flats in Balat do not always have a bathroom, some flats have a shared bathroom, and the sewage does not always work properly, resulting in lingering bad smells [translated by author] (Turkun, 2015, p167). This was mainly because of the architectural limitations, old houses in Balat used to belong to one family who would own the entire house (this is no longer the case). Although some of them have been renovated as entire houses by the creative class, many of

them have been converted into small flats with one bathroom or even shared bathrooms. This type of conversion is in a similar vein to the conversion of Victorian houses in London. In 19th century England, when a middle-class area started to decline, the housing stock was converted into flats in order to accommodate low-income groups, now, more recently, in Balat, these buildings have been rediscovered by the creative class for their architectural value (Benson and Jackson, 2013, p800).

Other typical daily smells in Balat consisted of homemade cooking such as sautéed garlic or onion and fresh laundry. This was again a sign of poor conditions; the lingering smell of food coming through the windows indicated that either there was not a kitchen extractor fan, or that they were not working well enough to efface the smell.

The smell of fresh laundry was also highly common in Balat and it was not only creating a smellscape, but it was also creating a visionscape, as laundry was mostly hung between buildings or via windows/balconies (see Figures 7.3.2.1 and 7.3.2.2). Hanging laundry is a clear example of blurring the public and private as Watson describes: 'doing the laundry has shaped and reshaped public/private boundaries' and using public spaces as semi-private because it is a form of presenting one's clothes to the entire neighbourhood (2015, p888).

Figure 7.3.2.1 Line Drying Laundry in Balat, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.3.2.2 Line Drying Laundry in Balat, Author's own, October 2018

However, it is important to note that the smellscapes that were mentioned were mostly found deeper in the neighbourhood where most of the buildings were declining, did not have proper locks and the main entry doors were left open throughout the day. This is the part of Balat that has not been gentrified yet and left untouched. Visionscapes in these streets consisted of deprived historical houses and ruins. Some buildings in Balat were even fenced up by the municipality with a sign informing, '*Dangerous building, keep away for your safety and do not park*' (see Figure 7.3.2.3). As explained below, in more renovated parts, old historical buildings were renewed to be used as houses, hotels, coffeeshops, shops or galleries.

Figure 7.3.2.3 Declined Buildings in Balat, Author's own, October 2018

In Balat, there were not as many construction sites as Caddebostan and Karakoy apart from the tram line extension on the waterfront. Constructing the tram line created ongoing dust, dirt, and noise, and it was limiting the waterfront access with temporary edges. Despite the fact that there are not any systematic top-down urban interventions in Balat, historical buildings have attracted the creative class with their cultural and historical value, and some are being renovated. Although renovation of the old buildings was blocking the nodes and installing temporary edges such as scaffolding or fences, paths and landmarks were not disappearing altogether, they were just being re-shaped (see Figures 7.3.2.4 and 7.3.2.5).

Figure 7.3.2.4 Excavator in Balat, Author's own, December 2018

Figure 7.3.2.5 Scaffolding in Balat, Author's own, November 2018

7.3.3 Lifestyle

As explained in Chapter 6, Balat is a deeply diverse neighbourhood with inhabitants from different backgrounds and several social layers. The research and surveys which were conducted in the area have been useful in order to support my observations: '50% of the participants were from Black Sea Region' [translated by author] (Akin, 2015, p27) and '21% of the respondents in Fener-Balat-Ayvansaray areas were of Kurdish origin' (Soytemel, 2015, p69). After a while I also realised there was a significant Islamic community in Balat, and they were part of the Ismailaga[7] community which Bezmez refers to 'one well-organized religious

[7] 'The Ismailaga branch of the Naksibendi Sufi order is considered to be among the most traditional (*gelenekci*) and conservative in Turkey, whilst for the secular establishment of the country it represents the incarnation of reactionary religious forces (*irtica*). Members of the Ismailaga community (*cemaat*), which is led by Mahmut Ustaosmanoglu Hocaefendi, are well-known for their "Islamic" dress code (*kilik kiyafet*) and their "authentic" beliefs, which are supposed to be in conformity with those of the Prophet Muhammad, and their network of Qur'anic school; but also for living in ghetto-like conditions in Istanbul's Carsamba district' (Pirický, 2012, p533).

order' (2008, p824). All these different ethnic and religious communities were living together in Balat, but daily life was not very convivial, and the neighbourhood can be described as a patchwork with many invisible boundaries.

The state of Balat during the fieldwork could be described as 'in transition'. The majority of the neighbourhood was still traditional and poor, but certain parts of Balat were transforming as a result of cultural gentrification and increasing attention from the creative class. This was observable in certain streets of Balat, lavished with historical Greek buildings; paralleling the waterfront are Yildirim Street, Vodina Street, Sancaktar and Camci Cesmesi rise which were gentrified. Many historical buildings in these streets were renovated and put on the market or turned into hotels, cafés, restaurants, designer shops, art spaces, galleries, workshops, coworking spaces and vintage shops that sold second-hand clothes or furniture (see Figures 7.3.3.1 and 7.3.3.2).

Figure 7.3.3.1 Historical Buildings in Balat, Author's own, November 2018

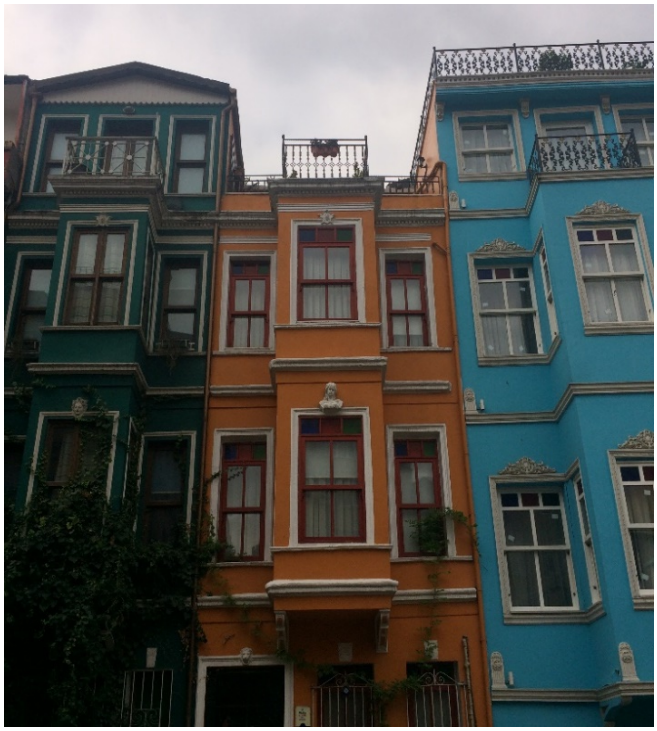

Figure 7.3.3.2 Historical Buildings in Balat, Author's own, October 2018

However, Balat was still home to original businesses that were serving low-income groups and existed alongside the new cafés and shops, including traditional bakeries, hairdressers, small markets, and garages located on the ground floors. The most traditional and significant of all

were old traditional tea/coffee rooms known as *kahve* and/or *kiraathane*. *Kahve* meaning coffee and *kiraathane* meaning reading place in Turkish, (the names used to describe local tea/coffee rooms that are regularly visited by men who live in that area to socialise and spend the day with their friend) (see Figure 7.3.3.3).

Although *kahves* and *kiraathanes* are not gender specific by law, they are traditionally known to serve male customers only, so the habit and expectation of male only customers still heavily exists. This was still the case in Balat (see Figure 7.3.3.4).

Figure 7.3.3.3 Kahve in Balat, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.3.3.4 Kahve in Balat, Author's own, October 2018

It is important to note that this is not always the case in Turkey as there are a number of *kahves* and *kiraathanes* in other neighbourhoods that are used by women, children, and families. These places function as cheap social clubs in low-income neighbourhoods. The original idea of using them as a reading place - hence the name *kiraathane* - has been hollowed out over the years. They do not serve food, only non-alcoholic hot and cold drinks at affordable prices. Card games, backgammon and some other traditional games are commonly played in them throughout the day. They are regarded as ideal places for unemployed and/or working-class men to socialise and sometimes to build a network to find a job. These considerably more traditional spaces can

be considered in the same context as 'the Habermasian public realm of the coffee house' that is open and accessible to men as a public space (Watson, 2015, p876; Cowan, 2004).

Balat was not a homogeneous neighbourhood when it came to habitus; different groups with various class, gender, race, ethnicity, and religious backgrounds were living organically while making the area even more popular amongst the creative class. In Balat, the spatiality reflects the relationality of the neighbourhood; fully renovated historical houses can be found next to declining buildings or ruins and correspondingly, completely different lives in completely different conditions were sharing the neighbourhood.

Another significant theme when it came to various lifestyles in Balat was nostalgia and neo-bohemia (Lloyd, 2010). Vintage cafés and shops located in historical buildings are decorated with 1970s and 1980s furniture and objects, and some of them sell the objects and furniture that are on display. Furthermore, the neighbourhood emanates a romanticised form of nostalgia that overlaps with May's account on the term as 'a certain sense of disengagement *with* the present, [that] does not preclude experiencing a sense of belonging *in* the present' (2017, p411). In Balat, there is a deep longing for the old and diverse Istanbul with vibrant streets where colourful and 'run-down' buildings sit side by side. And because Balat's gentrification is not top-down, the transformation of the area has a more 'organic' appearance with structural influences such as neo-bohemia and nostalgia. In one sense, continuity and urban collective memory is not as damaged and erased as fast as it was in other areas of Istanbul, though the continuity on show here is pieced together from new and repurposed imagery. Although Balat is becoming increasingly popular due to cultural gentrification, most of the buildings are historical and it is forbidden to demolish or transform their structure. Hence, the materiality of the neighbourhood cannot be changed completely. That said, the ways in which these buildings are being used has changed.

Although Balat has become associated with cultural gentrification and a neo-bohemian hub, unlike Western examples, its transformation is following postsecular patterns. The majority of shops, restaurants, cafés, and bistros in the neighbourhood do not serve alcohol for example. The area was gentrifying, and the lifestyle was changing, but the inhabitants were mostly conservative and religious (figures can be found in Chapter 6) and selling and consuming alcohol seems like an issue that can create a tension between the gentrifiers and the locals. In other words, Balat was allowing a specific type of consumer, and it was a form of consumption that cannot be thought of outside of Islam. This also explains the gendered activities and

gendered spaces in Balat such as *kahves* and the park that were used almost exclusively by men. Having chosen Balat, the gentrifiers therefore would avoid creating situations that created any tension. As happened before in more conservative areas of Istanbul, such as the case of Tophane in the Karakoy district, Oz and Eder describe the tension that derives from different lifestyles as 'contestation' (2018). Although each neighbourhood has its own drivers, as well as pull and push factors, as Oz and Eder argue, the case of Tophane was agitated by external factors such as flagship developments and ambitious urban transformation projects that can be considered as top-down interventions, unlike the current case of Balat. However, like in the case of Tophane, diversity does not always necessarily entail respect and such experiences which happened elsewhere were the reasons for business owners to be aware of their surroundings. Balat therefore shares a lot of characteristics with other gentrifying neighbourhoods and the ways in which public spaces are used would then depend on the lifestyle of that neighbourhood. Ultimately, the public of that neighbourhood would determine the activities that can take place in public spaces, but not without being shaped by the government's ideological role. In the case of Balat, the religious nature of the neighbourhood is more a reflection of the communities that live there. As it is still predominantly a conservative, religious neighbourhood, Balat can be understood as a postsecular place hence the government does not need to intervene to implement postsecular practices.

7.4 Caddebostan

Being a long-time resident of Caddebostan, I have the privilege of experiencing and knowing the neighbourhood before the ongoing transformation. I left Caddebostan in 2012, coincidentally the year Law no. 6306 was passed which made the transformation in the area possible. Over the years, I have witnessed the change of Caddebostan, the change was and still is highly drastic and can be defined as 'a micro urbicide' in the guise of super gentrification (Houston, 2015, p56) (see Figure 7.4.1).

As explained in Chapter 6, Caddebostan had in the past been a suburb of summer houses with beaches. Over time, it has gradually become an upper-middle class residential neighbourhood. Its current state can be described as an example of super gentrification where an already gentrified upper-middle class area is transformed again (Lees, 2003). The housing stock in

Caddebostan that was constructed before the year 1999 (the year of the Marmara Earthquake) has been deemed not secure enough to survive a natural disaster. With Law no. 6306, replacement of almost the entire housing stock which means demolishing and rebuilding hundreds of buildings home to thousands of families. Although Law no. 6306 actually allows for demolition buildings, informative placards were occasionally shared on the constructions stating the law *strengthens* not demolishes, '*We do not demolish, we strengthen. For secure buildings, we are strengthening with high technology. This building will be strengthened under the Law no. 6306*' (see Figure 7.4.2).

Figure 7.4.1 Demolition in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

Figure 7.4.2 Poster in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

As described in Chapter 6, the traditional housing structure of Caddebostan consisted of 2-3 storey summer houses with terraces and gardens and most were built before the late 1970s [translated by author] (Berkmen and Turgut, 2019, p158). With Law no. 6306 construction under the name of urban transformation has taken over Kadikoy where Caddebostan is located, and Kadikoy now has one of the highest numbers of building sites in Istanbul. According to Pektetik and Koramaz, 'Because of the planning regulations, each single renewal results in a crucial change in the neighbourhood environment in Kadikoy […]' (2019, p3-4). The

neighbourhood has become an ideal place to invest for property developers due to the increasing number of projects. Construction in Caddebostan is not only transforming the entire neighbourhood, but also the sensescapes with the introduction of new sounds and increasing amounts of dust, dirt, and waste.

The case of Caddebostan is explained and analysed below.

7.4.1 Public Spaces

As one of the main focuses of this research, the uses of different public spaces in Caddebostan were observed and analysed. There are three geographically-fixed public spaces in Caddebostan: a 2.2 km long waterfront with a beach known as Caddebostan Sahili or *Sahil* meaning seaside in Turkish and two parks: Goztepe and Gul. Public spaces in Caddebostan are regulated by Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and have signs explaining the rules and regulations. Depending on the location and the public space, rules generally consist of warnings about keeping the environment clean, keeping dogs on a leash and not to BBQ. Therefore, public space is used differently, when compared to Balat Park, where there are no rules or regulations, and BBQs and teapots over open fires are a common sight.

Goztepe and Gul Parks are located next to each other but designed differently, which has an impact on their use. Gul Park is a rose park (the name *Gul* means rose) and it has a marble structure and within the park there are fewer trees and benches. During the fieldwork, its concrete surface was slippery when it rained, and absorbed the heat on hot days. In the park, no shade can be found to escape the sun, rain, snow, or wind. Although the park was maintained and regulated, it was rarely used by the inhabitants for recreational activities due to its rigid design which does not enable spontaneity. As a result, the public used both parks instead as paths between Bagdat Street and Cemil Topuzlu Street. These parks, therefore, had become shortcuts for practical reasons. This way of using public spaces overlaps with Smith and Walters' desire lines which they discuss as: 'socially constructed by the logic of efficiency or discovery, so to follow them is a social act, in solidarity with other users of space rather than with abstract place makers' (2018, p2987). This was a significant finding and helped with the understanding that even the most structured public spaces can be reconfigured, depending on the needs and desires of the public. Gul Park had gates, whereas Goztepe Park had low fences,

but neither of the parks had specific opening or closing hours, so they were accessible 24-hours. Good lighting was crucial for security reasons and lighting was strengthened with CCTV and private security.

Figure 7.4.1.1 Benches in Goztepe Park, Author's own, September 2018

Goztepe Park has a more traditional structure with trees, benches, children's playgrounds, ponds and bridges, water fountains and public toilets. The park is preferred by mothers and nannies with toddlers and young children and provides a secluded space for families. It is more popular with the public because of its flat but soft surface, and its natural shade from the trees. It is also filled with benches and various seating arrangements. In contrast to the regulation of public spaces observed elsewhere (Blomley, 2011), the benches are not fixed to the ground so they can be moved around. During the fieldwork, I observed many practices of bench moving (see Figure 7.4.1.1). The intention was to create a more private and comfortable seating arrangement, rather than what was 'given'. I found this practice to be in a similar vein to the ways in which Balat Park was used by the inhabitants. Although the actual practices were completely different, and Balat Park was highly masculinised, while Goztepe Park was feminised, there was an effort to personalise the space and use it as if semi-private. Personalising public spaces, using public spaces as extensions of the private or semi-private are common forms of reconfiguring public space in Istanbul. The ways in which public spaces are reconfigured varies according to the class background, race, ethnicity, religion, and gender of the inhabitants, together with the materiality of the public space itself such as desire lines for the parks (Smith and Walters, 2018).

Figure 7.4.1.2 Caddebostan Waterfront, Author's own, September 2018

The Caddebostan waterfront known as *Sahil* is the 2.2km long waterfront consists of basketball courts, fixed exercise equipment, cafés, public pathways, cycle lanes, green areas for recreational activities, beaches, and public toilets. Unlike Goztepe Park's secluded structure, the waterfront is long and divided into different sections. Different sections allow for different activities, and this creates more room for spontaneity (see Figure 7.4.1.2).

