NEGOTIATING TOPHANE

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Introduction

Urban Situation - Motif

Urban Situation

"Art Walk Turns Into Street Fight in Istanbul

ISTANBUL — When what had been a gentrifying neighborhood's most successful art walk devolved into a bloody street fight, it raised embarrassing questions for a city celebrating its status as a 2010 European Capital of Culture.

Here in the Tophane neighborhood of the central Beyoglu district of Istanbul, new galleries have squeezed into retail spaces next to butchers, bakers and grocers. What once was primarily home to migrants from eastern Anatolia has become a mixed zone of traditional men-only tea houses and trendy designer boutiques. As in other cultural capitals like Paris or New York, gallery owners have coordinated art openings to draw in critics and collectors and to get a buzz going as visitors enjoy glasses of wine while strolling from exhibit to exhibit.

But on the evening of Sept. 21, the crowds outside three Tophane galleries were attacked by angry mobs, with reports of men armed with knives, iron bars, broken bottles, frozen oranges and pepper spray beating people who sipped sangria and smoked cigarettes on sidewalks. As many as 15 people were reported wounded, including visitors from Poland, the Netherlands, Germany and Britain, including a British-Turkish artist who required stitches to close a head wound. Seven suspects were detained and released."

-The New York Times by Susanne Fowler 10.10.2010

Since 2010, Tophane is the spot field for many journalists and researchers after the gallery fights. However, the discussion about the neighborhood is reduced to a duality of 'conservatives' and 'moderns' or 'capitalists' and 'victims'.

As an old cosmopolitan neighborhood Tophane is more than

this duality of 'conservatives' and 'moderns' and also the power relations are more complex to a two-sided conflict; 'capitalists' against 'victims'.
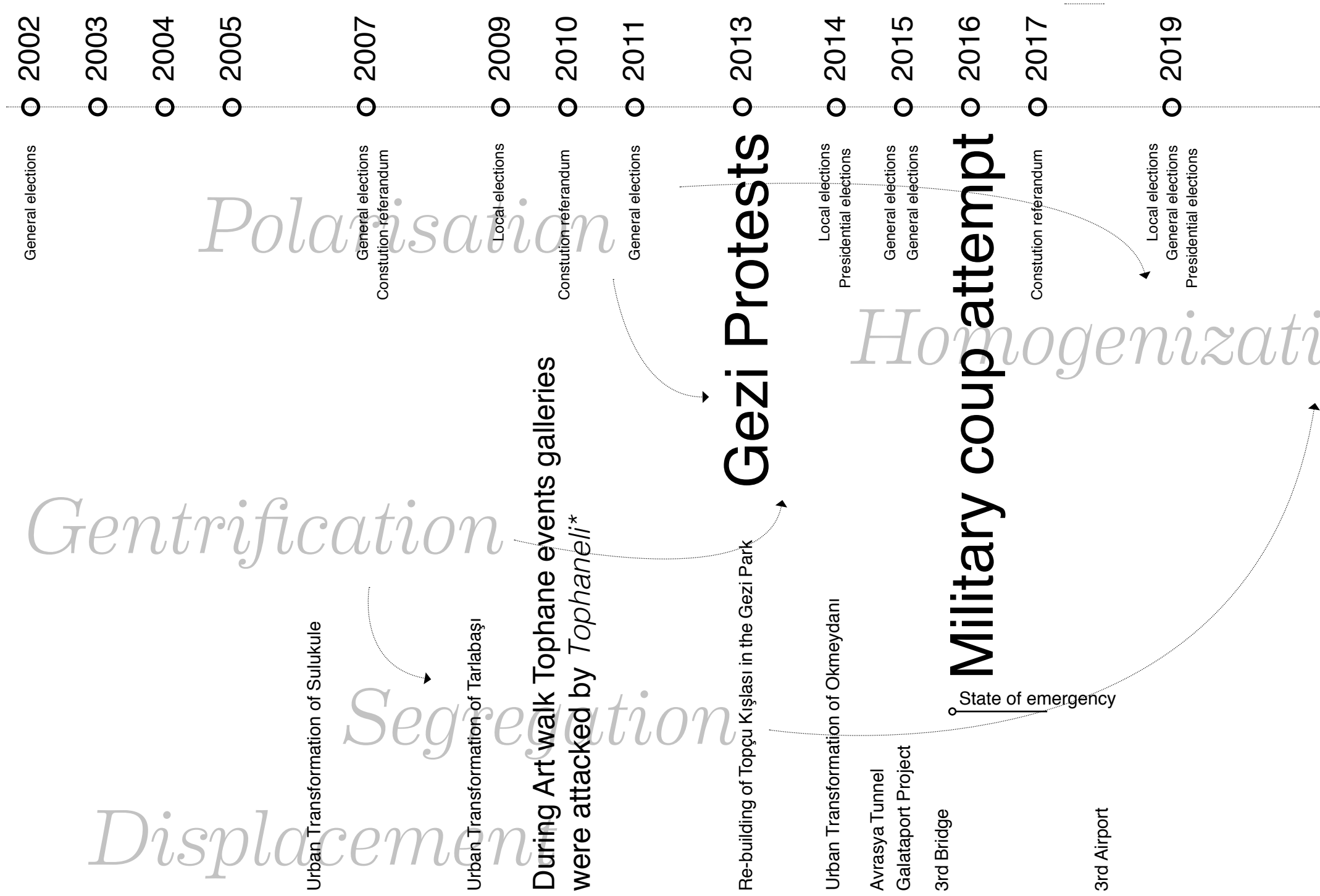
Negotiating Tophane is a research that attempts to make the invisible identities and conflicts visible.

Therefore, this thesis aims to understand the use and production of space by different social identities in Tophane; one of the most dynamic areas in Istanbul; located in the Beyoğlu-district. The area was renowned for its multi-ethnic and multi-cultural composition: Greeks, Armenians, Jews, Roma, and Muslims. Today, this multi-cultural scene and this diversity is seemingly reduced to a duality of the gallery fights of 2010.

This thesis understands Tophane as a place of diversity beyond the conflict between artists and residents and aims to display its heterogeneity through six case studies: 1. The Greek School; 2. The Minority Senior Center; 3. The Hacımimi Mosque; 4. The Neighborhood House; 5. Park; 6. Depo. The case studies are selected to observe the social relationships, since social relations in everyday life mirrors their spatial existence according to Lefebvrian production of space.

Therefore, the thesis observes, how different communities mark their spatial and social boundaries, how permeable these boundaries are and their temporality and which tactics and strategies residents are practicing in everyday life for living together.

Simmel says things must be separated from one another in order to be together (1997: 64). If so, is it unavoidable for communities in Tophane to be separated? Do these separations mean connections and provide connection points?

Timeline (2002–2019)

Years: 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2007 | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | 2019

- **2002** — General elections
- **2007** — General elections; Constitution referandum
- **2009** — Local elections
- **2010** — Constitution referandum
- **2011** — General elections
- **2013** — Gezi Protests
- **2014** — Local elections; Presidential elections
- **2015** — General elections; General elections
- **2016** — Military coup attempt
- **2017** — Constitution referandum
- **2019** — Local elections; General elections; Presidential elections

Polarisation

Homogenization

Gentrification

During Art walk Tophane events galleries were attacked by *Tophaneli**

Segregation

Displacement

- Urban Transformation of Sulukule
- Urban Transformation of Tarlabaşı
- Re-building of Topçu Kışlası in the Gezi Park
- Urban Transformation of Okmeydanı
- Avrasya Tunnel
- Galataport Project
- 3rd Bridge
- State of emergency
- 3rd Airport

14

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Central Concepts

-

Research Design

Beyond borders

Boundary is defined as "a real or imagined line that marks the edge or limit of something" (1). The need of marking boundaries in human settlements is described as a natural phenomenon, arising from the urge to survive while fighting against the enemies or rivals. This description displays boundaries as a potential site of fighting and the act of marking the boundaries as a declaration of war (Stavrides 2010: 14). However, boundaries are not only there, in order to secure the inside but also they are also created to be crossed. And the act of crossing boundaries accompanies often a complicated set of ritual acts, symbolic gestures and movements (ibid.).

Furthermore, Simmel compares the 'bridge' and the 'door' as material structures that connect while separating. In his words, "the human being is the connecting creature who must always separate and cannot connect without separating" (1997: 64). At that point border transforms to a porous membrane. The porosity characterize above all the relationship between private and public space, as well as the relationship between indoor and outdoor space (Stavrides 2010: 68). Porosity is not limited to spatial experience. A temporal porosity according to Benjamin is experienced while eating in the street or taking a nap in a shady corner (1985: 174).

Beyond the bordering archetypal artifacts like wall and door and relationship between indoor and outdoor, there are also bordering acts and events. "[Some] practices can be seen as symbolic 'border guards' that help to identify people as members or non-members of the community" (Fenster 2006: 117).

Through porosity, bordering becomes an act that contains many possible meanings beyond the 'declaration of war' on otherness. It contains also "the possibility of crossing the bridge towards otherness" and "not only hostility but also,

(1) Dictionary of Cambridge

perhaps, negotiation" (Stavrides 2010: 14).

Otherness

Identity marks also boundaries between self and stranger (Bauhardt in Bürkle 2015: 34). Therefore, any relationship between 'self' and 'other' is an interaction and creates thresholds. In this context Simmel characterizes "human being as not only a bordering creature but also the 'creature who has no border'" (1997: 67).

Stavrides suggests two types of identities, the open and closed identity. The closed identity is a fixed and unambiguous identity, and an identity with rigid borders such as the concept of 'collective personality' by Sennett. Todays so-called polarized societies answer to the description of Sennett:

> "Warring camps can see themselves as warring persons: you belong the one camp or the other by your resemblance to other persons in one camp or another; you construct this resemblance not by observing how they behave and comparing it to your own behavior, nor by deciding whether their needs resemble your needs." (cf. 2017)

People construct an idea of their resemblance to others, their shared identity, by 'decoding', meaning taking a detail of behavior as a symbol for an entire character state. Sennett gives an example:

> "Just as, say, the color of a scarf or the number of buttons undone on a blouse may symbolize a woman's sexual looseness, so small details of appearance or manner can symbolize a political stance. These details seem to indicate what kind of person espouses the ideology (ibid.)"

The act of 'decoding' takes place in everyday life, which can build a sense of political community:

"People look for details of behavior among the person espousing one view or the other to decide which best corresponds with your sense of yourself. Those details become for you a revelation of the true character of the conflict; they symbolize what the conflict is about. As ideology becomes measured as to whether it is believable or not through these details of behavior, political struggle itself becomes more personal. Political language becomes miniaturized, little moments or events seeming of immense importance, because through these details you are learning who is fighting, and therefore on which side you belong". (ibid.)

When a 'collective personality' is produced through these small details, there is very little actual knowledge of others like oneself, only a small number of symbolic details. For Sennett this type of collective personality stops the collective action.

"Such a community is hostile to outsiders, and competition is rife among those within over who is 'really' an embodiment of the collective personality" (ibid.).

In addition, these framed identities also help any form of govarnance. "People have to be recognizable, classifiable, therefore predictable, in order to be governed" (Stavrides 2010: 137).

On the other hand, the open identity that is enclosed in flexible borders offering meeting points with otherness (Stavrides 2010: 15). Amin Maalouf a Lebanese-born French Author sees each person's identity as a unique mixture made up of many components. He calls it 'composite identity' (2000: 20). For him, people cannot "divide it up into halves or thirds or any other separate segments" (ibid.: 2). But people are demanded to choose one allegiance to describe their identity to "seek within themselves that same alleged fundamental allegiance, which is often religious, national, racial or ethnic" (ibid.: 3). And

he also mentions: "the identity a person lays claim to is often base, in reverse, on that of his enemy" (ibid.:14) and "people see themselves in terms of whichever one of their alligiances is most under attack" (ibid.: 26).

However, Maalouf suggests to consider the person's identity as 'a pattern drawn on a tightly strecthed parchment' and not an 'assemblage of separate afilitions', nor a kind of 'loose patchwork'. "Touch just one part of it, just one allegiance, and the whole person will react, the whole drum will sound (2000: 26).

For him, identity is not given once and for all, it is something you become with your experiences (ibid.: 25). So one could say, identity is a process.

"It is often the way we look at other people that imprisons them within their own narrowest allegiances. And it is also the way we look at them that may set them free". (Maalouf 2000: 22).

Setting free the identities from all alligiance make them 'composite' that enable the 'self' to find a connection point with the 'others' and form porous thresholds between social identities and open them to interaction.

Neighborhood

According to Lefebvrian space concept, [social] space is a [social] product (1991: 47). In addition, the urban form is a place of encounter, assembly, simultanity. In this sense, the city creates the urban situation, where different things occur one after another and do not exist separately but according to their differences. Hence, "city constructs, identifies, and delivers the essence of social relationships: the reciprocal existence and manifestation of differences arising from or resulting in conflicts." (ibid. 1997: 118) The urban is associated

with the 'dialectic of content', meaning with the differences and contradictions of content (ibid.).

City of diffrences and contradictions brings us to a city of enclaves and makes only the conflicts possible connection points. However, even if the identity is a unique mixture, a 'composite', the urban is also unique mixture but tends to remain a 'patchwork' of different communities' spaces because they are not attached like the different allegiances in personal identities. The fact is; people are often demanded to choose one allegiance and produce material results according to this tendency.

> "If it is now recognized that people have multiple identities then the same point can be made in relation to places. Moreover, such multiple identities can either be a source of richness or a source of conflict, or both." (Massey 1994: 153)

Massey criticizes the persistent identification of place with 'community', she says: "Yet this is a misidentification" because "communities too have internal structures and they are not homogeneous" (ibid.: 153f). Therefore, when one see the identity as a process and a 'composite', then the identification of place with a 'community' is not more possible anymore. Thus, a city as an agglomeration of identity enclaves becomes a complex network of shared allegiances by different persons in different places. This network produces many porous thresholds and hybrid spaces a neighborhood.

Research Question

In this context, the questions arise:
How is the heterogeneity in Tophane visible?
How different identities produce their spaces?
How do they mark their borders?
How is the porosity of the borders of the spaces and identities?

Which kinds of thresholds are to be found in everyday life in the neighborhood?
How do different identities interact?
How do they negotiate living together?
Does the change in our look to the identity as 'composite' make new possibility spaces in the neighborhood visible?

Research question is:

How visible are the social and spatial boundaries between social identities in everyday life in Tophane? Which practices and spatial artifacts provide approaching otherness and create zones of negotiation?

To discuss possible answers to these questions, my strategical hypotheses is:

Tophane is reduced to duality despite of its complexity, as identities are reduced to one allegiance in their representation. The neighborhood on the other hand is a place of dense juxtaposition. Tophane is a 'composite' neighborhood, has the complex network of shared allegiances by residents which should create multiple observable threshold.

Research Design

Researchers who interact socially within the field of research, cannot be objective. Subjective presuppositions and diverging states of knowledge have an impact on one's research (cf. Breuer et al. 2011: 429). To outline my presuppositions at this point, I want to display my research process, explain which methods I used, what data was gathered, how it was analyzed.
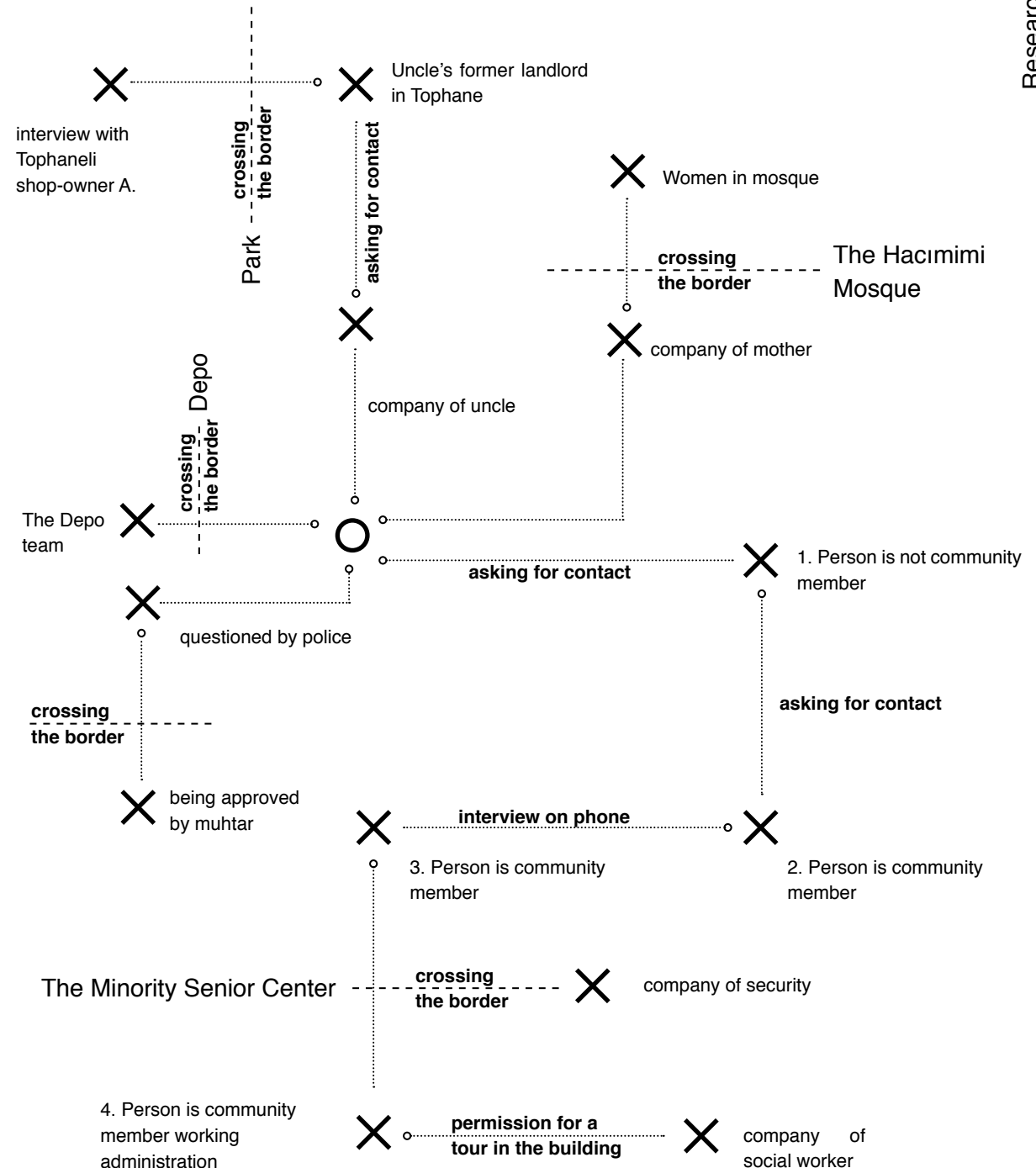
For a theorized approach to the field of research, I did a literature research on central concepts such as boundaries and thresholds, otherness and identity that let me to define the concept threshold for this research. This four-stepped definition is served to analyze the places:

1. Inside of the borders is not homogeneous, there is also internal 'composite'.
2. The threshold is in-between spaces and times. It can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, practice or an event.
3. The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibility and temporality.
4. The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

To deal with the question of material and social boundaries, porosity and thresholds between different urban identities in Tophane, first I did derivé (cf. Meinharter 2006) in the neighborhood and mapped the possible places of heterogeneity.