Rules and regulations are more relaxed at the waterfront compared to Goztepe and Gul Park, echoing numerous studies on the waterfront or beach as a liminal zone (Shields, 1991). Preston-Whyte uses the term liminal spaces and explains them as 'intangible, elusive, and obscure' (2004, p350). What makes liminal spaces different is that 'they lie in a limbo-like space often beyond normal social and cultural constraints. In these spaces can be found brief moments of freedom and an escape from the daily grind of social responsibilities' (Preston-Whyte, 2004, p350). Caddebostan waterfront in that sense, overlaps with Preston-Whyte's account of a liminal space or a 'third space' (Soja 1996 cited in Preston-Whyte, 2004) that allows *more* than parks in the area. The beach that is located by the waterfront is another liminal space within a liminal space; it is privatised with its own setting, rules, and regulations. During the fieldwork, the beach was closed because it was the winter season. Access is only allowed during the summer season once the entrance fee of 22TL for adults and 11TL for students is paid (£3 and £1.5 with the currency rate of 2019). The separation between the beach and the waterfront is clear and highlighted with a toll gate as a border/boundary.

However, the rest of the waterfront is open and accessible at all times providing 'brief moments of freedom and an escape' (Preston-Whyte, 2004, p350) and since streets are frequently blocked or damaged due to the increasing number of constructions, the waterfront is one of the few

recreational spaces in the area. The variety and the spontaneity that the waterfront offers makes it popular amongst different groups throughout the day and night, and in that sense the waterfront can be seen as a loose space. According to Franck and Stevens, 'Loose spaces allow for the chance encounter, the spontaneous event, the enjoyment of diversity and the discovery of the unexpected' (2007, p4). The waterfront is used by families to have picnics, friends to have drinks, kids to play, individuals to exercise, homeless people to squat and as a result it is always busy. Although some sections of the waterfront are considered liminal spaces such as the beach, the rest offer enough space and the possibility to conduct various activities. Caddebostan waterfront can be considered as a secular space in a postsecular city due to the amount of liminal spaces on offer. This is mainly because unlike Balat, Caddebostan can afford to resist increasing postsecular patterns, due to its republican tradition and economic wealth.

When it comes to the benches, the same practice of bench moving is also quite common in the waterfront in order to create a 'cosy' personalised seating arrangement. This was often done to ensure that big groups of people could sit together in an almost 'home-like' setting instead of using what was given. This reconfiguring of public spaces is a recurring practice of by the waterfront and in other public spaces in Caddebostan (see Figures 7.4.1.3 and 7.4.1.4).

Figure 7.4.1.3 Benches in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

Figure 7.4.1.4 Benches in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

Due to the ongoing constructions, sidewalks are occupied by tools, damaged, or completely demolished, and not always quickly repaired. The increasing number of constructions has normalised the fact that sidewalks can be seen being blocked by tractors, trucks, and cranes. The inhabitants of Caddebostan have to go about their daily life, all too often in construction sites. These public spaces are not heavily used by the public because there is not much space left for the pedestrian (see Figures 7.4.1.5 and 7.4.1.6).

It is not easy to walk through Caddebostan as the majority of the well-known paths are damaged; in some cases, paths have been demolished or erased completely. Old alleyways and pathways have disappeared during the construction and have never been replaced. The narrow pathway that used to link Plajyolu and Iskele Road, for example, has disappeared following demolitions. It was used for years by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood as a shortcut secluded away from traffic. It is clear therefore, that excessive constructions have distorted continuity in the neighbourhood and minimised the uses of such spaces. As mentioned in Chapter 3, once activities are missing between buildings, the interaction is disconnected and the city can become lifeless if life between buildings is paused (Gehl, 2011, p21).

Figure 7.4.1.5 Sidewalks of Caddebostan, Author's own. December 2018

Figure 7.4.1.6 Sidewalks of Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

7.4.2 Sensescapes & Elements

Each area of this research had its unique sensescapes and elements which were analysed and compared. Caddebostan was both highly predictable and ever-changing because of the ongoing constructions in the neighbourhood which started in 2012. During the fieldwork, Caddebostan was in its sixth year of transformation, and there was no foreseeable completion date or a specific decision maker because the constructions were planned and conducted on a case-by-case basis. Vision, smell, and sound in the neighbourhood was transforming and the use of space, dirt, dust and waste have followed as typical outcomes of constructions. It is important to note that the overall visionscape of Caddebostan was different to the other two areas of this research. There were several reasons for this. First the pace of change was fast, and, in some streets, there were more than five construction projects occurring at once. Moreover, there was no evidence of dressing up the building during the process of demolition and construction, and instead the work was entirely visible, creating a chaotic picture of demolition almost like a visible, exposed urbicide (see Figures 7.4.2.1 and 7.4.2.2).

Figure 7.4.2.1 Demolition in Caddebostan, Author's own, December 2018

Figure 7.4.2.2 Visionscapes of Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2019

The old 3-4 storey buildings with large balconies or terraces were being demolished and replaced with new tall buildings that resemble tower blocks with long windows and generally without balconies, terraces or outdoor areas (see Figures 7.4.2.3 and 7.4.2.4).

These new buildings can be interpreted as more 'interiorising' and enclosed; that is, the public face of the building has been turned inwards due to the lack of visual signs of public space such as gardens, balconies, or streets. New buildings in Caddebostan do not necessarily have balconies or terraces, they are designed with long windows instead. These new long windows in tall buildings radically reshape the visionscape of Caddebostan and it blurs the traditional distinction between the public and private, and even allows for the invasion of private space and privacy (Billig, 2014). This might eventually lead to a concern over privacy, as the buildings are located close to each other and the interior can easily be seen from other buildings. The lack of balconies in Caddebostan have been changing traditional uses of the semi-private realm in Istanbul. Balconies, as Probyn (1996) explains with regards to Montreal, are used for many activities from eating, drinking, smoking, and BBQing during the summer months, to using them for spare storage units in winter months.

Figure 7.4.2.3 New Buildings in Caddebostan, Author's own, November 2018

Figure 7.4.2.4 New Buildings in Caddebostan, Author's own, November 2018

Balconies were traditionally 'in between spaces' that enabled inhabitants to learn and recognise sound, smell and vision of their neighbourhood, as well as to add to the sound, smell and vision of that neighbourhood. Losing balconies has meant losing sensescapes.

The ongoing constructions in Caddebostan during the research were reshaping the neighbourhood and the existing balconies were not largely used because of the continuous sound of construction and due to the dirt and dust. As mentioned earlier, in Caddebostan, balconies are being gradually replaced with tall windows, but because tall windows would make private spaces more visible, this can lead to a new level of the public-private boundary. In a society that has embedded Islamic values like Turkey, the public-private distinction is ambiguous, public spaces can be used as semi-private spaces. Private spaces (the household) on the other hand, are regarded and defined as 'holly' and 'intimate' and the use of curtains and shutters are seen as necessities that separate the private from the public and 'protects' the indoor life from the outdoor gaze (Madanipour, 2003; Zamani, 2010). Moreover, the lack of balconies also separates the public sensescapes from the private sensescapes, and the hybridity and blurriness that balconies can offer has started to disappear.

Figure 7.4.2.5 Street Vendors in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

Across Caddebostan spaces are becoming more clearly public or private. The exception lies with the street vendors and their existence in the neighbourhood as a reminder of the traditional way of using the streets. During the fieldwork, I observed them to be mostly simit sellers[8], fruit and vegetable stands, flower vendors (almost exclusively Gypsy-Roma people), shoe shiners and national lottery sellers. However, unlike street vendors in Balat, street vendors in Caddebostan have fixed spots in the neighbourhood (see Figure 7.4.2.5). This way they can avoid the dirt,

[8] *Simit* is a traditional round shaped bread covered in sesame seeds that is very popular in Istanbul. Even though it can be found at bakeries, it is considered as a very much-loved street food. It can be found in every neighbourhood, from early hours of the morning till evening. It is a highly affordable breakfast, lunch and/or snack alternative on the go.

dust, and waste of constructions and the damaged or occupied sidewalks that make walking a struggle in the neighbourhood. Their existence also changes the smellscapes at the fixed spot they picked. Corners of the neighbourhood smell of fresh flowers, freshly baked simits or fruit and vegetables.

Other than the street vendors, the overall smellscape of Caddebostan was the lack of smell. The new architecture, increasing loss of balconies, and lack of mixed uses of the streets, created a more sterile environment which in turn lacks smell. Even during the ongoing constructions with all the dust that was being created, there was no significant or strong smell that could be identified, other than dust. According to May, the lack of smells might mean 'home' for Westerns (May, 2013, p135), and as one of the most Westernised neighbourhoods in the entire country, that was very much the case in Caddebostan.

The sound as another important sense was significant in the neighbourhood. Daily soundscape in Caddebostan include construction noises starting around 10am and ending around 6pm and the sound from various construction sites with the same rhythm echoing around the area.

As explained in Chapter 3, the research examines how various elements are impacted by the ongoing transformation. In Caddebostan, not only material elements were changing but dirt, dust and waste had also become important elements.

Figure 7.4.2.6 Waste Collection Bags in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

Figure 7.4.2.7 Waste Collector in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

As Campkin argues, ‘Dirt is central within processes of urbanisation’ (2013, p47), but here it is indelibly tied up with re-making the urban. Dirt and dust created by the ongoing constructions function as edges, whereby the roads are often blocked because of building machinery and pedestrians are forced to choose alternative routes. Sidewalks are often damaged by trucks and they become the linkages that can no longer be used. Moreover, waste from constructions is often left on the sidewalks and not always regularly collected, so was often picked up and recycled by children or young men. This is a common form of recycling in Istanbul, men and children working in precarious conditions go through the waste in order to find paper which they then sell to make money. Waste collection bags (see Figures 7.4.2.6 and 7.4.2.7).

Figure 7.4.2.8 A Road in Caddebostan, Author’s own, September 2018

It was highly common to walk over pieces of broken glass and broken bricks because these are typical leftover waste from constructions. What I observed in Caddebostan overlapped with Lynch’s elements that was discussed in Chapter 3. It was a bold example of the transformation of nodes, paths and the creation of temporary edges, and the general loss of landmarks (1960). Fences that were surrounding the constructions had become the new temporary edges that were highlighting the boundary between the daily life and the construction (see Figure 7.4.2.8).

As mentioned earlier, some alleyways that were used as linkages had also disappeared. Elements were challenged and changing rapidly. One of the best examples used to illustrate the impact of this in Caddebostan, is with the fruit and vegetable seller. The seller of fruit and vegetables in the Caddebostan neighbourhood was mobile until 2017 when he started renting a permanent shop in one of the recently constructed buildings (see Figure 7.4.2.9), so he did not

have to be mobile in an area with so many constructions. Although his linkages had been broken, he is still practicing the old tradition of selling fruit and vegetables by sitting outside his shop next to his van and displaying some of his products (see Figure 7.4.2.10). This was an important change for him as his daily routine had been transformed, but this has also impacted the use of public space in Caddebostan, as the streetscapes have been reconfigured.

Figure 7.4.2.9 Fruit and Vegetable Shop in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

Figure 7.4.2.10 Fruit and Vegetable Seller in Caddebostan, Author's own, September 2018

During my time in Caddebostan I experienced the overall emptiness of the neighbourhood. It was not only the parks, but many streets that were also mostly empty. More interestingly many commercial spaces were also vacant and for sale or for rent (see Figures 7.4.2.11 and 7.4.2.12). It is not common to come across that many vacant shops in an area that has a reputation of attracting people to its shopping facilities. Once the buildings had been through urban transformation and had been demolished, the shops were forced to move and/or close down. In some cases, some businesses moved more than once in the space of two to three years.

Figure 7.4.2.11 Shops for Rent in Caddebostan, Author's own, December 2018

Figure 7.4.2.12 Shops for Rent in Caddebostan, Author's own, November 2018

Hence, the only space that creates a sense of continuity and belonging might be the waterfront because it is the only space that has not been transformed and is still in active use. According to Sak and Senyapili, urban collective memory needs continuity to survive and in Caddebostan that is only left at the very edge of the *mahalle*, right at the waterfront (2019, p351).

7.4.3 Lifestyle

Caddebostan has long been the home to high-income groups and despite the excessive number of construction sites and the pace of change in the neighbourhood, the inhabitants have mostly remained the same. There is also little diversity. The real-estate prices limit who can move to Caddebostan which makes the area even more homogenous (figures can be found in Chapter 6). What makes Caddebostan different than Balat and Karakoy is that it does not have a history of decline. Its transformation can be best described as super gentrification; nothing more than a profit orientated process of demolish and rebuild in order to renew the housing stock of the

neighbourhood. In that sense, Caddebostan, as a proud secular republican area, has been supporting the neoliberal policies of the conservative Islamist government when it comes to the real-estate market and profit making. With one of the highest numbers of construction sites in Istanbul, the area can be considered at the crossroad of secularism and neoliberalism. The case of Caddebostan is significant in understanding to what extent social and political views can bend when it comes to gentrification and increasing the value of the building stock for current owners and attracting further investors. Despite the undeniable damage to public spaces, changing elements and senses, and the overall distortion of all of the transformation to the urban collective memory, Caddebostan chose to support the government's neoliberal approach towards redevelopment. Other than mass demolition and rebuilding, there has not been a radical lifestyle change in Caddebostan. People are not moving to Caddebostan to open up businesses or to experience nostalgia. While there are national and international chains in the neighbourhood including Starbucks, Café Nero, Burger King and McDonalds there are still many local businesses mainly consisting of cafés, restaurants, pubs, bars, taverns, eateries, bakeries, off licences, boutiques, hairdressers and, more recently hardware and DIY stores and third-wave coffeeshops. In Plajyolu Road alone, there are three DIY stores, and they were considered to be highly useful to provide for ongoing constructions, as well as the constant moving around of inhabitants between flats and shops.

Third-wave coffeeshops in Caddebostan were popular places with some roads having more than three where locals and customers know each other and the owners alike, and regular conversations take place. Third -wave coffee has become an important commodity in Istanbul in the last few years. These coffeeshops are 'boutique' venues that serve freshly brewed, high quality, artisanal coffee mostly produced on site (Istanbullu et al., 2016). The idea of supporting local businesses and feeling a sense of belonging and being 'known' are understood to motivate their popularity (Hubbard, 2016; Uluengin, 2016).

During the fieldwork, I observed that the majority of shops were very busy throughout the day and night. Many shops and kiosks in Caddebostan were open as early as 8am and closed at midnight or had their own timetables. Amid's account of Mashhad has many similarities with the ways in which the night is perceived and experienced in Istanbul unlike many Western cities that are recently declaring themselves as 24-hour cities:

> Shopkeepers and the self-employed, for example, have their own timetables, which vary across different times of the year and different parts of the city. […] In summer, many shops extend their opening hours until midnight. This is greatly influenced by the type of facilities they provide. Convenience stores and newspaper kiosks are typically open until midnight or operate twenty-four-hours. Restaurants and fast-food outlets close later than any other shops, and it is generally possible to have dinner at 2:00am or an early breakfast at 5:00am (Amid, 2018, p88).

Amid's research on Mashhad is significant in grasping the significance of night-time activities in most Middle Eastern cities including Istanbul, and similarly there is not a sharp separation between daytime activities and night-time activities in Istanbul. Night-time in Istanbul for example, does not necessarily mean solely alcohol consumption. Although alcohol consumption is one of the fundamental night-time activities for certain groups, and has a huge part in structuring nightlife, so is going to a coffeeshop or to an ice cream parlour till the early hours of the morning, depending on the season, echoing Amid's account (2018).

As touched upon earlier, alcohol consumption, alcohol licences and public drinking are regarded as important indicators in Turkey to comprehend the social and political tendency of an area, as well as its secular to postsecular transition. For this reason, I observed, searched, bought, and asked to consume alcohol in all three areas during the fieldwork. Gokarisel and Secor's research on postsecular geographies in Istanbul sheds further light on this matter:

> […] in summer 2013, the AKP government passed legislation restricting the sale and marketing of alcohol. Whether this legislation was an imposition of a devout Sunni way of life on the public or was merely an attempt to bring the regulation of alcohol sale and marketing to EU standards was being widely debated in Turkey […] (Gokarisel and Secor, 2015, p26).