From 13 possible places, I choose six to further research as case studies because of their dense juxtaposition and their diversity. Different empirical methods are used to collect data. In many places I was able to do participant observations and to attend events. My field research coincided with the month of Ramadan; I tried to use it as an opportunity to observe more pronounced sensibilities in the neighborhood coming with it.

Crossing border as researcher

interview with Tophaneli shop-owner A.

Park — crossing the border

asking for contact

Uncle's former landlord in Tophane

Women in mosque

crossing the border

The Hacımimi Mosque

company of mother

company of uncle

Depo

crossing the border

The Depo team

asking for contact

1. Person is not community member

questioned by police

crossing the border

asking for contact

being approved by muhtar

interview on phone

3. Person is community member

2. Person is community member

The Minority Senior Center

crossing the border

company of security

4. Person is community member working administration

permission for a tour in the building

company of social worker

Besides Ramadan, I had another struggle in the field research: Tophane has become a research field after gallery attacks in 2010 that was a handicap for this research because people were fed up with giving interviews. An interviewer N. told me that he had given five prior interviews. People inclined to question than to give answers because a researcher to them was someone 'new', 'a stranger' in the neighborhood. Therefore, I often avoided the interviewer position and led participant observations to informal conversations (cf. Breidenstein 2015). I also did narrative interviews with central actors of the case studies (cf. Hopf 2007). Usually I need a 'threshold' person to introduce me central actors, such as my uncle a former business owner in Tophane, my uncle's former landlord in Tophane, as well as the muhtar. These introductions made the borders permeable for me. The only place where I could get in without any need of contact was Depo, an art institution, which also can be explained with sharing the same social capital (cf. Bourdieu 2011). These interviews with the central actors were held on phone, in offices, at cafés, on benches and per Skype.
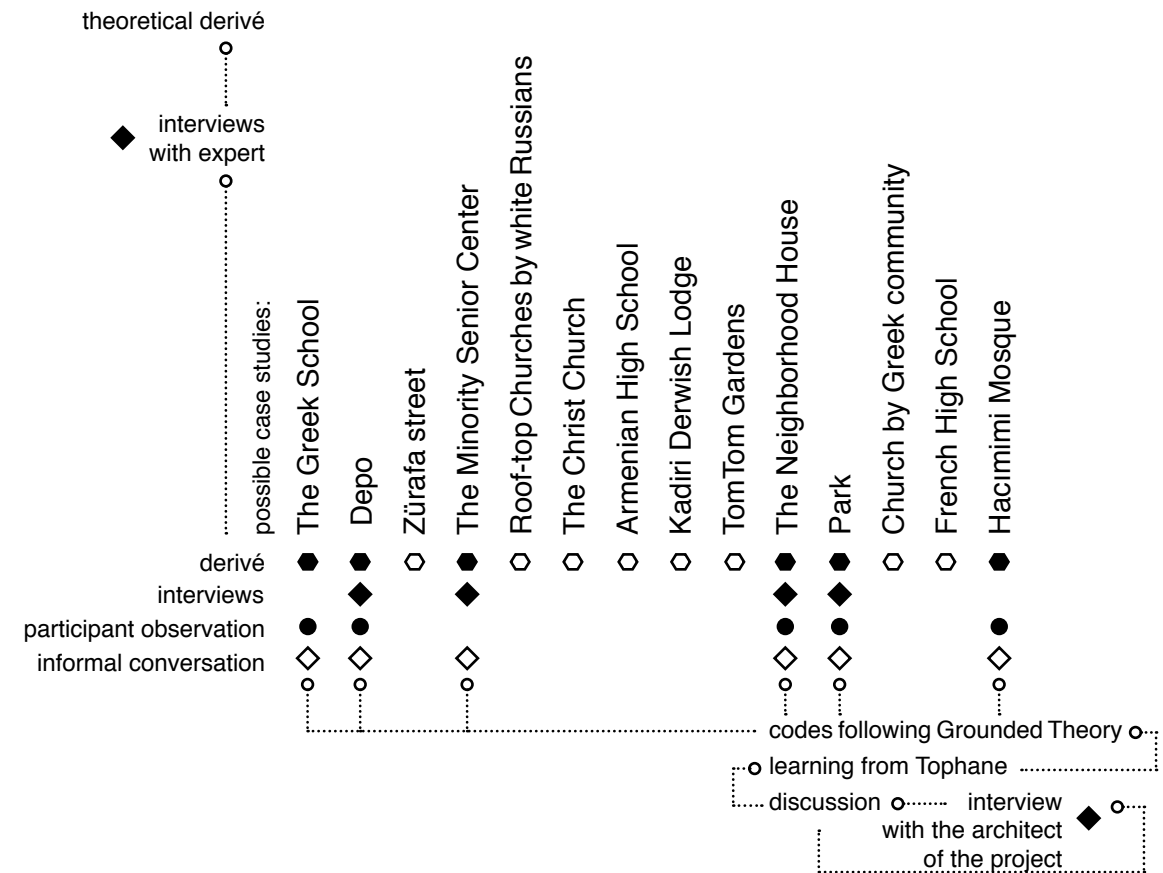
Following Grounded Theory a reached a point of data saturation (cf. Strauss et al. 1994). I listed the places categorized through actors, spatial boundaries, controlling methods, location, visibility, accessibility, thresholds and situation. In each case I discuss how the users of the place are positioned in the neighborhood, how they are visible and accessible, or not. The situations in case studies show the symbolic conflicts about the place and the neighborhood. At the end they are analyzed through a four stepped definition.

As a zoom-in, I focused on Koltukçular Street, a dead end from now on referred to as *avlu* (courtyard in Turkish) and its neighbors. I discussed how *avlu* works and how it can be seen as a place of commoning.

Building upon these cases I assembled two statements as learning from Tophane:

1. Even 'composite' identities still produce spaces according to their chosen allegience mostly the one most under pressure.
2. A 'dead-end street' as an in-between space can provide face-to-face relations with the 'other' due to stillness it provides among the diversity.

In aspect of these statements and drawing lessons from failures (cf. Lefebvre1996), I assembled a discussion about the possible two scenarios of Tophane after the new housing project.

	The Greek School	Depo	Zürafa street	The Minority Senior Center	Roof-top Churches by white Russians	The Christ Church	Armenian High School	Kadiri Derwish Lodge	TomTom Gardens	The Neighborhood House	Park	Church by Greek community	French High School	Hacımimi Mosque
derivé	●	●	○	●	○	○	○	○	○	●	●	○	○	●
interviews		◆		◆						◆	◆			
participant observation	●	●								●	●			●
informal conversation	◇	◇		◇						◇	◇			◇

theoretical derivé
◆ interviews with expert
possible case studies:

codes following Grounded Theory
learning from Tophane
discussion — interview with the architect ◆ of the project

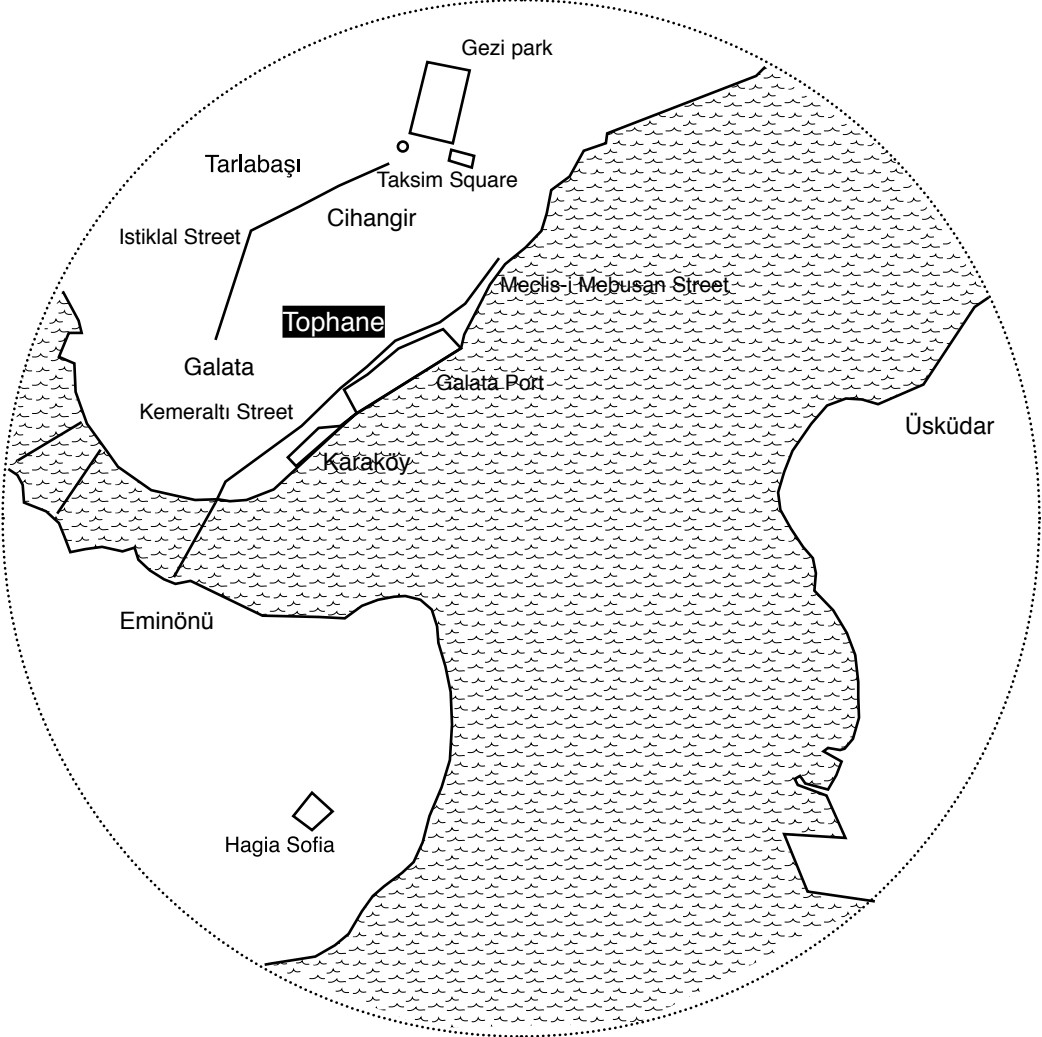Inside of the borders is not homogeneous; there is also internal multiplicity and 'composite.'