Its reflection on everyday life was in the shape of banning the purchase of alcohol from shops between 10pm-6am and this has undeniably created a new approach towards alcohol consumption and reshaped practices for obtaining alcohol[9]. This form of regulation was certainly a different and challenging practice in a city like Istanbul that has traditionally been home to shops, restaurants, coffeeshops and kiosks with their own timetables that can sometimes serve customers 24-hours. Depending on the neighbourhood, night-time in Istanbul can be highly broad and diverse overlapping some aspects of Amid's account of Mashhad where 'everyday activities might seem as equally normal taking place at night' (2018, p86). However, by limiting the hours of selling and purchasing alcohol in Istanbul, night-time is being

[9] Law no. 6487 was accepted in 24.05.2013 was implemented in June 2013 to regulate the sale, promotion and advertisement of alcohol products (Resmi Gazete, 2013, np).

challenged. Regulating the night-time is an intervention that is aiming to clarify and sharpen the boundaries between daytime and night-time activities. This is significant in understanding how activities are being regulated and it overlaps with how redevelopment in Istanbul has been making spaces more clearly public or private. Transformation in Istanbul is not only about transforming building stock and reconfiguring public spaces, but it is also about regulating life and just as there is a strengthening of public and private spaces, daytime and night-time is also being more structured. Ironically, more structured areas in Istanbul are in fact allowing more 24-hours activities, such as having access to coffeeshops at midnight in Caddebostan. This indicates a significant difference with the Western model of gentrification which is understood in terms of a vaguer sense of 'increased consumerism'. Here, consumption and consumerism are important, but are much more regulated and reflect the Islamist tendencies of the current government that have enough power to de-secularise even deeply secular areas like Caddebostan.

7.5 Karakoy

As described previously, Karakoy is a district in Beyoglu Municipality that consists of small *mahalles*. For this research, the *mahalles* of Arap Camii and Kemankes Karamustafapasa which are both located in Karakoy were selected and observed, both neighbourhoods are located on the waterfront just like Balat and Caddebostan. Karakoy has been transforming since the early 2000s with the encouragement of Law no. 5366. As discussed in Chapters 2 and 6, the exploration of run-down, declined, and neglected areas by the creative class have been gradually leading to gentrification. In Karakoy, economic gentrification soon followed cultural gentrification with flagship developments in the area such as the Galataport project.

During the fieldwork, observing two neighbourhoods of Karakoy gave me a broader picture of the area. It is important to mention that Karakoy is not as residential as Caddebostan and Balat and that is why my fieldwork experience in this area was highly different in some ways. Although the residential population of Karakoy is low, the area has a reputation for being extremely vibrant as its central location makies it an important hub for transportation in Istanbul with ferry stations, tram stops, funicular and metro stops. The cultural gentrification of the early 2000s, not only made the area 'cool' but has attracted commercial gentrification. Gentrification

in Karakoy is in a similar vein to Yucesoy's account of public space and the gentrification of Galata; a historical neighbourhood located between Karakoy and Taksim:

> […] public space has become a contested space, torn between two gentrifying groups: pioneers vs. large stakeholders. Investors are backed by local authorities, who see the salvation of the area in terms of tourist-industry investments, and favor thematized, commercial gentrification. Thus, while pioneers and followers offer opportunities for people to explore urban activities and identities and create shared spaces, as well as grounds to flourish, commercial gentrification tends to prescribe the spatial structure, placing people solely as passive consumers, as well as social spacing and inter-action patterns (Yucesoy, 2008, p42).

What makes Karakoy interesting is the various ways its neighbourhoods have transformed. The Arap Camii neighbourhood is at the early stages of its transformation and the majority of the neighbourhood is still in decline. Some parts have buildings that are in ruins or in serious need of rehabilitation. Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhood, on the other hand, is rapidly transforming as a mixture of cultural and commercial gentrification is happening, together with ongoing construction for flagship developments including the Galataport project.

Although the Galataport project has created significant controversy and has been halted several times, during the fieldwork, the project had been resumed and the waterfront of Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhood was closed off to accommodate the construction. Knowing the fact that the Galataport project will transform the 1.2 km coastline, the buildings surrounding the project were dressed up which led to the creation of long corridors of construction sites.

More interestingly, the posters that were used to dress the construction up had old visuals of Karakoy in black and white (see Figure 7.5.1). These old visuals were strengthened with other posters with slogans saying: '*Past is yours; Future is yours*' (see Figure 7.5.2). This is a significant example of how the visuals and slogans were used to create 'the gap between present non-belonging and past belonging' (Ahmed, 2015: 166 cited in May, 2017, p411). Although buildings are not systematically demolished and rebuilt in Karakoy, constructions have become part of daily life. Since Karakoy's redevelopment, was conducted under Law no. 5366, also known as the renewal law, which aims to preserve historical and cultural areas [translated by author] (Sahin, 2015), the façades of some historical buildings are preserved, and the interiors

are reconstructed. Typically, the ways in which the existing building stock is used is also transforming; many old shops have been turned into cafés, bars, and restaurants. In this sense, the current state of Karakoy can be considered as in 'transition' and 'in-between'.

Figure 7.5.1 Poster in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.5.2 Poster in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

7.5.1 Public Spaces

It is important to note that Karakoy is the only area in this research that has *meydans*. While this thesis understands public spaces as relational, it is crucial to include *meydans*. As extensively described previously, a *meydan* is a square or a piazza in a Turkish context, but a *meydan* unlike squares or piazzas 'is not holy but rather a mundane space, a junction of axes which brings together structures and spaces that were not designed intentionally to define one integrated spatial entity' (Baykan and Hatuka, 2010, p51). Before analysing the *meydans* in Karakoy, it is important to distinguish various types of *meydans* in Istanbul; the ones that solely function as a junction or as a node and therefore a mundane space that is used for activities such as passing by and, second, the ones that are well-known, central, and symbolically and have historically significance such as Taksim Meydan. The latter has been used for social

movements, protests and gatherings and these forms of *meydans* that have witnessed the political and social history of a city have symbolic power. Throughout the history and increasingly after the Gezi Park movement of 2013, *meydans* in Istanbul have been under heavy surveillance, with limitations and restrictions effecting the ways in which they can be accessed and used. The same practice can be observed in many parks in Istanbul with private security, CCTV, and other forms of interventions occasionally by the police. Thus, it can be argued that there is an ongoing discrediting and hollowing out of the meaning and use of public spaces in Istanbul, not only symbolically but also materially and spatially.

Such public spaces in Karakoy included three *meydans* and the waterfront. The waterfront was divided into various sections to accommodate the ferry stations and the ongoing constructions for different projects. Each *meydan* in Karakoy was located by a public transportation link; Tunel Meydani (Funicular Square), Tramvay Meydani (Tram Square) and Iskele Meydani (Ferry Square). In Karakoy, *meydans* are mostly open junctions for accessing public transportation.

Figure 7.5.1.1 Tramvay Meydani in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Both Tunel and Tramvay *meydans* are open concrete spaces surrounded by ongoing traffic. There is only one bench in Tramvay Meydani, (see Figure 7.5.1.1), and no seating at all in Tunel Meydani which make them unwelcoming and mostly unused. Concrete open spaces without any shade offer no room to hide from the sun, wind, rain, or snow.

Iskele Meydani, on the other hand, is located by Karakoy ferry station. The *meydan* is also located by the waterfront and because the rest of the waterfront in Karakoy was closed off at the time of the research, it was the only accessible public space in the waterfront. Iskele Meydani was used actively and always busy. People were not only using Iskele Meydani as a linkage to pass by, but they were using it while waiting for the ferry, watching others, fishing with friends, and smoking. Consuming alcohol in Iskele Meydani was also a highly common activity.

The practices of alcohol consumption in Iskele Meydani overlapped with Wilkinson's account of public drinking: 'Streets and parks can also provide a cheaper alternative, in comparison to consuming alcohol in commercial drinkscapes; there is no entrance fee, and the alcohol itself can be purchased from a corner shop or supermarket for a fraction of prices found in commercial premises' (Wilkinson, 2018, p124). Iskele Meydani provided this level of freedom to those who wanted to have an affordable drink.

The materiality of Iskele Meydani allows different activities unlike other *meydans* in Karakoy. Numerous benches and huge plant pots create a welcoming environment that is sittable. The bench moving practice that was observed in Caddebostan, was also common in Iskele Meydani where benches were moved in order to create a comfortable or a closer seating arrangement (see Figure 7.5.1.2). However, during the fieldwork, the buildings surrounding Iskele Meydani

Figure 7.5.1.2 Benches in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.5.1.3 Carpark in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

were under construction, with some sections being surrounded by fences of other constructions, and access to the *meydan* therefore, was often affected.

It is important to mention that there are not any strict regulations to limit or control traffic congestion or parking in Istanbul, so cars can block everywhere including pavements, *meydans* and waterfronts. As a result, empty spaces near and around the waterfront are used as car parks throughout the day (see Figure 7.5.1.3). Transforming public spaces into carparks or using public spaces as carparks, is certainly not an unfamiliar scene in Istanbul, but it seems like a highly common and accepted practice in Karakoy. The ongoing construction in the area has intensified this practice to such an extent that even excavators are often parked at public spaces by the benches including Iskele Meydani (see Figure 7.5.1.4).

Figure 7.5.1.4 Iskele Meydani in Karakoy, Author's own, December 2018

The access to the waterfront and the ways in which the waterfront is used is different in Karakoy and even amongst neighbourhoods. The waterfront in Arap Camii neighbourhood, for example, is by a new metro extension goes over a bridge and as a result, the waterfront has started to be used more actively and frequently. However, apart from the path that enables access to the metro station, the rest of the waterfront was closed off during the fieldwork for the renovation with a new public pathway. During the fieldwork, I could not access the waterfront in the Arap Camii neighbourhood. But once the construction is complete the waterfront will link the Arap Camii and the Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhoods through a public pathway. To what extent the waterfront is going to change the area's relationship to the sea after the transformation is important for Karakoy's public spaces.

The waterfront in the Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhood was also under construction during the fieldwork, and it was completely closed off to public use and access (apart from the

meydan by the ferry station) because of the ongoing Galataport project which will privatise the shoreline with a luxury port, marina, hotel complex and shops (see Figure 7.5.1.5) (Islam, 2010; Karaman, 2008).

Figure 7.5.1.5 Construction of Galataport, Author's own, December 2018

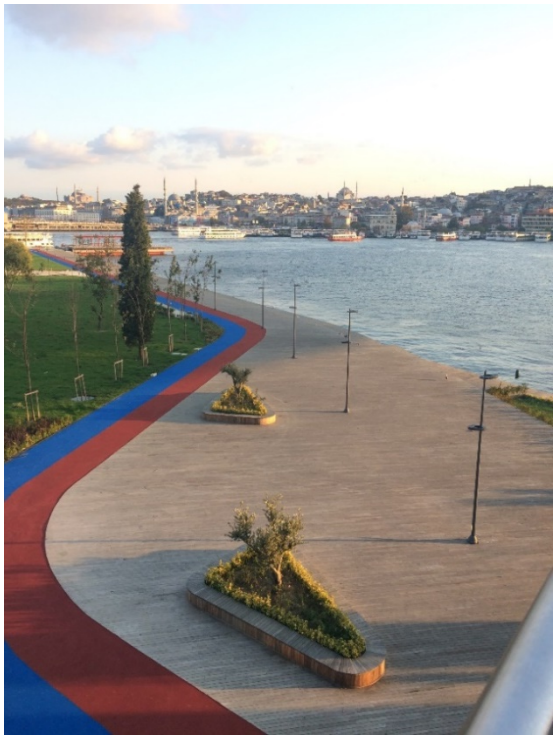

Figure 7.5.1.6 New Waterfront in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Once the ongoing constructions in Karakoy are completed, the only way the public will be able to access the waterfront will be through the metro station, and the new public space in Arap Camii, and through Iskele Meydan, in Kemankes Karamustafapasa (see Figure 7.5.1.6) In other words, the transformation Karakoy was going through during the fieldwork was mainly a waterfront redevelopment.

Streets, alleyways, and sidewalks in Karakoy were actively used, even though the constructions were blocking or damaging the streets and occupying sidewalks. This has become a common 'side effect' of the work in Istanbul and in Karakoy cranes, trucks and excavators could be seen in every corner (see Figures 7.5.1.7 and 7.5.1.8).

Figure 7.5.1.7 Construction Machine in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.5.1.8 Construction Machine in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Besides the ongoing constructions in the area, the commercial background of Karakoy and its central location continue to attract people from different backgrounds. Some visit Karakoy to buy electronic equipment from DIY shops, go to see a new exhibition in one of the galleries, try a new restaurant or just pass by on the way to somewhere else. Although life in Karakoy is between construction sites, life in the streets is still vibrant. Business owners sit in front of their shops to have a tea and play backgammon with their friends, while visitors go to cafés and consume coffee on the terraces of the sidewalk (see Figure 7.5.1.9). This mixture of use shapes Karakoy's

Figure 7.5.1.9 Street Life in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

characteristics and highlights the area's diversity. In these terms, Karakoy's public spaces are being reconfigured, on a daily basis. The practices of using streets for various activities can be read as a resistance to the rapid transformation of the area. This unregulated and relational reconfiguration and use of material spaces was a form of claiming *the right to the city* that Harvey explains:

> The right to the city is, therefore, far more than a right of individual or group access to the resources that the city embodies: it is a right to change and reinvent the city more after our hearts' desire. It is, moreover, a collective rather than an individual right, since reinventing the city inevitably depends upon the exercise of a collective power over the processes of urbanization (Harvey, 2013, p4).

In Karakoy, uses of public spaces represents various claims and reclaims.

7.5.2 Sensescapes & Elements

Karakoy also has its own sensescapes and elements. The area's change started off with cultural gentrification and then evolved. The construction has become part of daily life in Karakoy as in Caddebostan, however the type of transformation projects is different. Although both areas are undergoing economic gentrification, in Caddebostan there are more demolish and rebuild projects, whereas Karakoy is a case of commercial gentrification with a mixture of flagship developments and the transformation of 'run-down' areas into creative zones. In terms of sensescapes, Karakoy can be considered the most complex area of this research. The sensescapes of Karakoy is not only rich but also very diverse. Similar to Balat, the amount of different smells in Karakoy was one of the first things that I noted. The more traditional and taken for granted smells, such as seaweed and fish were mixing with new smells such as freshly brewed coffee. As the busy centre of a mega city, Karakoy is an ideal spot for affordable and accessible street food and the more street food there is, the more the mixture of smells. Furthermore, the ongoing constructions in Karakoy are creating dust and dirt which is polluting the air and adding to the overall smell of the area.

The soundscape of Karakoy primarily consisted of not so loved noises, the noise of constant traffic, the noise of the tram and the noise of ongoing constructions. All three *meydans* of Karakoy were exposed to the sound of constant traffic and constructions that started early in

the morning and continued after 6pm. The high number of scattered construction sites meant there was serious noise and dust pollution that might discourage people from using big open spaces. The sound of constructions created a rhythm like sound that was constantly playing in the background of the area. Additionally, there were some other sounds that were traditionally identified with Istanbul and especially with Istanbul's older neighbourhoods which could be heard in Karakoy throughout the day. These can be regarded as the *typical* soundscape of Istanbul from a *tourist gaze* which Urry calls (2002): the whistles of ferries, screams of seagulls, voices of street vendors and the call to prayer from mosques.

In addition to smell and sound, the visionscape of the area is also transforming. Once the projects are completed, Karakoy will have a new vision, especially around the waterfront. This will be an important shift considering the fact that construction sites feature pictures of old Karakoy and once they will be removed it will be a different Karakoy underneath. In gentrifying parts of Karakoy, on the other hand, such as the Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhood, walls and fences covering the constructions were covered in paintings and graffiti (see Figures 7.5.2.1, 7.5.2.2 and 7.5.2.3).

Figure 7.5.2.1 Street Art in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Figure 7.5.2.2 Street Art in Karakoy, Author's own, November 2018

Figure 7.5.2.3 Street Art in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

Besides the construction and cultural gentrification, there were many streets in Karakoy that were in decline with many buildings in ruins. This very well-known vision of Karakoy has given the area a bad reputation in the first place.

To accommodate the ongoing construction in Karakoy, elements were occupied temporarily or changed radically. Although the area had three *meydans*, I realised how much of a struggle it was to walk from one place to another during the fieldwork. The ongoing construction has created numerous disruptions, creating temporary edges with fences or scaffolding. This was very much the case by the waterfront where the construction on both sides created corridors, forcing people to walk in between construction sites without being able to see the sea (see Figure 7.5.2.4).

Figure 7.5.2.4 Karakoy Waterfront, Author's own, October 2018

Moving between the construction sites meant moving under scaffolding while being bombarded with dust and dirt. This can be defined as 'edges' that have the power to transform one's daily routine. As noted earlier, according to Lynch, edges can be regarded as 'boundaries' and/or 'barriers' that can break the continuity in an area or divide the area visibly with walls or water, for example (Lynch, 1960, p47). Although edges are commonly considered as physical and visible, the ways in which edges are structured and constructed have symbolic power over their uses in cities by acting as borders. Their existence informs individuals

where they can and cannot access, and also act ‘to increase the privacy of a place’ (Lynch, 1984, p213).

Streets and sidewalks, as significant linkages, were often occupied by cars or construction machinery (see Figure 7.5.2.5). *Meydans* as nodes of Karakoy were used to park cars and depending on their location they were exposed to dirt and dust from surrounding traffic and constructions. Waste was another common aspect of one’s daily routine and the types of waste varied according to the location. Random waste from hardware and DIY shops was left on the sidewalks, and it seemed like an acceptable practice (see Figure 7.5.2.6). In *meydans,* on the other hand, waste consisted of leftover food usually bought from street vendors.

Figure 7.5.2.5 Sidewalks in Karakoy, Author’s own, October 2018

Figure 7.5.2.6 Sidewalks in Karakoy, Author’s own, December 2018

Just like in Caddebostan, there were numerous waste collectors that collect, recycle, and sell the waste. According to Wall, ‘Growth, decay, production and waste are bound up with all landscapes’ (2020, p10) and in Karakoy there is random waste in random places. As Campkin discusses, in relation to urban environment, certain buildings or certain areas might be associated with dirt, decline and disorder (2013, p54) and this account overlaps with Wilson and Kelling’s well-cited Broken Windows (1982).

Figure 7.5.2.7 Sidewalks in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

As mentioned earlier, in Karakoy some parts had been 'cleansed' via gentrification, while some parts had completely declined and were in ruins. In declined areas, it was common to witness public urination and littering. Although public urination is an act that's looked down upon, Eldridge draws upon Douglas' 'matter out of place' and argues that it is not only the act itself that is found disturbing, but many other things such as: 'Who the urine 'belonged' to, and why it is where it is, [and] the context in which it is found' (2010, p41). In Karakoy, public urination was happening in the daytime which should have made it even more 'dirty', but because the area where the public urination was happening looked and felt 'run-down', it was somewhat accepted and almost normalised.

Correspondingly, abandoned ruins and empty land is being used as car parks and/or littering zones and it is common to see waste from constructions in these sections, as well (see Figure 7.5.2.7). More construction meant more deserted spaces in Karakoy, and these abandoned empty spaces have a significant impact on Istanbul, as they symbolise the ongoing transformation, as well as its side effects. Wilson and Kelling's observations on Newark echo the current case of Karakoy:

> Though the area was run-down, its streets were filled with people, because it was a major transportation center. The good order of this area was important not only to those who lived and worked there but also to many others, who had to move through it on their way home, to supermarkets, or to factories (Wilson and Kelling, 1982, p3).

Karakoy, as an always busy transport hub with a banking and commercial past, showed plenty of signs of being run-down during the fieldwork. However, there was evidence that it was in a

state of transition, and while the materiality and spatiality of Karakoy was changing, the relationality of the area was being reconfigured on a daily basis.

7.5.3 Lifestyle

As explained in Chapter 6, Karakoy had gone through different forms of transformation in three periods: redevelopment projects of the 1950s, the waterfront revitalisation of the 1980s and the ongoing state as of the mid-2000s with Law no. 5366. With every transformation, the materiality of Karakoy had been reshaped. However, the process that prepared Karakoy for its current case was its decline in the 1980s. Some of the bank headquarters moved out, leaving historical buildings behind and Karakoy gradually gained a negative reputation for crime and danger. The cultural gentrification of the 2000s introduced Karakoy to a new lifestyle, with the opening of museums and art galleries which undoubtedly attracted the creative class. Ever since, Karakoy has been an increasingly popular area amongst members of the creative class with eateries that serve ethnic cuisines, bistros, cafés, national and international coffeeshop chains, taverns, and bars. In Karakoy gentrification was a combination of the cultural and economic models and therefore it was not limited to a specific form of consumerism, it was more welcoming to different groups and different businesses. For this reason, the government's ideology might not be reflected in an Islamic conservative shape, but it is instead more in line with neoliberal practices that have been preparing to relaunch Karakoy as a touristic port with Galataport and new hotels. As argued in earlier chapters, the ways postsecularism, globalisation and neoliberalism are articulated varies considerably across the city, making any claim to a single objective of the government difficult to identify.

There are also many streets in Karakoy that have not been transformed, and could be considered 'run-down', including the famous Zurafa Sokak; a street that is closed to the public and has gates in order to accommodate brothels. There was also a mixture of lifestyles in Karakoy, and it is common to see street vendors in front of hipster cafés. That makes Karakoy more interesting, diverse, and welcoming. During the fieldwork, I observed that the creative class and the hipsters mainly visited the Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhood in Karakoy, as this area was gentrified and had many alternative places from third-wave coffeeshops to quirky decorated bars and cafés, from expensive designer shops to rooftop terraces. The Arap Camii neighbourhood was mostly untouched and had more traditional places that were not gentrified,

such as car parks on empty lands, hardware and DIY shops, nautical stores and small kiosks that serve quick and easy lunches, and old restaurants with buffet catering which appealed mostly to the working classes and local business owners. These spaces had a quick turnaround, unlike the new spaces where people would spend their time relaxing and enjoying the atmosphere.

Another traditional place in Karakoy was the *cay ocagi*. *Cay ocagi* literally means tea house and is a tiny local business (mostly located in a small room or in a kitchenette) run on the same principal as *kahves* and *kiraathanes,* as described earlier in relation to Balat. *Cay ocagi,* however, fundamentally exists at the entrances of office buildings serving tea and coffee at affordable prices to the offices, and to the people working in and around that building, including other businesses and shops. Since *kahve*, *kiraathane* and *cay ocagi* are local and traditional concepts, they are helpful to understanding whether an area is residential like Balat or commercial like Karakoy. They can also give away some information about the lifestyle, class background and daily routine of the area. During the fieldwork, I observed numerous *cay ocagis* in the area and they were mostly opening up to the public. Since *cay ocagis* are located in small rooms, customers who were ordering teas or coffees had to consume them outside in the streets or in the sidewalks (see Figure 7.5.3.1). Some *cay ocagis* put small chairs and tables by the sidewalks to accommodate their customers (see Figure 7.5.3.2). This practice undoubtedly

Figure 7.5.3.1 Cay Ocagi in Karakoy, Author's own, November 2018

Figure 7.5.3.2 Cay Ocagi in Karakoy, Author's own, October 2018

created and boosted life in the streets and highlighted the area's diversity in terms of class background.

With its increasing number of bars, bistros, and restaurants, Karakoy has started to become a popular nightlife destination. There are several reasons for Karakoy's increasing popularity and cultural gentrification is one of them. As mentioned earlier, the area's historical architecture has already been attracting the creative class since the early 2000s with the opening of museums and galleries. It can be argued, however, that its nightlife started to prosper over the last decade or so and increased further following the Gezi Park movement and the abandonment of Istiklal Avenue. Taksim Meydan and Istiklal Avenue are two significant places located in a very close proximity to Gezi Park in Beyoglu, Istanbul. As Yucesoy describes in her account of 2008 'Up until today, Beyoglu stands as an example of cosmopolitanism, a mixture of all culture and ethnicities, and a symbolic birth place of the social and civil codes and norms of Westernized Turkish Society' (2008, p35). Taksim Meydan and Istiklal Avenue have historically symbolised resistance, civil rights movements and overall freedom and liberties including International Workers' Day Marches, International Women's Day Marches, and the Pride Parade. Gathering for International Workers' Day in Taksim Meydan has been banned since 2013 (Deutsche Welle, 2019, np) and celebrating Pride Parade has been banned since 2015 (Elden, 2019, np). Those who try to gather every year to exercise their democratic rights are greeted with excessive police force (BBC, 2017, np).

Besides these movements, many cultural and social events were traditionally held on Istiklal Avenue as well, for example, the Istanbul Film Festival. A pedestrianised 1.4 km long avenue Istiklal became increasingly popular in the 2000s for its nightlife, pubs, bars, and nightclubs, located in alleyways and narrow streets with outdoor tables and seating arrangements (Eder and Oz, 2015). However, nightlife in Istiklal Avenue was challenged in 2011 with the removal of the outdoor tables and seating arrangements. Nightlife was curtailed with that intervention then almost halted after the Gezi Park movement, as parks surrounding Istiklal Avenue were aggressively emptied and several landmarks demolished. Nightlife started to move from Istiklal Avenue to Karakoy, as a nearby location, and scattered to several other neighbourhoods in Istanbul. The ongoing constructions in Karakoy and the amount of sound, dirt, dust and waste it creates, does not provide a walkable environment, let alone an outdoor, public nightlife. Unlike Istiklal Avenue with its flat surface, lighting and 24/7 police patrolling, some streets of Karakoy do not even have proper lighting.

During the fieldwork, I observed the case of Karakoy as ‘in-between’. The area still had grotty streets, deserted alleyways, and dark cul-de-sacs with abandoned buildings. The emptiness was more visible in Karakoy, compared to the other two areas of this research, because it was not fundamentally a residential area. Long empty streets with empty buildings alongside the ongoing constructions, were important signs of Karakoy’s upcoming change. On the other hand, however, there were art galleries, museums, libraries, and designer shops in old buildings alongside murals and graffiti indicating how ‘cool’ Karakoy had becoming. These businesses located in ‘run-down’ buildings and old depots gave Karakoy a ‘poor chic’ look that Hubbard refers to:

> 'Poor chic' does not involve the simple purchase of, and display, of second hand or discount goods. It requires serious disposable income to clean and restore such goods, turning the merely shabby into 'shabby chic'. Working class authenticity is cherished, but in the process it's symbolically consumed until little trace of its 'dirty' working class background remains. When hipsters move into previously devalued or working class spaces, the results are then often immediately apparent in aesthetic changes and 'improvements' to the locality, and these are ones that can involve forms of symbolic violence as the hipster habitus comes to dominate (Hubbard, 2016, p2-3).

Located in-between the old and the new, the rich and the poor and the relational and the spatial gave Karakoy its new characteristic. The area will continue to transform as the constructions go on and its public spaces will be continuously reconfigured.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter has described the fieldwork, listed, and explained the key findings of the research, discussed, and defined public spaces, sensescapes and elements and lifestyle for each area of the case study with observational, visual, and sensory analysis. Public spaces in each area were introduced to analyse the ways in which they were used and reconfigured. Sensescapes consisted of vision, smell and sound were observed and analysed and described to underline how and why areas are different and/or similar to each other. Elements were not just the material elements of the cityscape but dirt, dust and waste from constructions were also understood as elements. The overall transformation of elements and sensescapes and the extent to which they shape the reconfiguration of public spaces remained as the anchoring point of the fieldwork.

This is why, the lifestyle of each area and how daily life is conducted by various publics was observed and was included in this study. The next chapter will discuss the findings and address the research questions.

Chapter 8: Discussion & Concluding Remarks

This chapter, the discussion, starts by exploring the aims and objectives of the research in relation to the findings and the main themes of the thesis. Throughout the discussion, I will be returning to the research questions which have framed this study and, after a brief introduction, will be using them to structure the discussion.

Having grown up in Istanbul, I was familiar with the ways people use streets, alleyways and sidewalks to conduct everyday activities; smoking, hanging washing, meeting with friends, drinking coffee and the like. The constant negotiation that is needed when it comes to using and claiming public spaces and the relations between the public and private were of particular interest. More recently, Istanbul has started to change quite rapidly with the increasing number of redevelopment projects and cultural and economic changes driving gentrification. This was made possible by the government that 'has disavowed its roots in Islamist politics but has effectively combined Islamic values with neoliberal economic policies' (Gokarisel and Secor. 2015, p21). For this reason, I decided to focus on how redevelopment and gentrification were affecting the 'doing' of public space. Over the years, I have had the chance to experience and observe the ways in which Istanbul has been transforming and how this transformation has impacted the use of public spaces. Having all these in mind, I shaped the following aims to guide the research.

- **To investigate the relationship between urban redevelopment and the loss/decline of public space in Istanbul**.

  As broadly discussed, there is evidence of both models of cultural and economic gentrification in Istanbul and they exist in relation to each other and are similar to those of the West. However, gentrification and the ways in which it materialises, is affected and shaped by the culture, tradition and politics of the city (Lees, 2012). While gentrification has been recorded across many parts of the world, and it is now a well-researched and well-discussed phenomenon, Istanbul has its own history which further impacts redevelopment. The economic model has been increasingly taking over areas of Istanbul mostly under the name of urban redevelopment projects. The cultural model does not directly focus on making a profit and it commonly materialises, as a result of certain groups' interest in a relatively poor and run-down area.

- **To examine how public space is being reconfigured during the ongoing constructions.**
- **To understand how spatial changes shapes and reshapes relationality in public.**

These aims were designed in order to explain how redevelopments might have an impact on public space in three contrasting areas, including the impact of proposed top-down urban interventions, such was seen in Gezi Park in 2013. In particular, I was interested in the impact of construction work on public spaces. Mow the work might shape the doing and experience of public space developed into a key aspect of the project and is discussed more fully later. Alongside this was an interest in how the use of public space was changing, and how this was affected by the sensory such as vision, sound, smell, dirt, dust and waste. Although this thesis primarily focuses on the changes happening in three areas, urban redevelopment in Istanbul has been extensive enough to also change urban collective memory. Urban collective memory, because of its nature, continuously expands as it reflects ever-changing urban life. However, there is a difference between expanding urban collective memory and erasing some aspects of it. Throughout this research, I witnessed the constant erasure of public spaces, landmarks and secular memory and thus, the concept of urban collective memory and the ways in which it has been affected by the construction became a prominent question.

To reach the aims of the research, the following objectives were designed:

1. Produce ethnographic data comparing three areas at different stages of urban redevelopment.
    a. The data included economic, visual, sensory, and observational material.
2. Provide a detailed account of current redevelopment policies in Istanbul by examining the laws that have altered and been implemented since 2002, the year the current government was elected.
3. Measure and assess levels of public participation in the three named areas over a finite period.
4. Examine recent redevelopments and where they occurred in the case study locations.

These objectives were carried out between 2017 to 2020. As explained in the methods section, the following methods were utilised to be able to understand the redevelopment in Istanbul:

- Case study
- Analysis of Legal Framework

- Literature review of each area, including secondary data.
- Micro-Ethnography
    - Visual Analysis
    - Observational and Sensory Analysis

The fieldwork was conducted in 2018 in three areas in Istanbul over two trips to Turkey. To be able to collect the data efficiently, a list of criteria was prepared beforehand and was used in the field, as shown in Chapter 4. Throughout the fieldwork, recent redevelopments and where they occurred were observed according to the criteria. Their impact on public space and public participation, in relation to the ways in which public spaces were used, was also examined. The economic data about each area that consisted of property prices was investigated and included to be able to create a clearer picture. The six urban laws that were prepared between 2004 and 2012 were examined in detail in Chapter 5. All collected data from the three areas were then analysed in relation to the legal framework.

Before moving on to the research questions and methods that were conducted to respond to each question, I want to first reiterate important themes and the background of urban changes in Istanbul, that influenced and eventually shaped this research. As the reader will recall from Chapter 1, some important urban changes for Istanbul were listed and analysed historically in three different eras; the 1950s, the 1980s and the 2000s and some of the changes before the early 2000s were understood to be less systematic. They were occurred as a result of the increasing population, urban sprawl towards the peripheries of the city, and the long-lasting issue of illegal housing (*gecekondu*) (Ayatac, 2007; Bugra, 1998; Erman, 2001; Genis, 2007; Gul and Lamb, 2004; Karaman, 2013; Keyder, 2010; Mutman, 2013; Uzun et al., 2010; Yetiskul and Demirel, 2018). There were other changes that could be read as a result of particular policies. As identified, the neoliberal policies of the 1980s and Turkey's integration to the global market and the ways in which they had reflections on the built environment such as the increasing number of shopping malls and gated communities have been widely examined in the literature (Adanali, 2011; Akcali and Korkut, 2015; Aksoy, 2008; Arat-Koc, 2007; Dokmeci et al., 2007; Dossick et al., 2012; Enlil, 2011;Genis, 2007; Keyder, 2005, 2010; Soysal, 2010; Zeybekoglu, 2015).

More importantly, as explored in this thesis, the recent redevelopments, especially after the early 2000s with the implementation of new urban laws, was understood to have led to the

gentrification of various neighbourhoods of Istanbul and has transformed public spaces, as well as daily life. Hence, I want to explain how gentrification has been applied to the context of Istanbul. Though first coined by Ruth Glass (1964) regarding London, gentrification arrived in Turkey during the 1980s alongside neoliberalism. Gentrification is typically conceived in several ways with the economic and cultural models dominating. The cultural model, mostly associated with the work of Ley (1996, 2003), Lees (2000), Lloyd (2010), Florida (2005, 2014), Bondi (1991), Bridge (2006) and Uzun (2003) frames gentrification through an understanding of the new cultural values that represent the new middle class and/or creative class and their 'rediscovery' of the inner-city. This is typically associated with lifestyle choices and consumerism (Ley, 1996) and has been further developed by other critics such as Florida (2005, 2014, 2017) and Lloyd (2010) who focus on certain groups' interest in mostly run-down areas of a city. Florida (2005, 2014) defines this group as the creative class and explains that members of the creative class do not necessarily have to have economic capital but their cultural capital and non-traditional lifestyle value things like historical architecture and diversity. Lloyd's concept of neo-bohemia (2010) overlaps with Florida's creative class which Lloyd defines as a lifestyle commonly associated with contemporary artists and their interest in certain 'marginal' neighbourhoods (Lloyd, 2010). In both accounts, the lifestyle choice of people moving to run-down areas of a city, eventually ends up transforming the area and sometimes can even displace the original inhabitants.