The threshold can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, a practice or an event.

The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibilty and temporality.

The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

Tophane

Presenting the Field: Tophane

Gezi park

Tarlabaşı

Taksim Square

Istiklal Street

Cihangir

Meclis-i Mebusan Street

Tophane

Galata

Galata Port

Kemeraltı Street

Karaköy

Üsküdar

Eminönü

Hagia Sofia

Tophane

Tophane

Tophane is located on the European side of Istanbul, along the Bosporus shore. For centuries, Tophane hosted the main trade port of the city, which was decommissioned in the mid of 1980s. It has always been attracted labor, the last wave of which emigrated from East Anatolian cities mainly Siirt, Bitlis and Erzincan.

Being a port neighborhood, it was associated with drugs prostitution, gambling and criminality; today the traces of this past are still visible through the brothel zones, coffeehouses and in the narration of the people about the past.

Before the 1960s, Tophane was a multi-religious neighborhood populated by Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and Muslims. As a consequence of the exile law for Greeks the area has lost most of its Greek community and its 'visible' religious diversity. Most deserted houses in the neighborhood were bought or squatted by the newcomers from Anatolia between 1960 and 1980.

Beyoğlu is a cultural and commercial center of Istanbul since 17th century, as the location of embassies along the Grand Rue de Pera: today Istiklal Street triggered the urban development and increased the European population in the settlement of that area. It is transformed to a center of cultural and commercial activities (cf. Çıracı and Ekdi 2015: 72). Today, this transformation continues with the establishment of Istanbul Modern Museum in 2005 in one of the old warehouses in the old docks. As a consequence many galleries are opened in Karaköy, Galata and Cihangir the neighboring district and that spread over time to Tophane.

Another factor of transformation is the Galataport Project covering 1.2 km of embankments between Karaköy and Tophane contains construction of hotels, restaurants and

commercial areas in the decommissioned port. Although Tophane is not included in the planning area of the project, it is transforming 'compulsorily' to a tourism center (cf. Başaran 2015). However, gentrification process in Tophane takes place differently than the other examples Sulukule in Eyüp and Tarlabaşı in Beyoğlu, where low income residents were displaced from the city center to the periphery. Residents of Tophane compared them are not only the poor, but also the middle class- traders and owners which aims to gain profit from their property (ibid.).

Despite of gentrification process, Arabs, Turks, Kurds, Romanis, Armenians, White Russians, Jewish Community, artists, prostitutes continue to live in a dense juxtaposition in the neighborhood.

This is Tophane..!

Tophane is a *semt*.

Before reading the physical and social boundaries and thresholds in Tophane, it is important to understand the difference between the definitions of *semt* and *mahalle*. *Mahalle* is an administrative unit in cities, whereas *semt* is the neighborhood in the social perception. Tophane is a *semt*. *Semt* is made of *mahalles* but does not have an official boundary. That is why the boundaries of Tophane changes from person to person. The *Muhtar* of the Kemankeş *Mahalle* assumes five *Mahalles* in the borders of Tophane, namely Kemankeş, Firüzağa, Tomtom, Müeyyetzade, and Hacimimi Neighborhoods. But not everyone living in these neighborhoods calls themselves as *Tophaneli*.

Administrative borders

Tophane is ours.

Topography

Tophane rises along the Bosporus. Istanbul has a complex topography of hills. Tophane sits on the side of a hill with a flat area developed with landfill on the coast. At the high end of the neighborhood the streets are challenging in their steepness.

Investment borders

A former *Tophaneli* member from municapality of Beyoğlu describes in a conversation the neighborhood: "Tophane is a neighborhood caught between Karaköy, Galata and Cihangir." In these three other *semts* trendy cafés and boutiques are common and rental prices are high. Compared to them, Tophane is changing slowly and is still in transition.

Border tags

The boundaries in some way are visible in the neighborhood with the graffitis like "This is Tophane" and "Tophane is ours." Furthermore there are many "Tophane" writtings on the walls. This street writing is working as border markers and warning "the newcomers" and "the outsider" that here in Tophane rules another order.

Tom Tom Kaptan Sokak

Tomtom housing Project

kadiriler derwish lodge

2.748
Tomtom Mahalle

4.127
Firuzağa Mahalle

Kadiriler Yokuşu

Boğazkesen Caddesi

1.376
Hacımimi Mahalle

Crimean Church

Hacımimi mosque

The Minority Senior Center

Hacımimi housing project

Depo

200
"new comers"

Lüleci Hendek sokak

Karabaş Mektebi Sokak

The Park

The neighborhood house

Tophane-i Amire

Galataport Project

Kılıçali Paşa Mosque

546
Müeyyetzade Mahalle

The Zürafa street

The Greek school

Armenian High school

141
Kemankeş Mahalle

Beyazıd-ı Cedid Mosque

administrative boundaries

inhabitants

"new comers"

project

places

other mentioned places

Who is *Tophaneli* ?

People living in Tophane are called *Tophaneli*. In my interviews I realized that having a workspace and property in Tophane for 30 years might not be enough to feel Tophaneli. When I asked small business owners in Tophane, I usually was referred to the residents mainly those from Siirt and Bitlis.

Therefore, I think, it is easier to begin to find out, who is not Tophaneli. Romani people are not counted under *Tophaneli*, too and they are the first ones forced to leave the neighborhood because of the increasing of the rental prices. Consequently, many of them move out to Kasımpaşa. And another group is women in the neighborhood, although they have their own social network, they are not noticeable in the public space. Minorities in the neighborhood are also isolated from the Tophaneli.

During my research in the neighborhood, I was often 'decoded' as an employee in one of the cafés in Karaköy.

Visibility

Most visible group in Tophane is men from Siirt and Bitlis They have established in Tophane their own *Hemşehri* (fellow countrymen) associations which strengthens the feeling of belongingness, the feeling at home village and the solidarity in the community.

At the same time, they are also visible in the media through their website, *Tophanehaber* means news of Tophane. Their attitudes against galleries, gezi protest and military coup attempt are quite clear. Nowadays, they report and claim, that people leaving their bottle of beer next to the mosque, which is in the midst of cafés and bar.

Catalogue of
the case studies

'Patchwork' in Tophane?

"The present epoch will perhaps be above all the epoch of space. We are in the epoch of simultaneity: we are in the epoch of juxtaposition, the epoch of the near and far, of the side-by-side, of the dispersed." (Foucault, 1986: 22)

Tophane is an urban enclave and constituted through many islands by different group and institutions, together in a dense juxtaposition. Each social group has their own gathering space in *mahalle* such as mosques of different religious schools, the churches and schools of different minority communities, governmental buildings, *hemşehri* associations, charity associations, brothels, gated communities, shanty houses and recycling sorting areas. These places seem to be homogeneous in their representation but they have internal multiplicity, when the identity is not seen as 'collective' and is set free of allegiance and belonging.
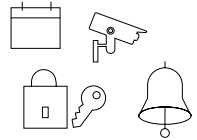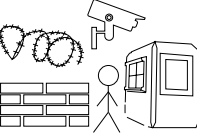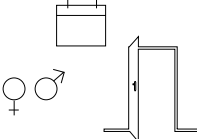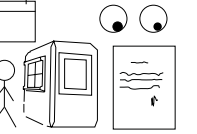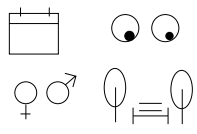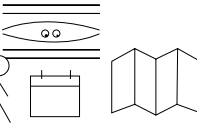
"Heterotopias always persuppose a system of opening and closing that isolates them and makes them penetrable at one and the same time." (Foucault 1993: 422)

These places are in a dynamic change between isotopy (place of identity and neighboring order) and heterotopy (place of the other and the other place). In Tophane, something is always happening. Relations change, difference and contrasts can sometimes result in conflict and some are attenuated, erode or corrode (cf. Lefebvre 1997: 129).