While there is reach to this argument, and nostalgia and hipsterism are evident, as explained later, this model presumes a 'return to the city', and in Istanbul, it does not always materialise that way. Istanbul was never post-industrial in the same terms as the US, nor did it follow the examples explored by other authors such as Neil Smith's 'back to the city' by focusing on investing into semi-abandoned inner-cities which can be regarded as a form of 'recycling':

> If the city continues to attract productive capital (whether for residential or other construction) we may witness a fundamental restructuring of urban space comparable with suburbanization. Then, indeed, it would become a back to the city movement by people too-middle- and upperclass people, that is-while the working class and the poor would inherit the old declining suburbs in a cruelly ironic continuation of the filtering process (Smith, 1979, p547).

In other words, moving and investing in the inner-city was not the priority in Istanbul because although the inner-city sometimes did decline, it was never really abandoned.

The economic model associated with Smith (1979, 2002, 2010), Clark (2005) and Islam (2010) tends towards understanding gentrification via such theories as the rent gap and the displacement of working-class tenants for largely financial motives. As explained, this model 'works' more readily than the cultural model in relation to Istanbul due to more state-initiated redevelopment projects where some poor neighbourhoods were selected, transformed and prepared to be sold to upper-middle class groups, as seen in Sulukule and Tarlabasi neighbourhoods and explored by Turkun (2011), Lees (2012), Karaman and Islam (2012) and Islam and Sakizlioglu (2015). In both neighbourhoods, the locals were forced to leave by authorities rather than individual gentrifiers. In Sulukule, 300 Gypsy-Roma families were forced to move to the peripheries of Istanbul and 291 families moved back to Sulukule after six months and became homeless (Lees, 2012, p159-160). Tarlabasi, an area that was once described as 'the notorious ghetto of Istanbul' by Ertuna-Howison and Howison (2012, p10) was similarly 'cleaned' after an urban transformation project, and building stocks were prepared to be sold at a huge profit. This type of practice has been defined as the 'reinvestment of capital' (Lees et al., 2008, p9). However, it also differs according to the contexts in which the economic model was first conceived. The economic model in Istanbul materialised with the support of the government, and mostly functions as a government policy with top-down projects.

Another concept I want to go over, is public space and how it is understood and used in this research. Typically, public space is understood as geographically-fixed, but I took a more relational approach, drawing upon the work of Massey (2005), Jacobs (2010), Fuller and Low (2017), Franck and Stevens (2007) and Kneirbein (2014). Fuller and Low highlight a relational approach to space as 'relationally constituted, contestable and processual' (2017, p476). Massey echoes this argument and defines space as 'always in the process of being made' (2005, p9). Therefore, the meaning and purpose of public spaces are made by the public through culture, economics, religion and laws (Jacobs, 2010), as well as their day-to-day use. Being made by the various publics mean the reconfiguration of public space continuously happens and thereby public spaces are always 'becoming' overlapping Fuller and Low's account also describes spaces as 'constituted through the objects and bodies that are placed in the world and the modes of making-sense of the meaning of particular spaces' (2017, p476). This ongoing reconfiguration, albeit owing to existing historical patterns, establishes and re-establishes their characteristics. New laws, the resurgence of a postsecular government, constructions and the resulting sensescapes therefore have an impact on how public space is reconfigured and used.

Having been influenced by the ways in which various spaces were made public in Istanbul, public space is most commonly understood as relational for Istanbulites like myself. Streets and sidewalks are used as public spaces, and sometimes even more so than geographically-fixed public spaces. It can be argued that public spaces in Istanbul are some of the fundamental elements that have shaped the city historically, traditionally and culturally. I'm referring here to the ways in which the embedded religious traditions have shaped the ways gentrification occurs in Istanbul, and how this then impacts on the uses and understandings of public space as well as the private. The reader will recall from my discussion in Chapter 1 the transformation of understanding and uses of public space from Ottoman Islamism to Republican Secularism as a fundamental transition. Therefore, I observed the transformation of Istanbul, having known the background of the city, I realised that not only were geographically-fixed public spaces such as parks and *meydans* transforming, but streets and sidewalks had also been affected by the constant redevelopment.

Having roughly sketched out the themes of this final chapter and reiterated points from the literature review, the following sections explore the research questions and answers them in more detail, starting with how the research questions were designed to address the aims and objectives and which methods were used.

8.1 Research Questions & Methods

Observing all the changes in Istanbul, I witnessed the ways in which the city was transforming. Drawing upon Lynch (1960), I took elements as one of the central concepts of this research, once elements change or disappear, urban collective memory is challenged and altered. Having seen the transforming of the elements and its impact on daily life, I created the following research questions to be able to achieve the aims and objectives of this thesis.

1. **What agencies have been involved in urban transformation and redevelopment since 2002 (year the current government was elected)?**

Method

This question was designed in order to understand six laws that were prepared between 2004 and 2012. Without the implementation of these laws, Istanbul would not have been transformed in the form it did. The laws were read in their original Turkish and then translated into English. After translating them, each law was analysed by underlining what type of transformation they enabled, and what legal and developmental changes they enabled. Some of the laws can be understood as continuation of the previous one by providing more rights to certain authorities. This question helped to understand how the ongoing constructions in Istanbul were made possible and the motives behind them, according to the legal framework.

Answer

A significant finding of this thesis was that much of the transformation of Istanbul was steered by the government who have played an active role in driving gentrification and the construction sector. More systematic constructions appeared in Istanbul after the election of the current government in 2002. However, to be able to enable this work some laws needed to be altered, new laws needed to be introduced and certain state apparatuses needed to be reviewed such as TOKI. Therefore, a new series of urban laws were introduced between 2004 and 2012, as was explained in Chapter 5. Not only was TOKI reviewed and its roles extended, but local authorities were also given new powers: 'Depending on the land status (public or private), either the IMM or the particular district municipality has executive authority over urban redevelopment. The land can either be transferred to TOKI or the municipality can form a public-private partnership' (Yazar et al., 2019, p6). According to Ceker and Belge this is how redevelopment in Istanbul became systematised and TOKI could declare any land an urban transformation area:

> The gentrification of Istanbul has become state led through a triple coordination that consists of County Municipalities, Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality and Ministry of Environment and Urban Planning and through state apparatuses such as TOKI, KIPTAS. In addition, private construction firms are also getting their share from the cake by having a pioneering role in the change that occurs in Istanbul's spatial anatomy [translated by author] (Ceker and Belge, 2015, p85).

In order to clarify the process of urban transformation in Istanbul, Ceker and Belge explain it in three forms: 'earthquake oriented', 'historical areas oriented' and 'investment oriented' [translated by author] (2015, p85). These three forms overlap with the three areas of this

research. As explained previously, Karakoy being located in Beyoglu, and Balat being located in Fatih, fall under Law no. 5366. They are described as 'test-beds of the Law on Renewal' (Dincer, 2011, p48) and are considered historical areas that need to be renewed. Moreover, with Law no. 5366 Beyoglu and Fatih municipalities were given new power to make projects rapidly materializable as Islam underlines:

> Two local municipalities, Beyoglu and Fatih, lobbied for a new legislative framework to gain powers to intervene, and in June 2005 Code 5366, 'Law on the Protection of Deteriorated Historic and Cultural Heritage through Renewal and Re-use', was passed in the Grand National Assembly, providing the local municipalities with new powers of expropriation to implement renewal projects within historical sites and abolishing the need to obtain the consent of the property owners (Islam, 2010, p61).

As a result of these and other factors, the planned form of gentrification has been increasingly top-down and it has not only become a government policy, but it started to function through state apparatuses that represent state ideology and expectations. Akboga-Kale et al.'s account of 2017 verifies the government's initial plan; they argue that urban transformation in Turkey can be understood as a long-term project that can last for 20 years and where 7 million buildings will be renewed (2017, p697). If the constructions in Istanbul continue to be conducted at this pace, the majority of the city will transform within the next decade or so. In order to underline the pace of these changes, I include Berkmen and Turgut's account on construction permits: 'The number of construction permits that were approved by Kadikoy Municipality was 185 in 2010, 521 in 2014, 612 in 2015, 826 in 2016 and almost 1000 in 2017' [translated by author] (2019, p165). This rapid increase is a direct result of Law no. 6306. Caddebostan is located in Kadikoy, one of the neighbourhoods investigated by this research. According to Yalcintan et al., Law no. 6306, commonly known as Urban Transformation Law, can 'spread with the help of the notion of the earthquake risk' and 'only during the period between July 2012 and December 2013 the Council of Ministers declared only 40 transformation areas in Istanbul' [translated by author] (2014, p13).

Urban waterfronts have been transformed following an international pattern that was observed in the London Docklands area during the 1980s and 1990s (Butler, 2007; Church, 1988; Imrie and Thomas, 1999), and have since been turning into middle-class spaces (Lees et al., 2008, p9). During the fieldwork, I noted that Balat's waterfront was under construction to enable public transportation. Karakoy's waterfront was under construction for revitalisation and Caddebostan's waterfront had already been gentrified since the area was already a middle-class

area before further redevelopment. In much of Istanbul, run-down neighbourhoods have been renewed for further investment, new roads, new transportation links and new bridges have been constructed, some landmarks have been demolished, and new landmarks have been constructed.

As broadly explained, Balat's transformation mostly consists of renovation of historical buildings to accommodate the creative class. Whereas the transformation of Caddebostan, derives directly from the risk of earthquake policy but, there is an investment and profit aspect to it as private construction firms are conducting the redevelopment. Karakoy, on the other hand, fits into Uzun's account as a case of a combination of renewal of historical areas, industrial sites and investment purpose with flagship development and it is an example of a public-private partnership:

> There is an upgrading process in the central business districts and very often old industrial sites are being reintegrated to the city. The local governments aim to develop new attractive urban regeneration projects, leading to new partnerships with large investors, developers, and consortia of private firms (Uzun, 2010, p760).

Due to these urban laws, conducting redevelopment projects are being simplified and these projects are resulting in the gentrification of areas. More importantly, urban redevelopment in Istanbul is supported by governmental policies, local governments, private construction firms, and in some cases international capital. However, according to Uzun the projects that have national and international partners as investors, are where shopping malls and cultural facilities are being constructed and where the land and the permits are given by the IMM (Uzun, 2007 cited in Uzun, 2010, p768). This shows not only that the process of transformation is planned by the state apparatuses, but also that the construction sector itself has become an extension of the state apparatus. As follows Brown's definition of neoliberalism, the state is not entirely hands off, but is playing a key role in shaping and determining the market (2015). Here we see the role of state is not to allow a *laissez faire* approach, as we might find in liberalism but rather to initiate growth and development. None of these projects could have been achieved without state approval or the influence of TOKI, but it's not an entirely hands off approach, more of a massaging of the market to achieve specific goals.

2. **How do urban policies, specifically dealing with urban transformation and redevelopment, configure and reconfigure public space, enable or constrain participation in public space, and in what form?**

Method

This question was designed to understand the ways in which six urban laws understand the public, constitute public space, and how they enable different types of redevelopment projects. To be able to answer these questions, various types of redevelopment and their outcomes in each area were observed. I also focused on how the concept of public spaces were being used and understood, and what was meant by public space in each law. This question is important as it helped to see beyond the legal framework and demonstrated the impact of laws on daily life and what public space meant for the state apparatuses and agencies.

Answer

As discussed throughout, urban laws have an impact on daily life and public spaces, specifically the ways in which they manifest in the three areas of this research. Although the scale and type of projects varied according to the area, in the majority of the cases they have led to an increased amount of construction. Geographically-fixed spaces were considered as public spaces according to the urban laws and the ways in which construction was conducted. Streets or sidewalks, on the other hand, were not included or mentioned in the laws. During the fieldwork, I noted that public spaces such as streets and sidewalks were commonly occupied and occasionally damaged by construction machinery and building materials, and the inhabitants had to use the roads or change their routes. I provided visuals to show the damage and occupation of sidewalks and streets in all three areas in Chapter 7.

I found the different understandings of public space to be a significant finding of this research. What the public understands and uses as public space does not necessarily overlap with what authorities understand and offer as public space. This duality has become Istanbul's reality, public space is reconfigured as geographically-fixed spaces according to urban policies. This approach neglects, however, other public spaces such as sidewalks, and therefore, does not see any harm in damaging or erasing them. This means there is a clash between what society uses and what law makers plan and conduct. Therefore, streets and sidewalks are being damaged during redevelopment because public space is considered something that is built not fluid: as Butler highlights, it is regarded as something that is given to the public, not created by it, and therefore claiming public space has become an ongoing power struggle (2015). A further danger

with this is if something is simply given and not created or gained, then it can be taken, at any time, for any reason. As Butler argues, public spaces 'can be closed in the name of simply anything' (2015, p10) and as Harvey notes, the public do not necessarily have a right to public space (2013, p163). However, I still argue that public spaces are being made by the various publics through the ways in which they are used, and it depends on the city, the circumstances, and the policies as to what extent they can be made by the public. This includes resistance against limitations and control over public spaces. However, to be able to resist or to be able to use public spaces alternatively, and in a less regulated manner, there needs to be less limitations and the space itself needs to allow a certain blurriness. It is important to mention that using streets and the like as public spaces blurs the relationship between various spaces including the distinction between public and private, due to the design, structure, and the ways in which public space is used. These changes can be understood as a reflection of the governmental authoritarianism to what extent they might be intentional was discussed in Chapter 1.

Oz and Eder draw upon Mills' account on the Kuzguncuk neighbourhood in Istanbul and point out 'the fluidity between public and private space, and the constant blurring of the 'home' and 'street'' by women on a daily basis (2018, p1039). This blurriness and the fluid use of the cityscape was observed and noted during the fieldwork, especially in Balat, being a more traditional neighbourhood, and similar to Kuzguncuk. The blurriness between various spaces might constitute the characteristics of a city, like Istanbul. Franck and Stevens' account of 'loose space' is a useful concept here to understand the blurriness that can often be observed in Istanbul:

> Activities spill over from one space to another – from interior to exterior, from building entry to stairway, from sidewalk to street. Shops, services and restaurants extend their business out onto adjacent streets and sidewalks. Like sidewalk vendors, they blur the boundary between spaces of commerce and spaces of circulation. People enjoy occupying the boundary as they sit on a wall or hand items for sale on a fence (Franck and Stevens, 2007, p36).

Although this example mainly consists of commercial activities, it is important to imagine the amount of activities that can take place in public spaces if there are not clear distinctions. Billig similarly explores the extent to which boundaries between public and private can be pushed, and he argues that although there are physical boundaries, spaces can become adapted and blurry only to be changed back again; it is the ongoing process of reconfiguration (2014, p167). As Madanipour further describes, 'The boundaries between public and private spheres are never

fixed, dividing the urban world into a sharp dualism. Instead, it is always evolving and interdependent' (2019, p45). The looseness accounted for in these descriptions can enable a high level of freedom that cannot always be found in parks and *meydans* where more rigid rules and regulations are enforced. Dovey and Polakit go on to define this sense of looseness as such: 'Looseness of function refers to the manner in which the same space is used for a multiplicity of functions either at the same time or different times. One function may slip into another or be camouflaged within it' (2007, p114).

This approach is far from the idealised Habermasian public sphere, a space that is open and welcoming. But then again, this research never argued that public spaces are open and welcoming places. Even still, this finding recalls the accounts of Butler (2015) and Harvey (2013). As Harvey points out, the right to the city is not only the right to use the city but, a right to be able to transform it, hence it is a collective right that interests everyone (2013, p4). As explored in this research, I can argue that the right to the city has been a problematic concept in Turkey, mainly because the urban environment is mostly regarded as 'given'. This approach is discussed in the previous chapters in relation to the historical background and the secular vs. postsecular dichotomy evident in the use and experience of public space. During the fieldwork, I noted that public spaces were 'given' to the public by the state apparatuses and thereby, there was not a lot of room left to remake public spaces through various uses. This approach of seeing public spaces as 'given', manifested in different forms from authorities' neglect, to regulation, local government's maintenance, to overt police control. To reiterate, as Butler argues, public spaces are controlled simply because they are seen as 'given' spaces (2015). As previously discussed, in Turkey, this control has been moving from the secular Republican tradition to a postsecular Islamist tradition, which can be explained as de-secularising public spaces.

This was also observed in the analysis of the urban laws and the ways in which the public and public space were understood and defined in the legal context. This understanding has eventually reflected on the redevelopment in Istanbul, where rights to the city were not taken into consideration because redevelopment projects were implemented from top-down, and a right to be able to transform the city and its public spaces were mostly dismissed.

I argue that streets and sidewalks can still be an exception to this as they can be considered as loose spaces. They can be used for various reasons and thereby, can be a site for enacting a right to the city, where it can be practiced and where it can manifest in these spaces. It is important to note that in Istanbul, streets and sidewalks are not commonly considered as public

spaces and parks and *meydans* are constrained or controlled alongside the redevelopment of the areas. This constraint may be in many different forms, such as the form of direct intervention, like in the case of Gezi Park. During the fieldwork, I noted that it might also be in the form of the privatisation of public spaces such as the Galataport Project in Karakoy, the waterfront redevelopment in a business district, the sidewalks cafés in Balat and Caddebostan. It might also, however, be in the form of demolition. With the help of the urban laws, and the overall fear of a possible earthquake, buildings have been renewed through a demolish and rebuild system which has meant demolishing some historical landmarks and erasing the part of urban collective memory. While the city has been changing, habits, practices and the ways in which public spaces were being used is also changing. In areas where the demolitions are more common, such as Caddebostan, streets have been affected by constructions and cannot be used as nodes and paths. If they have been reconstructed, they can be used to accommodate new sidewalk cafés. In both Balat and Karakoy, waterfronts were completely closed off and access was not possible, let alone actually being able to use them. Once the constructions are complete, the ways in which they will be used, will possibly change again.

Streets and sidewalks in these areas were more accessible, as opposed to Caddebostan, but they appeared damaged due to the construction. The people who were using these public spaces, might gradually change, as a result of cultural gentrification and increasing interest of the creative class. It is important to note that in Caddebostan, the uses were changing, but people mostly remained the same, whereas in Balat and Karakoy, the uses were becoming more diverse. Both old inhabitants and newcomers were introducing their lifestyles and reconfiguring public spaces according to their needs.

Importantly, there were some other demolitions that mostly happened unnoticed in Istanbul, and these need to be mentioned in this research. Although resistance to the demolition of Gezi Park was a well-known topic when it comes to redevelopment and gentrification in Istanbul, it can be considered as the tip of the iceberg. It can be read as an attempt to preserve what is left from the ongoing interventions to not only the city, but also urban collective memory. In other words, it can be argued that the Gezi Park movement was not just about the park itself, but a reaction to interference to the public and public life and a resistance to increasing de-secularisation of public space. The public did not feel they were the decision makers of their own city, and according to Harvey, ‘the freedom to make and remake ourselves and our cities’ is ‘one of the most precious yet most neglected of our human rights’ (2013, p4).

Butler expands on this account and discusses who "the people" are, which as Butler suggests is a relative matter: '[…] there is an always-open question of whether "the people" are the same as those who express "the popular will" and whether those acts of self-naming qualify as self determination or even valid expressions of the popular will' (Butler, 2015, p6-7). Drawing upon Butler's discussion, there is a duality on who "the people" are, and the ways in which they can claim public spaces in Istanbul. "The people" that are approved and supported by the government has transitioned from middle-class secular republicans to conservative Islamic groups who are given the right to the city.

As broadly explored, certain public spaces were given to the public, whereas certain public spaces were demolished, or as Butler explains, 'can be closed in the name of simply anything' (2015, p10). Thus, it can be argued that controlling public spaces might mean controlling the public. As Franck and Stevens indicate, 'For a society to be free requires public spaces which are in various ways open, unregulated and visible to many others' (2007, p18).

3. **How have urban transformation and redevelopment projects changed the three contrasting areas: Balat, Caddebostan and Karakoy? How have the characteristics, demographics and public spaces of these areas changed? Is there an ongoing loss/decline of public space (this includes any damages/changes/limitations to the street and daily life practices) in these areas?**

Method

This question was designed to address to what extent constructions happening in the name of urban redevelopment reshape public spaces in Istanbul in three areas, whether there are any changes in the local population or property prices. I sought to explain how public spaces are impacted by the redevelopment work and whether or not there were any forms of loss/decline/damage to public spaces. To what extent transformation changes the characteristics of areas and their public spaces not just materially but relationally and the sensory, was one of the main questions of this research. In order to answer this question, fieldwork was conducted in all three areas to observe and analyse what was happening during the process of urban change.

During the fieldwork, I used the criteria that I had prepared to help me with my observations in the field and I also used sensory and visual analysis. Using the visual analysis, I could show the

various impacts of constructions on public space and daily life. Using sensory analysis, I explained the ways in which the ongoing constructions, and redevelopment introduced new sensescapes and changed old sensescapes. I aimed to investigate if there were any discontinuities caused by the ongoing redevelopments, whether discontinuities are physical or sensory, and how they might be impacting daily life. I also focused on the ways in which redevelopment projects impact the 'reconfiguration' of public spaces in each area.

At the time of structuring this research and before conducting the fieldwork, there were two anticipations; gentrification is occurring in Istanbul and redevelopment projects are leading to the loss of public space. As redevelopments tore through the city, a question arose as to how this might impact ordinary uses of public space. That is, while Gezi Park was well-known, what might be the impact of this redevelopment on less well-known and more ordinary spaces? Instead of solely focusing on gentrification and what it meant at the end of the process, I decided to explore the process of transformation, looking at the process itself. I divided the answer to this question into four sections: characteristics, demographics, public spaces and loss/decline of public spaces.

Answer

Characteristics

Urban redevelopment has various impacts on Istanbul and these impacts vary according to the neighbourhood, depending on the type of redevelopment. However, the characteristics of all three areas of this research were transforming in some form during the fieldwork. These transformations were not only physical, but they were also sensory and relational.

As described broadly, Balat has been going through cultural gentrification, where historical building stocks have been renovated to be used as hotels, cafés and vintage shops. The local businesses in Balat have been gradually changing, while the creative class' interest in the area has been increasing. These relatively subtle changes have been transforming the taken for granted sensescapes of the neighbourhood and this means transforming the idea of 'home' to some people (May, 2013, p138). As explained in Chapter 7, Balat's smellscapes were highly distinctive and stronger than the visionscapes and soundscapes. There were many strong smells in Balat, mostly the smell of burning coal and sometimes the smell of sewage. However, the

lingering smells of homemade cooking was highly common, together with the smell of fresh laundry hung between buildings or through balconies. The vision of laundry together with the smell of laundry was a typical sensory image of Balat, where the public and private were blurring both visually and sensorially. The smell of fresh laundry can be regarded as an edge (Lynch, 1960) between the public and private. Hanging laundry can be read as displaying someone's life, and it is an example of the ways in which we use the cityscape and how we define what is public and what is private through use, thus shaping the boundary between public and private (Watson, 2015, p888). This example was significant as it served to both blur public and private, but also highlight the ways this distinction is not always helpful in explaining how people use public space. Because hanging laundry is a temporary practice that can make public space private, it also then goes back to the public again.

The visionscape in Balat mostly consisted of deteriorated houses and sometimes ruins. However, with the impact of cultural gentrification, some buildings had been renovated, and they created a colourful restored vision. This was a significant change in a run-down neighbourhood. Balat, known as a low-income neighbourhood, is becoming a popular destination to revive nostalgia and neo-bohemia. Balat was once seen as a neighbourhood that represented old diverse Istanbul, and it was influenced by the nostalgia of the city that Mills describes in relation to historical neighbourhoods of Istanbul such as Kuzguncuk (2010). This is because historical neighbourhoods with their historical architecture, reminds people of a certain era and as May argues, 'Nostalgia can be used as a technique to connect with a sense of belonging in the past' (2017, p411). Therefore, choosing Balat to live and/or work has become a lifestyle choice by the creative class in order to mimic a life, an experience of living with others. Lloyd's account of neo-bohemia supports this argument where he argues living with others creates a sense of authenticity (2010, p80). By selecting Balat, the newcomers change the ways in which the old houses are being used, and as a result, Balat's characteristics are changing. As explained previously, although Balat has been experiencing cultural gentrification, the activities and the forms of consumption that can materialise, were limited due to the area's conservative Islamist majority and the fact that newcomers were acting accordingly.

The transformation of Balat was not rapid as it was in Caddebostan and Karakoy. There were not systematic redevelopment projects in Balat, but mostly singular restoration projects conducted by the members of the creative class or 'urban middle class' as Ley defines them

(2003, p2528). The case of Balat, with its historical buildings, old Greek houses and narrow streets fits into Ley's account of aestheticisation and can be used to explain the increasing interest in the area (2003, p2542).

Caddebostan, as an old summer suburb, has been a residential neighbourhood to the upper-middle class and was certainly going through a transformation during the fieldwork, in what can be defined as super-gentrification (Lees, 2000, 2003). The area had already been gentrified, so the ongoing redevelopment of Caddebostan can be explained as a second wave of gentrification with continuous demolish and rebuild. Although, the structure of the neighbourhood is changing rapidly with the excessive constructions that resemble 'a micro urbicide' (Houston, 2015, p56), mass displacement of local did not occur and the inhabitants of Caddebostan mostly remained the same [translated by author] (Berkmen and Turgut, 2019).

By comparing the state of Caddebostan to an urbicide, I want to highlight the ways in which the sensescapes of the neighbourhood were challenged on a daily basis. Caddebostan's visionscape was transforming more rapidly than other areas of this research. The increasing number of constructions in almost every street was not only creating a noise and dust problem, but it was making the neighbourhood look and feel like a construction site. The sound of constructions had become a part of daily life in the neighbourhood and accepted as a backdrop. As Attali explains 'Noise had always been experienced as destruction, disorder, dirt, pollution, an aggression against the code-structuring messages' (1985, p27). The only way to escape from it is to avoid the outdoors and choose to spend more time in private spaces, but even in private spaces it was possible to hear and see the constructions.

Dirt and dust were common problems for all three areas of this research and in Caddebostan, as a result of mass demolitions, dirt from constructions and heavy dust could be seen and sometimes even tasted. Using streets thereby, can become an issue in Caddebostan, as this means walking around and breathing in dirt and dust. Drawing upon Attali's account of noise (1985), dirt and dust have negative connotations and are mostly associated with disorder. This overlaps with Douglas' well-discussed argument explaining dirt as disorder (1966). As previously mentioned, the smell in Caddebostan can be considered as a non-issue because there was an overall lack of smell in the neighbourhood, apart from a few street vendors and the smell of their products.

These smells can also function as one of Lynch's elements (1960) which can be used as a linkage or an edge to distinguish the public from the private. In Caddebostan, the lack of smell

is a result of these clear boundaries. There were less loose spaces in Caddebostan, as spaces were more clearly private or public and therefore the lack of smell itself was in itself functioning as an edge. The new buildings in Caddebostan had an interiorising structure where the boundaries between the inside and the outside were more distinct. Here, the smell could not move as a linkage, because it had become part of an edge.

All these new sensescapes has affected the characteristics of Caddebostan. During the fieldwork, I noted that balconies were replaced by long windows. In a city like Istanbul where spring and summer are sunny and hot, balconies are not only important but also a necessary part of urban life. As Degen points out, balconies can offer 'a form of sociality as residents can stand or sit on their balconies and chat to a passerby' (2008 cited in May, 2013, p143), but this had disappeared. The mixing of laundry, food, or other smells that would have otherwise wafted between homes and streets had been closed off with a hard edge.

In Karakoy, cultural and economic models of gentrification overlapped similarly to Ley's argument on seeing cultural and economic capital together, when it comes to gentrification (Ley, 2003, p2542). This was observed during the fieldwork, where museums and coffeeshops were right next to flagship developments such as Galataport Project. Similar to Balat, in Karakoy the uses of old buildings for new purposes have been common; former bank buildings have been turned into galleries and old DIY shops were becoming new hipster cafés. The area has also becoming a spot for nightlife with increasing numbers of restaurants and rooftop bars. People were coming to Karakoy to try a new restaurant, to visit an art gallery and to drink with their friends. This was an important indication to understand how the characteristics of Karakoy have been changing. The run-down area has become a hot spot for nightlife and these changes were having an impact on sensescapes of the area. The smell of old and new in Karakoy were blended during the fieldwork functioning as a linkage.

The constructions, in contrast, with all their dirt and dust were also creating non-stop noise. Karakoy was the noisiest area of this research with the sound of traffic, constructions, the call to prayers from mosques, and ferries. Karakoy's vision increasingly consisted of construction sites similar to Caddebostan, and in some areas ruins similar to Balat. Having discussed how redevelopment projects changed characteristics of each area, the question will now move onto demographics.

Demographics

In terms of demographics, Balat's population has steadily decreased from 17.106 in 2009 (Turkiye Nufusu Il Ilce Mahalle Koy Nufuslari, 2019a, np) to 13.091 in 2019 (TUIK, 2019, np). This might be a result of increasing rent and property prices in the area and can be understood as a typical impact of cultural gentrification. There is also the possibility that flats are being inhabited by couples rather than large families.

Although Caddebostan's population seems highly stable with 20.810 in 2009 (Turkiye Nufusu Il Ilce Mahalle Koy Nufuslari, 2019b, np) and 20.453 in 2019 (TUIK, 2019, np), it has fluctuated in between. The population of the area started to decrease after 2012, and continuously dropped until 2017, only to increase again as of 2018 (Turkiye Nufusu Il Ilce Mahalle Koy Nufuslari, 2019b, np). Given the fact that Law no. 6306 came into effect in 2012 and Caddebostan's transformation falls into this category, this is when the constructions started. The case of Caddebostan consisted of mass demolitions and this meant relocating the inhabitants for a period of time and bringing them back once the buildings were ready. During the fieldwork, I noted that the constructions in Caddebostan are still going strong, but some streets had been almost completely transformed with new buildings. As a result of the new architectural style that consists of tall buildings, there are more flats available in Caddebostan and that might be an explanation to the increasing population.

It is crucial to mention that Karakoy is not a residential area, unlike Balat and Caddebostan. Thus the residential population of the two neighbourhoods in Karakoy has been low however it has fluctuated over the years. The population of the Arap Camii neighbourhood was 57 in 2009 (Turkiye Nufusu Il Ilce Mahalle Koy Nufuslari, 2019c, np) and 122 in 2019 (TUIK, 2019, np). It steadily increased from 2009 to 2014 and started to drop only to increase again as of 2018, then it dropped again (Turkiye Nufusu Il Ilce Mahalle Koy Nufuslari, 2019c, np). The same pattern was observed in the Kemankes Karamustafapasa neighbourhood, but with more drastic ups and downs, with a population of 134 in 2009 (Turkiye Nufusu Il Ilce Mahalle Koy Nufuslari, 2019d) to 112 in 2019 (TUIK, 2019, np). Although this does not seem like a significant difference, it is necessary to look at the pattern in between. Kemankes Karamustafapasa's population continually increased between 2009 to 2012 to such an extent it quadrupled and then started to decrease rapidly in 2013 from 454 to 112 in 2019 (Turkiye Nufusu Il Ilce Mahalle Koy Nufuslari, 2019d, np; TUIK, 2019, np). In both neighbourhoods, there was a pattern of decline around 2013 and 2014. The year 2013 was a significant year for

the political history of the country due to the Gezi Park movement and it was specifically important for Beyoglu, where the park is located, where the majority of the protests took place, and it is the municipality where Karakoy is located. During the Gezi Park movement, not only the park itself was impacted by the excessive police force, but the majority of Beyoglu was badly affected by water cannons and tear gas.

Public spaces

The protests surrounding Gezi Park were not only about a specific public space, but endemic of a wider debate about the city, the political context, and whose voices were heard and legitimated by the government. As discussed throughout this study, not every member of society is given the same right to the city and the same access to public spaces. This access is ideological, and the current ideology represents and approves a more Islamic and conservative way of life. Hence whoever fits into the government's criteria are given the right to the city and right to claim public spaces. Whoever does not agree with the shift from a secular to postsecular transition cannot claim public spaces, and their public spaces can be shut down or demolished. This way the secular memory associated with public spaces can be erased, and if the collective memory is erased, then there is nothing to remember, and consequently, nothing to claim.

As observed in the fieldwork, there has been an element of interiorising in Istanbul with the ongoing redevelopment. By interiorising, I fundamentally state two aspects; the new architectural style, especially seen in Caddebostan which consisted of less balconies and more tower blocks with secure entrances, CCTVs and underground carparks. This new style clarifies the boundaries between public and private; there are less loose spaces. The second aspect of interiorising in Istanbul is the increasing number of gated communities, shopping malls and other forms of privatised public spaces or anything that somewhat regulates or separates the activities according to spaces and thereby does not allow random activities in random spaces. The interiorising mostly materialises through investing heavily in buildings stocks and the intervention of rules in public spaces. That means public spaces need to be reconfigured by the public during and after constructions. In an ever-changing city, the uses and understandings of public spaces are also ever-changing and need to be validated daily. Even if public spaces are fixed, the ways in which they are used is temporary and ever-changing.

During the fieldwork, this was very much the case in waterfronts and *meydans* of Karakoy; waterfronts were completely closed off, *meydans* were affected by the constructions and the dirt, dust and waste they were creating. The situation was not very different in Balat, where the waterfront was closed off again because of constructions. The only places that were left for people to use were the streets and sidewalks which were fluctuating in use on a daily basis depending on the redevelopment surrounding them. The presence of construction equipment and sidewalks being torn up fundamentally changed whether a sidewalk could even be used.