The catalogue of selected places as case studies attempts to show these conflicts but also the connection points of these seemingly islands and search for negotiation zones.

entrance only for members

controlled entrance

'free' entrance

Tomtom Gardens Housing Project

Tomtom Gardens Shops

Kadiriler Derwish lodge

3.

Hacımimi Mosque

Square

Christ Church

2.

Minority Senior Center

Park

5.

Hacımimi Housing Project

Depo Art Gallery

Semt Konağı

İftar tent

1.

Greek School

6.

4.

Armenian Highschool

Armenian Church

Tophane boundaries in this research

French Highschool

Zürafa Street

Türk Ortodoks Church

Roof-top Church

	Place	Actors	Spatial Boundaries	Controlling	Location	Visibility	Accessibility	Thresholds	Situation
1.	The Greek School	Galata Greek Community, artists, tourists, visitors, security members, staff		security, open door during exhibitions	main street	signboard, and hosting exhibitions	free entrance at exhibitions open school wednesday 16:00		idealizing the past
2.	The Minority Senior Center	residents, guests, persons in administration, staff, social workers		security room, security cameras, barbed wire, closed door	dead-end street	many security elements, a small signboard on the wall	only for members and social workers under contract		observing without being seen
3.	The Hacımimi Mosque	residents of Tophane Hanafis and Shafis		open door, through gazing	small street for pedestrians	signboard, minarette	open, gendered spatial uses		negotiating how to pray
4.	The Neighborhood House	municipality and local authority, residents of Tophane, children		fences, security cabin, muhtar offices at entrance	in the park	signboard, new-build 'Ottoman style' building	through documents		attending "People's parliament"
5.	The Park	residents of Tophane children, also Gönülbağı and young locals association, mosques' associations, passers-by		through gazing	the park	banners for Ramadan	"gendered" spatial uses		organizing common meal
6.	The Depo	Depo Team, artists, visitors, tourists		supporter room at entrance, using door in the dead-end street, partition	dead-end street	Graffiti, signboard, partition	free entrance at exhibitions		using partition

Places:

1.

The Greek
School

2.

The Minority
Senior
Center

3.

Hacımimi
Mosque

4.

The
Neighborhood
House

5.

Park

6.

Depo

Situations:

1s.

Idealizing
the past

2s.

Observing
without
being seen

3s.

Negotiating
how to pray

4s.

Attending
'people's
parliament'

5s.

Organizing
common meals

6s.

Using partition

Zoom in:

Being
neighbors
in the dead
end street

1.

The Greek School

The Greek School is the place of the Greek Community that was forced to leave but a nostalgic bond with Tophane still remains.

The Greek [*Rum*] School

The Greek School is located on Kemankeş Caddesi, on the main street in Tophane. Next to it, there is a French Highschool St.Benoit, and across it, there is the Armenien Getronagan Highschool. The school does not have registered students anymore but is used as an exhibition venue. The door of the building is open during the exhibition hours but there is a security person sitting at desk with a screen, watching the inside through security cameras.

The history of the Greek school goes back to 1853. The building was commissioned by Zarifi family for the Greek community as an elementary school. After the 1950s with the 'Cyprus crisis' and the following political unrest in the country, the school was confiscated by state and became the property of the Ministry of Education but continued to function as a minority school (Bedir and Ince, 2014: 77). The school is the first building that returned to the Greek Community in 2012, because of that it has a symbolic meaning for the Greeks (ibid.).

In connection to the 'fluctuating political context,' the Greek population in Istanbul has significantly decreased since the 1950s. In 1955 6-7 September riots took place and thousands of houses and shops and tens of schools, churches, and cemeteries belonging to the Greek community were damaged. The riots have caused a traumatic effect on the community. We can trace the shrinkage of the community through student enrollment numbers in Turkey which dropped from 6888 to 2012 over course of 18 years (Yücel, 2016: 8).

The Galata Greek School had to close its doors because of the demographic changes and the lack of students in 1988. Although the school was opened in 1996 again, it had be closed one more time because of financial problems in 2007. A quite new law on returning confiscated properties to their initial owners made it possible to return the building to the

Greek community in 2012. Therefore, a discussion around the repurposing of this historical heritage representing the Greek history in Istanbul and the vacant building, which has impervious borders in the urban context has started (Bedir and Ince, 2014: 77).

Through gentrification processes in the neighborhood, the cultural network has got dense in the last years. The school administration aimed to transform the building into a cultural center. For this purpose, through workshop organized in the school, they generated a slogan 'by the Rum, for everybody' having the place as a reminder for the history and memory and aiming to open the place for the 'others' to cross the borders (ibid.).

> "Throughout the repurposing discussions on the Greek School, two main axes of thought were the Greek culture and history; and civilization in Istanbul as a more comprehensive concept than only culture. While considering these two, the emphasis should not be missed on the cosmopolitanism of the city and the neighbourhood as a source of building an inclusive approach. Along these main axes of thought, the core principles of the new institution are set as autonomy and accessibility, contributing to the democratisation of culture and providing freedom of speech and art, institutionalizing while remaining civil." (Bedir and Ince, 2014: 79)

From this point of view, today, the School permanently exhibits a classroom and has 'the open school library', which can be visited every Wednesday as from 4 pm to 6 pm and during events and exhibitions. The school hosts many exhibitions including the prestigious Istanbul Design Biennial and Istanbul Art Biennial.

Facts and politics decreasing the Greek population

1923 — Proclamation of the republic

1932 — Various jobs were barred for the people with Greek origin.

1942 — *Varlık vergisi,* the law imposing a wealth tax on property for minorities

1955 — 'Cyprus crisis' and 6-7 September riots

1958 — People with Greek passport were deported with several excuses.

1964 — Exile judgments and increasing hostility in public against the Greeks.

1988 — The Greek School was closed due to lack of students.

1997 — The Greek School was opened one more time.

2007 — The School was closed again because of financial crises.

2012 — The School was given back to the Greek community.

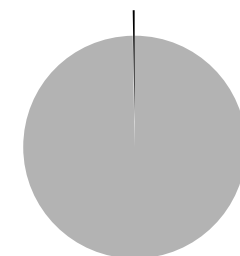2016 — The school is used as a cultural center with the motto 'by Rums, for everybody'.

270.000
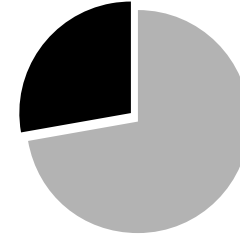
Greek population in Istanbul in 1922
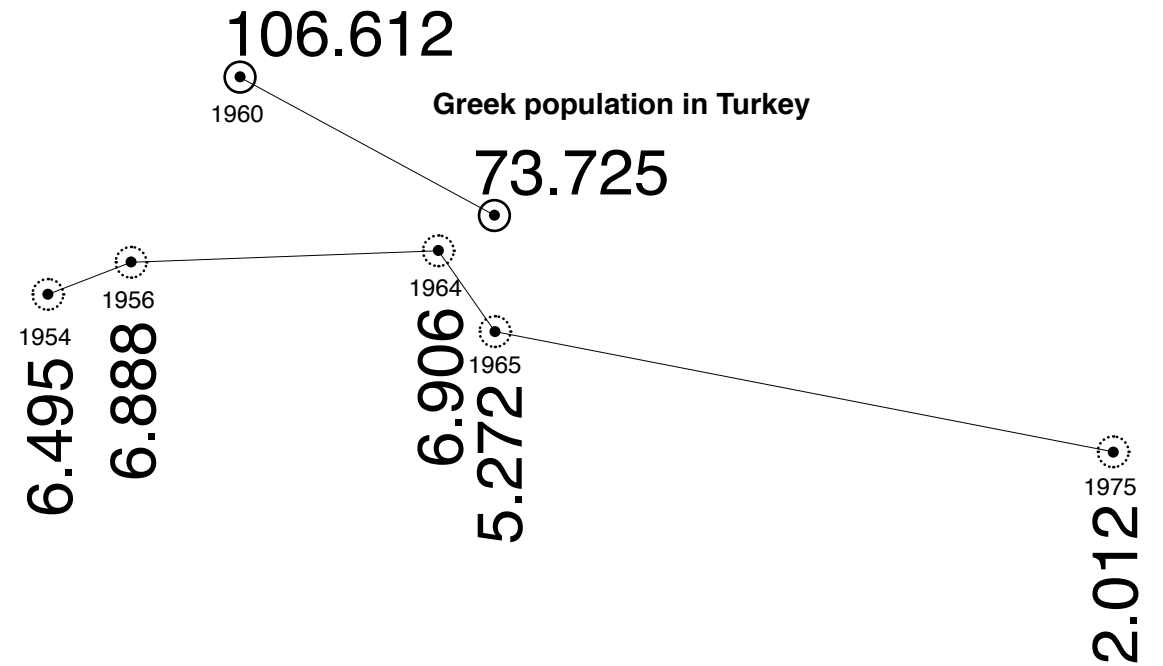
Greek population in Turkey

106.612 — 1960
73.725 — 1964
6.495 — 1954
6.888 — 1956
6.906 — 1964
5.272 — 1965
2.012 — 1975

The number of students in Greek schools in Turkey.