The need to reconfigure public spaces is driven from the fluidity of the concept and its use. As Franck and Stevens highlight, public spaces can be considered as the only spaces in a city that allow alternative uses (2007). They are the spaces that are used in unique ways and often not as designed. Because many other places in a city have specific reasons to exist, they are commonly private spaces, and therefore, they limit and/or regulate alternative uses more than public spaces. However, it is important to note that public spaces are not completely free and open to any form of uses. Depending on the city, the urban laws and policies and the neighbourhood, the ways in which public spaces are used vary. This was very much the case in Istanbul where, the alternative uses that public spaces were allowing were different in each area. This alternative use was determined both by the public and the state apparatuses; some public spaces were closed off or controlled to such an extent that there was no room for alternative uses, or if the area was more conservative, the amount of alternative uses were limited. In other words, not every public space in every city has the same level of flexibility and fluidity. Too much control limits the possible activities and reduces freedom (Fernando, 2007) as have seen in the case of Gezi Park. Too much neglect creates fear and further avoidance, as observed during the fieldwork in Balat Park. As Carmona et al. highlight, excessive control or continuous neglect has a similar impact on the uses of public spaces:

> Lack of security, perceptions of danger, and fear of victimisation, threaten both the use of public realm and the creation of successful urban environments. A sense of security and safety is, therefore, an essential prerequisite of successful urban design. Increased security has, however, often been attained by privatisation, and retreat from the public realm. (Carmona et al., 2003, p119).

During the fieldwork, I observed the regular surveillance and ongoing neglect in different public spaces in different areas. In Karakoy, for example, some public spaces were used as carparks or to leave waste in. In Balat, the park was a meeting place to drink alcohol, and in

Caddebostan, the waterfront was used by everyone for recreational activities. Various groups or individuals can use public spaces according to their needs and that unique way might be temporary or regular. But that flexibility and fluidity that public spaces provide, are the reason they are considered as 'breathing space' (Fernando, 2007, p54; Franck and Stevens, 2007, p3).

Loss/decline of public spaces

As broadly explored, the loss of public space in Istanbul has been linked to the neoliberalism of the 1980s and has been explained as an encouragement for urban renewal projects (Oncu, 1997, p56-57). The idea of losing public spaces or losing the right to public space has received much attention, and inspired movements and in most cases, the reactions shown in Istanbul, have been similar elsewhere. Ozdemir and Eraydin's account of urban movements in Istanbul echo Harvey (2013) and Butler's (2015) arguments with regards to who determines the right to public space and ultimately who shapes or loses public space:

> These movements have a more political character and are triggered by neoliberal urbanization strategies and projects of both central and local governments usually focusing on the 'megaprojects' or the loss of public space—issues that concerned the public as a whole. In Istanbul, movements of the discontented groups focus in general on public spaces such as Gezi Park, or largescale infrastructure projects such as the Third Bridge (Ozdemir and Eraydin, 2017, p734).

The state of public space in each area was observed during the fieldwork with the aim of seeing if there was an ongoing disappearance/loss. As expected, not only did each area have different public spaces, but they also had different uses and understandings towards public space. These different understandings are shaped by the inhabitants' class and cultural background. Sitting on a doorstep was a common practice in Balat, but that was never observed in Caddebostan because in Caddebostan, it was replaced by sitting in a sidewalk café.

In Istanbul, transformation occurs mostly as government policies, that are enabled through urban laws, and often materialise with such a pace in some areas. They can be viewed as urbicide or urban amnesia. The term urbicide was previously explained in Chapter 3, and it is commonly understood in relation to war and violence (Campbell et al., 2007; Coward, 2009; Tyner et al., 2014) but I used it here in the way Gunay describes it. According to Gunay, the current state of Istanbul with mass demolition can be regarded as 'urbicide' (2015) and Houston's definition overlaps with Gunay's account where he understands urbicide as the 're-

construction of urban environments' (2018, p343). The concept of 'urban amnesia' is used by Abd Elrahman and Mahmoud to describe Cairo's spatial transformation and shares similarities with Caddebostan where dozens of buildings are demolished and built in every road:

> This dynamic state of the streets left citizens with an experience of an urban amnesia. The urban space is not recognizable anymore. These phenomena are manifested by different multiple actions: eradication of different buildings in most districts, adding fences to guarantee a minimal level of security, transforming certain streets into a location for commercial installations and street vendors and changing the activity of many buildings (Abd Elrahman and Mahmoud, 2016, p1100).

As mentioned earlier, as a result of mass demolition in Caddebostan, some streets have become unrecognisable where it has become difficult to remember how the area looked a year ago. This is one of the most significant effects of urbicide or urban amnesia at a neighbourhood level, as it was wiping out the entire building stock. The well-known nodes, paths and landmarks were disappearing and becoming unusable public spaces.

Balat was arguably the least affected by the redevelopment. There were several reasons for this, as explained previously, the area is more traditional, and its streets are more actively used throughout the day. The only park in the neighbourhood is not maintained by the authorities and is neglected by the inhabitants, and the waterfront is closed off due to the tram line extension. The temporary loss of waterfront in Balat only leaves streets for the inhabitants to use. Thus, unlike other areas, there were not any systematic top-down interventions but more renovations. Although cultural redevelopment has transformed the streets of Balat with sidewalk cafés and shops, streets have not disappeared. However, with the increasing interest of the creative class in Balat, the ways in which and by whom streets are being used has started to slowly change; new places equal new types of relations and uses of sidewalks emerging.

Karakoy was more complicated than the other two areas. Here, different projects were conducted, and the majority of *meydans* have been neglected by the public because of the lack of seating arrangements, and the noise and dust from constructions surrounding them. The ones that are preferred by the public are occasionally used to park trucks and cranes. It is common to see a bench by a crane in the evenings, however, suggesting a creative use of the machinery. Although *meydans* and waterfronts in Karakoy had not disappeared, they had been made inaccessible and temporarily lost. However, once the redevelopment projects are complete, these spaces will become different spaces for different uses, and they will need to be reconfigured by the public. Looking at it from this perspective, these spaces had in fact already

been lost. As witnessed, public spaces are occasionally being blocked, damaged or completely closed off to accommodate constructions. This inevitably means not being able to walk within the area. Although streets in Karakoy have not completely disappeared and there are still practices of using the public space as semi-private, they have been affected by the redevelopment projects. According to Gehl, life between buildings means various activities in a city space such as 'purposeful walking', as well as 'unpredictability and unplanned, spontaneous actions […]' (2010, p19-20).

4. **What are the links between urban transformation and redevelopment projects and gentrification in both cultural and economic terms?**

Method

This question was designed to understand gentrification and how it has been materialising in Istanbul. Using the case studies, observational analysis and an analysis of the legal framework, I sought to explain the links between redevelopment and gentrification and how it might vary according to the area, according to the law and according to the project. This way I managed to explain how certain projects can be conducted in certain areas and how some people react to these projects. I also explored the ways in which gentrification was culturally or economically led and whether it was initiated by the state or by the gentrifiers/pioneers.

Answer

One of the initial drivers of this project was my interest in how mass redevelopment in Istanbul was related to gentrification. Was the pattern following a more traditional western model of the rent gap, displacement, or cultural redevelopment? Or might the different economic, social and historical context of Istanbul change the ways gentrification is lived, imagined and understood?

As explained previously, there is evidence of both cultural and economic models of gentrification in Istanbul. In Karakoy, for example, we saw how the central location made it a prime area for further investment, echoing Neil Smith's point about the rent gap (1979). Balat, on the other hand, demonstrated a more culture-led model where diversity, cosmopolitanism and creative developments made it attractive to hipsters. The final example of Caddebostan

proved to be an example of super gentrification, echoing the work of Lees (2003) whereby an already gentrified area underwent a second wave.

The cultural gentrification is explained in relation to the new middle class, creative class and neo-bohemia that Florida (2005, 2014, 2017) and Lloyd (2010) discuss. And because the members of creative class consist of individuals with cultural and social capital, they can be pioneers in finding and defining the 'urban cool' (Lloyd, 2010) which also makes them known as gentrifiers (Lees, 2000; Florida, 2005, 2014). This form of transformation can be considered as less organised. In other words, there is more to gentrification than 'rent-gap', profit making and displacement; there are many other practices in the chosen areas such as 'post-industrial production sites, facilitating new forms of labor-force reproduction *and* exploitation' (Lloyd, 2010, p260). Cultural gentrification helps us to understand why not every run-down area is chosen and how it is about selecting, and then promoting the 'cool' area by the creative class. This selection process not only depends on the city, but it depends on the culture and the people who decide to perform the selection. Although it is a privileged form of cultural capital that is not always aligned with the governments preferred form of consumption, it is shaped by the government's expectations one way or the other; it can be bottom-up, such as preferring not to sell alcohol in Balat, or top-down, such as not being able to purchase alcohol by law after 10pm.

As explained in Chapter 7, in Istanbul gentrification have strong links with the concept of nostalgia and neo-bohemia in old run-down areas such as Balat and Karakoy. Both areas are old and traditional settlements in Istanbul that throughout their history experienced various cultures before slowly declining. According to Shields, these types of areas that are run-down, can be considered as 'left behind', and they 'evoke both nostalgia and fascination' (Shields, 1991, p3). This account fits into explaining how Balat and Karakoy were 'discovered' and attributed a nostalgic identity and how their existence brings back the 'good old' diverse and welcoming Istanbul that was a home to various religious and ethnic groups. Since this account is highly idealised and romanticised, it does not specify whether it is Ottoman Istanbul or Republican Istanbul. This nostalgia can be read as a search for something unspecified that was lost a long time ago.

As Florida highlights, diversity is one of the values that the creative class is looking for: 'What creatives look for are abundant high-quality amenities and experiences, an openness to diversity of all kinds, and above all else the opportunity to validate their identities as creative people' (Florida, 2014, p186). Therefore, the creative class in Istanbul might be searching for diversity

or to *restore* the diversity back in these run-down neighbourhoods, while transforming these areas. Living in the city has become a lifestyle choice as Ley argues (1996) and as I noted during the fieldwork, this is the case in Balat with members of the creative class started increasingly choosing the area for their new home or workplaces. According to Gainza, 'Local life changes with the arrival of new residents and retail activity, evoking mixed feelings of revitalisation, displacement and loss of neighbourhood identity' and this was easily observable from the number of third wave coffeeshops, hipster eateries, vintage shops, handmade jewellery boutiques and workshops in the area and these highly symbolic spaces for creative class' (2017, p955). Therefore, by choosing and moving to an area, the creative class prepare the area for further gentrification which in turn attracts investors. This form of gentrification might transform into an economic gentrification after a while, like in Karakoy.

Karakoy's transformation was initially similar to Balat's. Thus, Karakoy is attractive to the creative class with historical architecture and inner-city location and as a result, the creative class has acted as gentrifiers or pioneers in redeveloping the area. The more Karakoy was culturally gentrified, the more it started to attract investors. This was clear during the fieldwork with evidence that old buildings were being turned into hotels, rooftop terraces, bars and bistros. But maybe the most significant transformation observed in Karakoy during the fieldwork, was the Galataport project as an example of the privatisation of public space.

The process of gentrification does not always have to occur in this order and cultural and economic gentrification can blend together in many different forms. The revitalisation of old industrial areas is an example where certain areas in a city gain popularity after these abandoned spaces are redeveloped. In Istanbul for example, since 2002, old industrial areas such as Antrepo (a former warehouse) in Karakoy, Beykoz Kundura Fabrikasi (a former shoe factory) in Beykoz, Haskoy Yun Iplik Fabrikasi (a former wool and yarn factory) in Haskoy, Kadir Has University (a former tobacco factory) in Cibali, SantralIstanbul (a former power station) in Eyup and BomontiAda (a former brewery) in Sisli, have been revitalised and opened up for cultural, educational and recreational uses. These revitalisations can be read as being a combination of the cultural and economic gentrification, as former working-class spaces were transformed for alternative uses by the middle-class. In Istanbul, it is common to find overlaps and combinations of cultural and economic gentrification as Lees argues, that both models can exist together or overlap at one point (1994) but this does not necessarily mean the economic model did not somehow materialise on its own.

The economic gentrification is explained previously in relation to government policies, urban laws and state-initiated top-down projects. For this research, the case of Caddebostan fits the economic gentrification in the form of super gentrification that Lees (2003) mentions. As discussed earlier, the redevelopment of Caddebostan materialised by reconstructing the building stock in the area. The new building stocks means new flats that are sold or rented. The transformation of Caddebostan overlaps with the concept of the 'rent-gap' theory and profit making (Smith, 1979). What makes Caddebostan more significant, is that its redevelopment was not a state-initiated project in a poor area, like many examples of economic gentrification in Istanbul. It was an investment opportunity that was encouraged by the state and supported by new urban development laws. And since the area was already gentrified and the inhabitants were middle-class, there was little in the way of displacement, like in the case of many poor neighbourhoods in Istanbul.

Having reiterated the aims and objectives, this chapter then focused on each research question and explained the methods that were used to address them. The chapter then answered the research questions in relation to the findings and the literature. In this chapter I have not only answered the research questions, but I have also introduced the daily aspects of redevelopment in contrasting areas, and shown the ways in which urban laws shape daily life and the extent to which they impact public spaces. I discussed the right to the city in relation to public spaces in Istanbul, and explored the links between the loss of public space and the right to the city, and the overall impact of the change on urban collective memory. I have now concluded the discussion and will now move on to the contribution to knowledge and the conclusion of this thesis.

8.2 Contribution to Knowledge

Having observed and analysed three different areas of Istanbul, this research has introduced an overall picture of urban transformation and redevelopment, the ways in which it supports gentrification and how the redevelopment work being carried out in Istanbul has impacted on the use of public space. Previous research in Istanbul has tended to focus on the end result of urban transformation, and the end result of gentrification. Uzun (2003) for example, has explored the impact of gentrification on the urban fabric, by exploring three cases in Turkey,

focusing on various models of gentrification and the ways it changes areas via the work of Smith (1979) and Ley (1996). On the whole, the impact on daily life is less explored. Islam (2010) on the other hand, argues that urban transformation projects are regarded as investment opportunities with the encouragement of the current government and thereby, they mostly examine the construction of shopping malls and gated communities. My own research drew on the work of Pink (2004), May (2013), Degen and Rose (2012), who also looked at the sensory aspects of urban design and Soytemel (2015), who emphasised the concept of 'belonging' in the gentrified neighbourhoods of Istanbul.

Another significant feature of previous research is that it understands and explains the redevelopment taking place through economic gentrification and/or displacement of locals. Uzun et al.'s (2010) work, for example, focuses on the illegal settlement issue and the strategies to solve this, such as TOKI and law-making authorities. Akkar Ercan's (2011) work also argues that gentrification is more of a neoliberal policy that has power over the real-estate market and can cause displacement. This is similar to Aksoy's study (2008) that defines the state of Istanbul as a state-led project stemming from globalisation and neoliberalism.

Another issue that has emerged is that some areas have been studied extensively, leading to research fatigue. For example, there have been over a dozen studies of Taksim, Tarlabasi and Sulukule (Akcali and Korkut, 2015; Akin, 2015; Ceker and Belge, 2015; Eder and Oz, 2015; Ertuna-Howison and Howison, 2012; Mutman and Turgut, 2018; Turkun, 2015; Unsal and Kuyucu, 2010; Yetiskul et al., 2016). Studying the same areas over and over again helps to add similar findings to the literature. For this reason, three areas in three different municipalities were selected to conduct this research. All three areas had been transforming in specific ways, and various forms of redevelopment have resulted in different ways of understanding the resulting gentrification.

More importantly this research specifically aimed to grasp what was happening during the process of redevelopment itself and this was specifically looked at during the fieldwork. This way, the transformation was observed while it was occurring, rather than looking at the urban redevelopment after the constructions had ended.

Having been able to observe the transformation during the constructions, allowed me to assess the impact of the work on public spaces and the ways in which public spaces were used at that time. As broadly explained, the ongoing constructions have had a variety of impacts on Istanbul by changing, damaging or erasing elements. During the fieldwork, there was a continuous

transformation of the senses due to dirt, dust, noise and waste, as well as changing sounds, visions and smells in each area. If these three areas were to be observed after transformation, these findings would undoubtedly be different. The sensescapes were continuously transforming during the fieldwork and consequently, this transformation shaped and reshaped public spaces as they were reconfigured.

One of the main contributions of this research is the impact of actual urban redevelopment on the use of public spaces and, upon completion, the ways in which gentrification reshapes and regulates public spaces in Istanbul. Having acknowledged the notion that space is a social product (Lefebvre, 1991), this thesis has argued that social contexts, culture, religion, tradition and laws can shape and reshape space. According to Franck and Stevens, a fixed use for spaces does not exist anymore as spaces allow a variety of activities: 'In urban public spaces around the world people pursue a very rich variety of activities not originally intended for those locations' (2007, p2). This argument overlaps with the traditional understanding and use of public spaces in Turkey where spaces are used for various activities. However, as a result of the redevelopment work and resulting gentrification, alternative uses of public spaces are limited, controlled, regulated or sometimes even completely erased in Istanbul. The more gentrification takes over an area, there less room there is for alternative uses. In the previous chapters, the blurriness between public and private was explained as a traditional way of using and experiencing Istanbul but with the materialisation of urban redevelopment, spaces are becoming more clearly public or private. Moreover, public spaces are increasingly designed or regulated in a form that does not allow alternative uses and discourages or limits possible activities: 'A comfortable bench can be used to stretch out on for a nap, while singular seats do not afford such comfort' (May, 2013, p143).

The form of discouragement or limitation manifests in different forms in different areas:

In **Balat,** it was the authority's neglect of public spaces which caused these spaces to be predominantly used by males, meaning that women, children and LGBTQ groups cannot use parks as they may like to. In this sense, Balat can be considered the most postsecular area of this research as it limits the activities that take place in public spaces or it directly gives public spaces to male actors. The case of Balat was extremely interesting as there was an increasing influx of the creative class in the area that in turn boosted cultural gentrification. That said, the lifestyle they were bringing into the area including consumerism cannot be thought of outside of Islam. The creative class in Balat had to de-secularise their business to be able to *fit in* and

that led to a specific form of consumerism such as third-wave coffee shops over bars that sold alcohol.

In **Caddebostan,** it was in the form of privatisation of open spaces with sidewalk cafés, but more importantly with the highest number of constructions, the area was the perfect embodiment of the government's neoliberal policies. Having known the area's long-lasting republican secular tradition and undisputed support for the CHP, it was noticeable how the area cohered to the government's neoliberal policies.

In **Karakoy,** the most notable change was in the form of occupying public spaces with construction machinery and cars. Karakoy represented the neoliberal global face of the government with more ambitious projects targeting tourists such as the Galataport project. Since the area was increasingly becoming a tourist spot, there was a confluence of secularism and postsecularism that would allow a more diverse form of consumerism through hotels, bars, bistros and art galleries. In that sense, Karakoy was being prepared as a display case to the world.

Although all three areas had their own journeys of urban redevelopment and experiences with various forms of gentrification, the majority of public spaces in these areas were either transformed, damaged or closely monitored with private security, such as in the case of the parks and the urban waterfront in Caddebostan. As Tonkiss argues, security can make public spaces safer and less intimidating (2005, p78) but Fernando points out that these spaces can also be neglected if the control is extreme (2007, p54). In other words, as this thesis aims to highlight, and was discussed in relation to urbicide, it can be relatively simple to *kill* public spaces one way or the other. However, it is important to note that open spaces in Istanbul are still used by the various publics in various forms, but the ways in which they are used is affected by the ongoing constructions taking place under the name of urban redevelopment, as well as the government's neoliberal and postsecular agenda.

The second contribution of this research to knowledge is an extension of Lynch's (1960) approach to city's elements. Needless to say, Lynch's (1960) elements have been highly influential for this research and they helped to elaborate how cities are understood. They were also useful when observing the case study areas in Istanbul. According to Lynch, nodes, edges, paths and other elements not only define a city, they are also fixed (1960). However, this research finds that, in Istanbul, elements are constantly changing as the city is continuously transforming. As this thesis argues, even the most symbolic and the most concrete elements of

a city are changeable, and the faster they change, the more they distort urban collective memory. Depending on the area, the change can be more or less drastic. In some areas, such as Caddebostan, streets and cul-de-sacs were demolished by breaking the well-known nodes and linkages, and this impacted both the visionscape and the layout of the area. This type of change can be regarded as an erasure in the shape of systematic demolition, leading to an erasure of the secular memory. The radical transformation of the urban environment is explained as 'urban amnesia' by Abd Elrahman and Mahmoud (2016) or 'urbicide' by Coward (2009), Gunay (2015) and Houston (2015). Living in a neighbourhood that resembles an urbicide, where elements can change from one week to another, meant that life in Istanbul was no longer between buildings, but between construction sites.

Gehl's (2010) 'life between buildings' influenced my understanding of the changes occurring, where it was life between constant redevelopment, which consequently provided the title of this thesis. According to Gehl, life between buildings is an outcome of a good urban design and a representation of living cities (2010, 2011). Gehl describes living cities as where there is social interaction, and lifeless cities are explained as '[…] scarcely avoid being poor in experiences and thus dull, no matter how many colors and variations of shape in buildings are introduced' (Gehl, 2011, p21). The case of Istanbul was proven to be in a similar vein to that of lifeless cities, as Gehl mentions it is where constructions have taken over the city and its public spaces. As observed in the fieldwork, daily life was conducted in and around construction sites and machinery and resulted in noise, dust and dirt. The sheer volume of constructions affected the area's elements such as paths, linkages and nodes 'between buildings' and therefore impacted neighbourhoods and public spaces by causing them to be not walkable, sittable, or simply useable. If streets are not walkable or sittable, they gradually become lifeless, while only certain spaces can be used, which create limits on public life. These limits then have an impact on the possible diversity of areas: if an area is lifeless, can it be diverse? Can practices of 'rubbing along' exist? In Istanbul, it is notable that some areas are in fact becoming diverse due to cultural gentrification, but this diversity works more like a patchwork or archipelagos of activities rather than a blend. Ongoing constructions are leaving few spaces for direct interaction amongst different communities.

The third contribution of this research to knowledge is in relation to the methods that were used. For this research well-known and well-used observational and visual analysis was used in the field, in addition to sensory analysis. As found, the sensory is a key part of the changes

described here, but sensescapes are rarely mentioned in detail and are mostly overlooked in urban studies on Istanbul. The sensescapes for this research examined vision, smell and sound, as well as dirt and dust; these were used to understand daily life in all three neighbourhoods. Conducting a sensory analysis, not only helped to understand and describe the daily life of a neighbourhood, but they are also one of the first things that changed when each area changed. In other words, the sensory was used to trace the transformation of each area. As Low argues:

> While urban dimensions of landscapes and the physical environment are often thought of in the fore as built structures that relate to functionality in modern life, cities are also sites of human experience that comprise social relationships, memories, emotions, and how they are negotiated on an everyday basis. Embedded within these processes of sociality is how the senses mediate one's engagement with urban growth and development, hence rendering insights into the multi-sensory character of urbanity (Low, 2015, p296).

Much of the existing research on gentrification in Istanbul tends to focus on macro changes such as housing, increasing property prices, displacement of locals and the like. This thesis has argued that micro changes are as important because they reveal different aspects of gentrification, the aspects that are taken for granted and go unnoticed. This is why this research was committed to explore micro changes as they can be read as direct implications of gentrification: living with construction noise for eight hours a day, having to inhale asbestos from demolition work, putting up with dust and how it changes patterns of opening or closing windows, hanging washing, sitting, or just walking down a street. There were other implications with regards to vision, smell and sound and the ways in which daily life was built according to minimising exposure to dirt and dust. How people adapted to these changes and what type of adaptation and resistance mechanisms they practiced while they are adapting, was understood to significantly impact on the use of public space. These aspects of gentrification are an important contribution to knowledge and follow on from the work of Degen (2008), Degen and Rose (2012), Low (2015), May (2013) and Rhys-Taylor's (2013) sensory approaches.

The final key point to have emerged from this research is the different approach towards the right to the city. Butler (2015) and Harvey's (2008, 2013) arguments on the right to the city overlap with this thesis' argument in relation to claiming and reclaiming public spaces. However, their approach does not engage with micro changes and the impact of these micro changes in terms of the right to the city. As broadly discussed, public spaces in Istanbul have undergone various forms of transformation: privatised, monitored, closed off or demolished. Much of the research about Istanbul focuses on the more symbolic or popular public spaces

such as Gezi Park or Taksim Square. As Madanipour argues, it is common for public spaces of a city to be used as the meeting points for movements because they are the spaces where power is formed and resisted in the eyes of the public and 'whoever controlled these urban spaces, controlled the city and society' (2003, p183). The proposed transformation of Gezi Park and the resistance against its demolition was important for this research with regards to thinking about the right to the city. However, this research instead explored lesser-known public spaces in lesser-known neighbourhoods. I also looked less at these defined public spaces and instead at those everyday acts of doing public space on sidewalks, on door stops and in daily interactions. With this in mind, three areas were selected to demonstrate a glimpse of daily life in Istanbul to understand what happens when everyday spaces disappear or undergo significant transformations. It was noted how some people 'gain' or 'are given' the right to the city, while other's rights to the city and its daily spaces have been taken away from them due to re-Islamification and de-secularisation. Although the overall transformation of Istanbul was prompted by the need to provide secure housing following numerous earthquakes, it has quickly become linked to neoliberal policies that the government supports. The focus of the redevelopment of Istanbul therefore moved away from providing secure housing for all, to demolishing and constructing whatever is profitable and, in the meantime, transforming public spaces according to the government's neoliberal Islamist agenda.

Cities and neighbourhoods both during and after transformation become less about housing and more about investments, where space becomes owned or controlled by certain groups. This accelerates the entire process of pushing 'others' (less advantaged) out of the 'chosen' and 'invested' areas, by making it all look almost like a natural occurrence, eventually leaving the city to the new urban elite (Florida, 2017, p168). Every transformation of the city, its neighbourhoods, its streets and its public spaces affects the inhabitants' right to the city and in cities like Istanbul, decisions regarding the urban are top-down which ultimately determines the right to the city. According to Harvey, the right to the city is not only an individual right to claim the city, but also a right to change it, the relationship between the city and its people is a reciprocal one (2008). This thesis argues that this relationship has occurred throughout the city's urban history because of the approach that sees the city and its public spaces as *given,* rather than a right. It is therefore crucial to see how the shift from Ottoman Istanbul to republican secular Istanbul also limited some groups from using public spaces and secularised it, just as the ongoing shift from secular Istanbul to postsecular Istanbul is now taking the city from secular groups by de-secularising it and giving it to the desired groups of this zeitgeist.

There is an ongoing negotiation and reclaiming of public spaces in Istanbul, as demonstrated through activities at Gezi Park, but how those practices link to daily interactions, and uses of public space, needs equal attention and protection.

8.3 Concluding Remarks

As mentioned throughout the entire study, cities always change and that is what makes them complex. They offer endless possibilities and endless threats, somehow both welcoming and unwelcoming at the same time. The case of Istanbul was no different, especially since it has traditionally been known as a city that needs to be conquered. This was always part of its history, and increasingly so after the 1950s, with the migration of people from rural areas of the county to the urban. Migrating to Istanbul had become a thing to do to such an extent, the concept started to feature heavily in Turkish cinema. An iconic scene that represents this, occurs in front of the beautiful Haydarpasa Train Station located by the sea; here a character - almost always a man - looks at the city and says '*Yeneceğim seni İstanbul*' which means 'I will defeat you Istanbul' with a non-Istanbul dialect. In some variations he might proclaim '*Istanbul sen mi buyuksun ben mi?*' meaning 'Istanbul who is greater, you or me?'. However, by the end of the film, the character loses the challenge by losing his traditional values and virtue. The message of these films is to underline the fact that not only do cities change, but cities have enough power to transform individuals and many other things inside them. Nevertheless, this seductive and sometimes negative portrayal of Istanbul was never sufficient to discourage masses of people from migrating to Istanbul at the time. Population numbers have continuously increased, making Istanbul the most populated city in Turkey. Ironically, Haydarpasa Train Station was seriously damaged after a fire in 2010 and has not been in active use since 2012. Its renovation started in 2016 (NTV, 2010, np; Sozcu, 2017, np), but there are now rumours it will be transformed into a hotel complex and a shopping mall (TrenHaber, 2019, np).

This thesis has presented the case of three areas in Istanbul undergoing a process of urban transformation and redevelopment, the new migrants, the established residents, the buildings and people all constantly undergoing defeat and renewal. The aim here was to demonstrate the ways in which public spaces are affected from the constructions, both materially and sensory. The main argument of the thesis is that public spaces are constantly being made by publics, through laws, culture, economics and religion. The question that emerged through this argument

is to what extent they are being made and reconfigured during redevelopment in three areas, to what extent redevelopment ends up gentrifying the areas, and whether all this transformation causes a reconfiguration of public space. My aim has been to make sense of the transformations of public space and the overall impact of changes on urban collective memory.

Before I conducted this research, I was aware of the impact of urban laws and what they were enabling in Istanbul. Urban transformation projects were mushrooming in every corner of the city. Constructions had *become* a feature of life in Istanbul and seeing cranes in the background or hearing the noise of endless demolition work is now part of daily life, to such an extent there is a song about urban transformation called *Kafamda Kentsel Donusumler* (Urban Transformations on My Mind) by Ikiye On Kala.

Although this thesis is about the transformation process and how it gentrifies areas and asks whether it causes any reconfiguring and use of public space, the case of Istanbul is more problematic than just a few projects in a few neighbourhoods. As observed in the fieldwork, explored in the secondary research, and witnessed in Istanbul, I can argue that all these urban laws, fear of a possible natural disaster, discourses about secure housing, transformation projects are systematically erasing something from the urban fabric, and that something mostly happens to be a public space or a well-known public landmark. I have argued here that if public spaces in a city are controlled or lost, then there cannot be much left for the public to claim (Butler, 2015) and more importantly it cannot be possible to talk about the right to the city (Harvey, 2013). As we are gradually witnessing in Istanbul, as a result of the endless transformation projects, the new architectural style is more interiorising, so much so that the boundaries between public and private are becoming clearer. Privatisation and private spaces are also encouraged whether in the form of gated communities, smart houses, private securities, CCTVs or shopping malls. I would like to note once again that I am not grasping the overall transformation in Istanbul from a nostalgic account. Just like other cities, Istanbul is changing, but this change has been drastic enough to erase the city's urban collective memory. I emphasised in the findings the ways in which public spaces were closing down, being demolished and rebuilt, streets disappearing, nodes changing, landmarks vanishing from the vision, and cranes being erected and how public space was not just used but understood. Once the urban collective memory is damaged or some parts of it erased, it breaks off the continuity in the urban fabric. In Istanbul, in some neighbourhoods more than others, there is a life that is being constructed, the public ends up living in a place where they do not have any memories

and they cannot find their way around due to endless construction machinery, scaffolding, walled off streets, and redevelopment. Here I want to specify that I am not talking about moving to a new area, but rather the complete transformation of one's neighbourhood. As seen in Caddebostan, it is difficult to recognise streets, old well-known well-visited places have gone, and new places have been created. This is an existence without any continuity, without any layers or traces from before, and thereby there is no sense of belonging to a certain area.

The more the urban fabric changes at a certain pace, the more it looks fluid, and I see this as a way of creating a whole new system from the current government's perspective. In Turkey, as the reader will recall from Chapter 1, the quickest way to form a new system is to completely neglect the previous one. We saw this in the shift from the Ottoman Empire to the Republic of Turkey, and that shift also meant the introduction of secularism against Islamification. Secularism was the founding ideology of the young nation state and, to emphasise this, landmarks, *meydans* and neighbourhoods were given names connected to the republic or the founder of the republic, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, such as AKM and the Republic Monument in Taksim Square. Ever since then, many other shifts have occurred in Turkey, and Istanbul was mostly at the centre of it all, usually as a target and sometimes as a symbol to represent what has been going on in the country. By using transformation projects as a tool, the current government materialised the long-lasting de-secularisation of society, recoded or erased public space, and initiated re-Islamification with neo-Ottomanist discourses and neoliberal policies. Many areas of the city with secular connotations, landmarks and public spaces have been transformed, the first selected area being Beyoglu. I explained the background and the transformation of Beyoglu in the earlier chapters, and I emphasised Beyoglu because it had been the ultimate symbol of secularism, republic and anything Western (Cinar, 2007). To legitimise its republican connotation, the area has been the home to Gezi Park, AKM and Taksim Meydan. When I started to conduct this research, however, AKM was empty, it had been closed down and was waiting renovation. Now AKM has been demolished and the Republic Monument in Taksim Meydan is facing the construction of a large mosque, which is nearing completion. The transformation of Taksim can be regarded as the embodiment of de-secularisation and re-Islamification in Istanbul.

While I was writing the final sections of this thesis, the building of Bomonti Brewery, a 130-year-old historical landmark was given to the Office of Mufti in the Sisli district and was demolished, despite the opposition of the public. Around the same time, Ayasofya, also known

as Hagia Sophia, a church converted to a mosque during the Ottoman era and converted to a museum in 1935 by Ataturk himself, has been converted back to a mosque and opened up for worship, despite the criticism of the public and UNESCO. The case of Ayasofya represents the extent of the ideological transition occurring in Turkey. Although these examples are about the symbolic landmarks, they are important to highlight the scale of transformation in Istanbul when it comes to the use of spaces and how they play out in simple daily activities, memories, and ways of living in the city.

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