3.000

Greek population in Istanbul today

Being visible in the exhibitions in Tophane

Quotes from his exhibition-text at the Greek school

"But it was real. As real as the day is long! My Greek friends and neighbors from childhood... Sometimes I hear a sentence in Greek while going through the radio stations, and they come back to life."

"As a coincidence, I studied at the Getronagan High School across the street. I still recall Mihal's, Tanash's and Vasil's laughters echoing through these walls. And even the screaming and footsteps of many children who used to be students here."

threshold

Kirkor Sahakoğlu, an armenian artist ....○ the exhibition "Utopia"

threshold

The Greek community ○ **accessibility** .... 2012 the law ○ **threshold** .... The Greek school

the exhibition "The Visual Urban Memory of Galata" at Depo
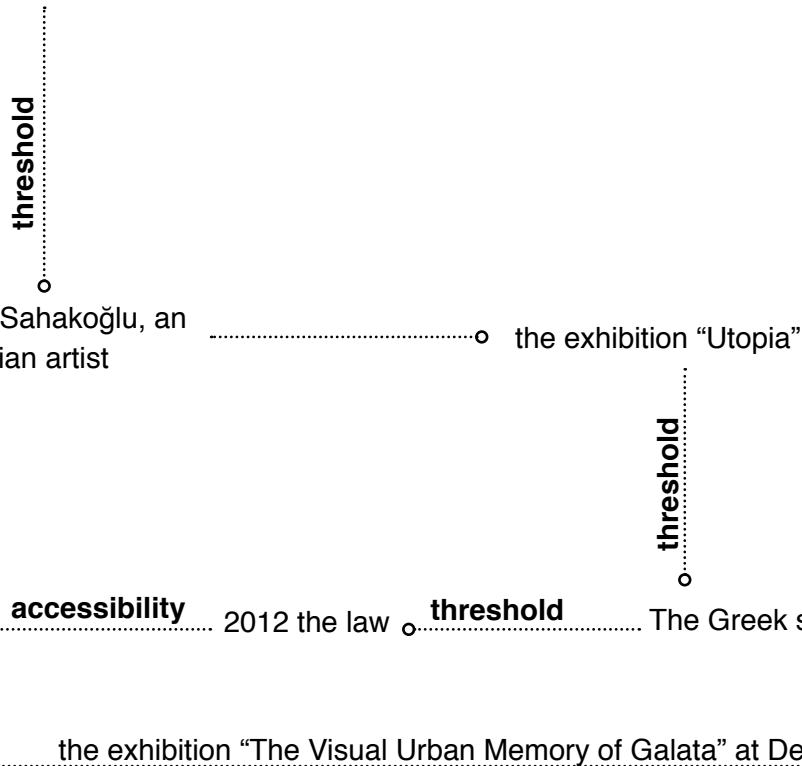
Galata'nın Görsel Kent Hafızası - Perşembe Pazarı Bölgesi
The Visual Urban Memory of Galata - Perşembe Pazarı Area
İNCİ BATUK

25 Mayıs / May - 24 Haziran / June 2017

Fotoğraf Editörü / Photography Editor: **ÖZCAN YURDALAN**

The melancholy of ancient neighbourhoods
Ahmet Ümit

Ancient neighbourhoods hold an ancient melancholy within. This is not only the melancholy of fallen civilizations, of religions on the brink of disappearing, of melted stone, or of rotten wood, it is an ancient melancholy left behind by the souls of people who once lived in the neighbourhood. This melancholy permeates the clouds, the sea, the streets, the homes, the shops and the looks of people who today, continue to live in this neighbourhood. This is why, as you pass through such ancient neighbourhoods, you may think you have heard an imperceptible sound, a song that sings of an unrepeatable experience, a bittersweet wind softly touches your heart, and a ghost passes by your eyes in its faded clothes. In the flash of an eye, imperious city walls are erected once again, and an excitement spreads through the streets, the squares and the marketplaces. The neighbourhood now remembers its old days, its glory days. The Genoese, the Venetians, the Romans, and the Ottomans. And all the other various nations, all of them. Bargains made in different languages, love whispered, curses hurled, prayers said, yells let out, and the heroic words, the cowardly begging, the sacrifices and betrayals, all in different languages. And memories, inscribed in the mind of the neighbourhood, never to be forgotten...

Ancient neighbourhoods are never just another neighbourhood. They are letters written from the past to the present, and in their remains, the story is told of all aspects of humanity. Those remains, which are paper, marble, wood and iron. And even if paper burns, marble melts, wood turns to dust and iron rots, they speak to you from an old fountain, from a bastion that has survived pillaging, a signpost on the corner of a shop, or the gate of an old temple. Sometimes, the ancient neighbourhood is as plain as a single-line-poem, but it contains the whole of life. "Once there was a wonderful life here," it says, "once, anything you may imagine, was lived here." And then it adds, "It was so magnificent that, visit it once, and you could not help but return. That's why it is the way it is. That is partly the reason of today's melancholy." It goes on, "That is why the sea, since it knows the better days of the neighbourhood, is so silent, that is why the sky is so resentful, and that is why the streets are so forlorn." And then, the seeing eyes, the wise mind, and the talent that documents, brings to life this cry of ancient neighbourhoods with words, colours, sounds and photographs. So that ancient melancholy can make people true people again, so that those who know their city, may know themselves...

7 May 2017, Istanbul

DEPO

Being open as a cultural venue.

Since 2007, the Greek school has, unfortunately, no registered students. A vacant school building with old signboards on the walls, "be a good friend" and "do not say bad words" or the school reports from the 1950s exhibited in the open school room witnesses the history, former residents of Tophane. From this position, the school reminds us the Foucault's fourth principle of his heterotopia concept:

> "Heterotopias are most often linked to slices in time- which is to say that they open onto what might be termed, for the sake of symmetry, heterochrony. The heterotopia begins to function at full capacity when men arrive at a sort of absolute break with their traditional time. This situation shows us that cemetery begins with this strange heterochrony, the loss of life, and with this quasi-eternity in which her permanent lot is dissolution and disappearance." (Foucault, 1986: 26)

On the other hand, the school as temporary free-entrance exhibition space brings the place a system of 'opening and closing' and makes the space 'penetrable'. More than one type of display, more than one time and dimension co-exists simultaneously in one real place like in museums, libraries, cemeteries, or like in the Greek school.

Exhibition at the Greek School

1s.

Situation:

Idealizing the past

Idealizing the past in the neigbourhood

People in Tophane talk about the past with the Greek neighbors fondly. "Greeks were good neighbors!", "Some will get angry at me for saying this but we have learned many crafts from Greeks" are routinely heard from *Tophaneli,* although it is never made clear, who gets angry (interview A.; İ.; N. 2017). N. a café owner who is in his forties also tells about his childhood: "We used to share our flat with an elderly Greek lady. My mother cared for her like her own 9th children. And I used to work for the Greeks, when I was a child. They gave me pocket-money for small jobs like cleaning the floor or bringing a package to someone. There is no one left. I saw nearly 50 Greek neighbors pass away."

The multiculturality and cosmopoliteness are something referred to as things of the past. The past is the ideal one; good memories live in a nostalgic relation in the tales about the history of the neighborhood. But there is a contradiction. The stories of how cheap the houses were bought for from the Greeks forced to exile mix in with the nostalgic remembrance of living together.

In other words, the nostalgic relation with the past makes one loose the contact with the present making it difficult for the story teller to realize contradicting sentiments in their story. As Boym explains:

"Nostalgia, like progress, is dependent on the modern conception of unrepeatable and irreversible time. The romantic nostalgic insisted on the otherness of his object of nostalgia from his present life and kept it at a safe distance. The object of romantic nostalgia must be beyond the present space of experience, somewhere in the twilight of the past or on the island of utopia where time has happily stopped, as on an antique clock." (2001: 13)

Although the time has not happily stopped in Istanbul for the Greek neighbors. They were forced to live their country because of the ethnic allegiance. However, they are still an actor in memories in everyday life.

Inside the borders is not homogeneous, there is also internal 'composite'.

The 'under attack' ethnic identity makes the Greek community seen as homogeneous. In narratives, they still are called as the Greeks as whole instead of neighbors, friends or by name.

The threshold can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, practice or an event.

The Greek school is a place, where the past and the 'otherness' of a minority are displayed. The exhibition by an Armenian artist, graduated from the Armenian High School on the other side of the street create a threshold; the exhibition describes the days with the his Greek friends Mihal, Tanash and Vasil who are not here anymore.

At the same time, hosting the biennial can be seen a threshold, where the visitors of the biennial experience the 'otherness' of a vacant Greek school.

The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibility and temporality.

Opening hours and schedule of exhibitions defines the porosity of the school.

The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

The existence of the Greek School and the occasion of transform it into a cultural venue shows the absence of the Greek community and also the need of negotiation and confrontation the past with all actors in the society for a better 'living together'.

2.

The Minority Senior Center

The Minority Senior Center with its wall and barbed wire displays the 'symbolic war' of 'approaching otherness'.

The Minority Senior Center

The Minority Senior Center in Tophane is located in the Dibek *Çıkmazı*, a dead-end-street, since 2001. The garden of the complex has two entrances, one to Hacımimi Külhanı Street the other to the dead-end. Visitors have to use the dead-end where there is a security cabin. There is always a security guard, so it is not possible to ring the bell before get questioned about the purpose of the visit.
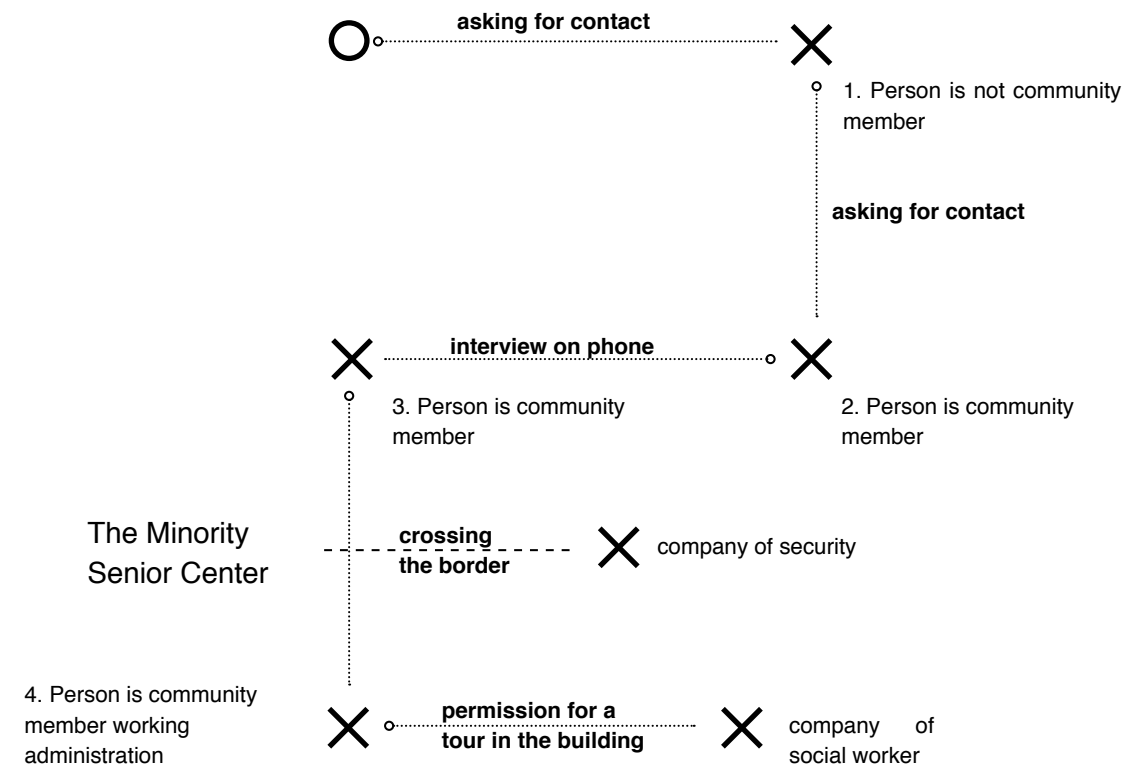
For crossing borders of the complex, I need three persons to introduce me to the community, two of them were community members. As a result, I had the opportunity to have a tour in the Center with a social worker, who was charged to call and ask the manager for the 'suspicious' questions.

After one get an invitation or one's name is on the guests' list, you can get in the security room. There, one need to give your ID and bags are controlled through the security checkpoint. Security member brings you to the person, one meets. Such security strategies make the discourse about insecurity in the urban praxis visible.

> "Checkpoints appear above all as points of self-evident protection: protection from practices which are unpredictable, other, different- in other words, protection from "arhythmical" practices. Checkpoints appear to protect normality from its opposite, society from what should appear as outside, foreign and therefore hostile." (Stavrides 2010: 32)

The Minority Senior Center claims that they "do not intend to integrate with Tophane". They do not want to be visible because of security concerns. The interviewer adds, "a person on the street cannot come in any way, and we also do not want to have any relation with Tophane residents. We also do
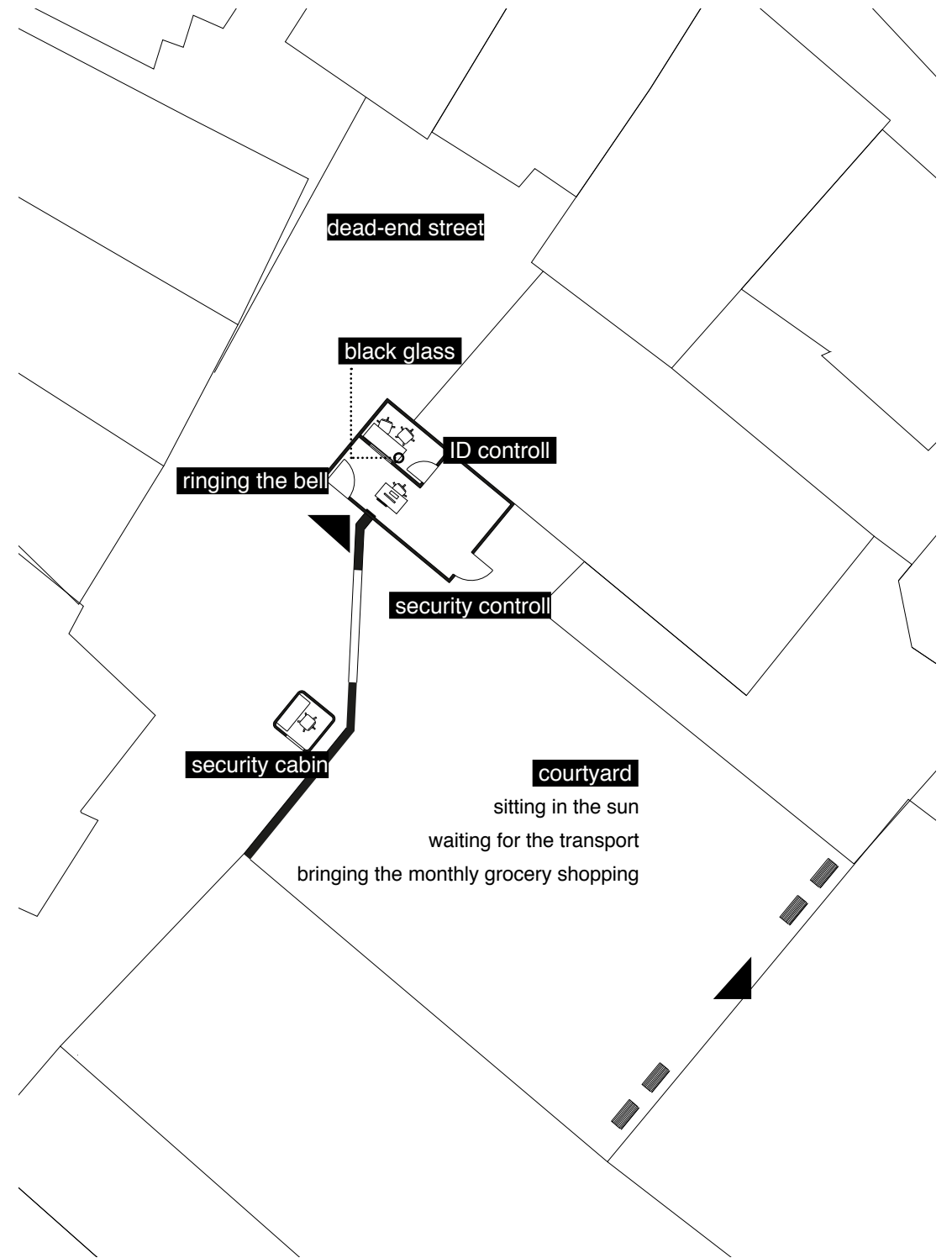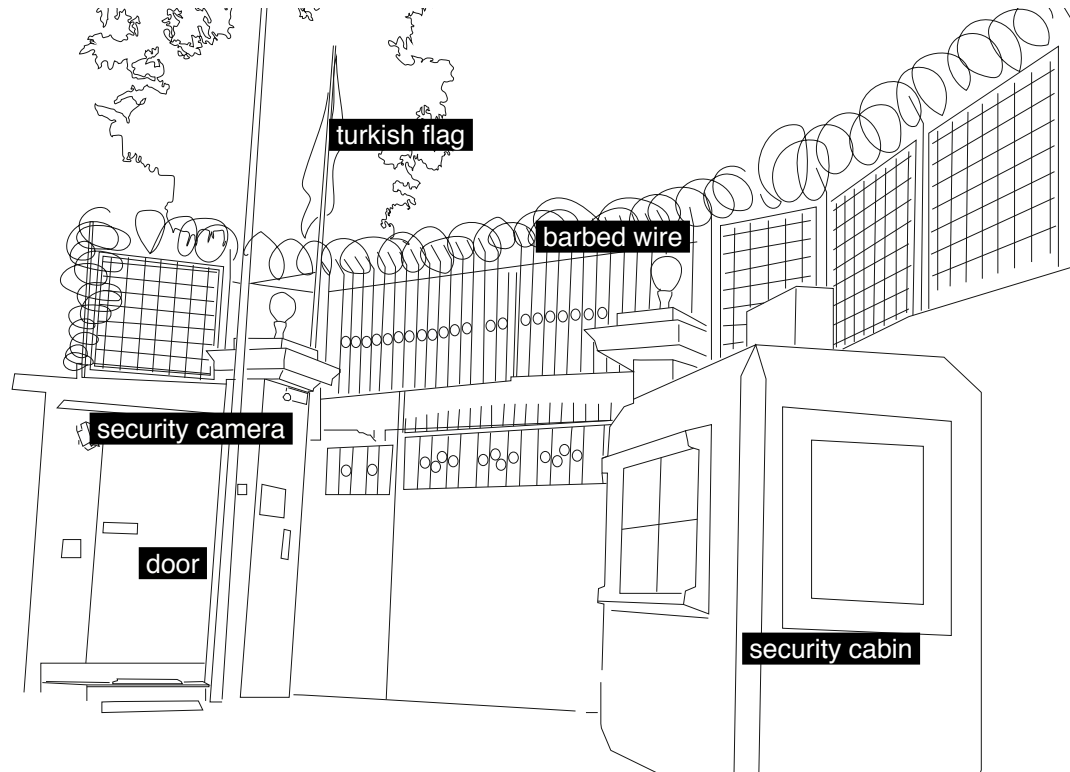
not have commercial relations, because we do a monthly bulk purchase, so we also do not need to go to the *Bakkal* (small neighborhood shop)". These statements of the manager resemble the 'symbolic war' of 'approaching otherness' according to Stavrides (cf. 2010).

asking for contact

1. Person is not community member

asking for contact

interview on phone

3. Person is community member

2. Person is community member

The Minority Senior Center

crossing the border

company of security

4. Person is community member working administration

permission for a tour in the building

company of social worker

Controlling

The Minority Senior Center marks its borders clearly, which can be considered as a reaction to the past and current political tensions. Many *Tophaneli* I have interviewed were not aware of the existence of to the Minority Senior Center. I stopped asking for fear of exposing their presence. It is not entirely clear if the graffitis 'free Gaza' or 'Baby-killer Israel' were intended the residents of the Minority Senior Center or just a coincidence.

"If the encounter is considered only as the necessary step to verify and deploy hostility between groups of people, then the act of crossing borders will be only an act of symbolic or actual war. This form of encounter characterizes communities build shelters protected by the material or symbolic walls with drawbridges that are drawn most of the time." (Stavrides 2010: 18)
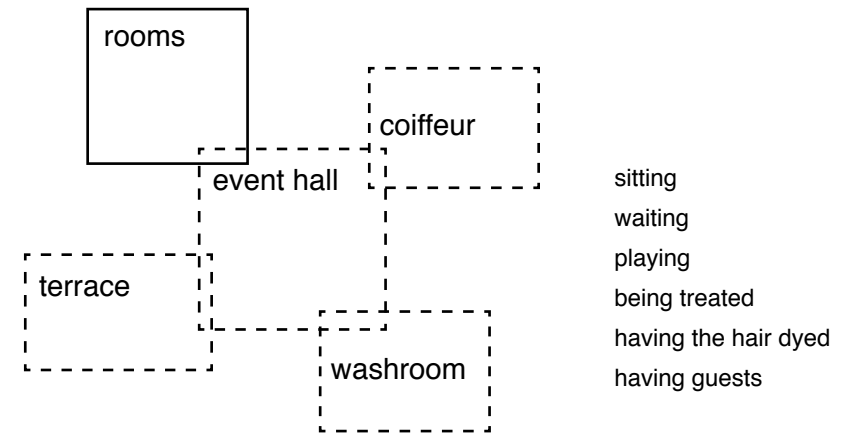
turkish flag

barbed wire

security camera

door

security cabin

dead-end street

black glass

ringing the bell

ID controll

security controll

security cabin

courtyard

sitting in the sun

waiting for the transport

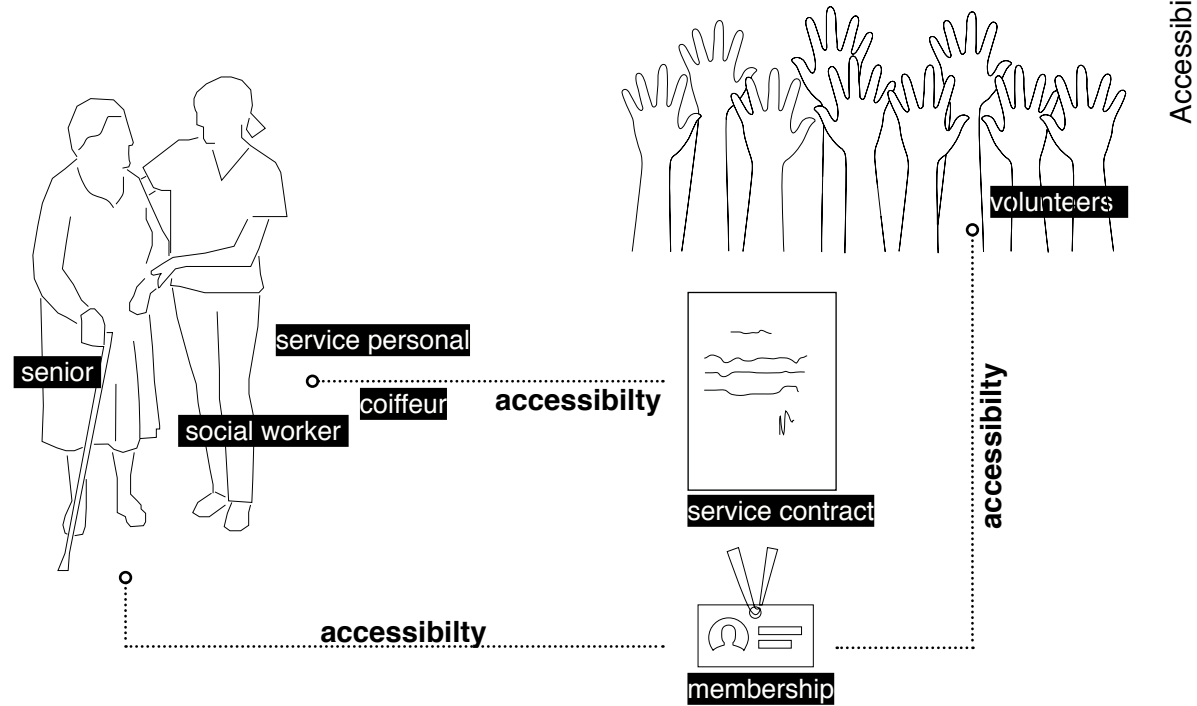bringing the monthly grocery shopping

The membership

"[...] an institution tends to circumscribe a community as a closed world of predictable and repeatable social practices. Thus, institutions of commoning may also be employed to define specific commoning practices, and the corresponding community of commoners be considered as a closed, self-reproducing world. But this may- and often does- lead to forms of enclosure." (Stavrides, 2015: 13)

Around 100 residents are living and getting health care at the senior center. To be a resident of the Minority Senior Center, one needs to be a member of the religious community. The strict rules create clear social boundaries.

A group of women volunteers visit the seniors regularly. To volunteer one is also required to be a member. Seniors can have visitors, but they need to first inform the security about who they are.

Only staff members are allowed to be outside of the religious community. A trust relationship is built this time with the help of a service contract.

senior

service personal

coiffeur   **accessibilty**

social worker

service contract

volunteers

accessibility

accessibilty

membership

rooms

coiffeur

event hall

terrace

washroom

sitting
waiting
playing
being treated
having the hair dyed
having guests

2s.

Situation:

Observing
without
being
seen

Observing without being seen

The garden wall of the senior center is like a defensive wall as Koolhaas describes:

"Of all the shifting manifestations of the wall- bearing wall, partition wall, party wall, feature wall, etc.- the defensive wall best captures the element's primal political character as a way of setting a limit between self and other. Defensive walls physically manifest national myth-making and existential anxieties…" (2014: 14)

The wall with barbed wires and security control is a materialization of the social relation between the minority community and *Tophaneli*. For the community, the circulation must be ruled and organized; to eliminate what is dangerous and to make a division between good and bad circulation (cf. Foucault 2015).

The act intending to be invisible, can be seen as a product of insecurity and unsafety in urban praxis, according to Bauman: There are three categories of insecurity in society; uncertainty, insecurity and unsafety, triad of people's ethic, materiality and emotionality. People who are exposed to these three feelings are not free to take the risks of collective action. (cf. 2013).

Although the minority community do not feel free to take the risks of collective action with the neighbors, it builds itself a common space urban enclave as Stavrides defines:

"Common space can be considered as a relation between a social group and its effort to define a world that is shared between its members. By its very conception such a world can be stable and well defined, completely separated from what is kept outside and the 'outsiders'. This is indeed the kind of world that can be contained in an urban enclave: enclaves can be secluded common worlds, as in the case of a favela, or of a gated community." (Stavrides, 2016: 54)

The community command the view of the whole neighborhood, although they intend to be invisible. The community observes the 'others' through the terrace view can be compared 'looking out through a window behind a jalousie'.

View from roof terrace

Inside the borders is not homogenous, there is also internal 'composite'.

The threshold can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, practice or an event.

The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibility and temporality.

The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

The Minority Senior Center has strict rules about membership based on the ethnic and the religious allegiances. The feeling insecure and attacked because of these two allegiances make the 'composite' stay 'invisible'.

However, the staff and social workers working under contract in the center bring the 'visible' heterogeneity.

The elements such as barbed wires, security cameras, identification control mark the borders of the minority community, who feel unsafe and insecure in the neighborhood. Being so framed with the security checkpoint mirrors social relations in the neighborhood.

Being a community member or working there with a contract allow one to cross the border in the minority center. The social workers can be seen in this sense as thresholds.

The borders of the minority center are rigid. The place is isolated from the 'outside' and as a non-member person, one need to have a permission for a visit.

The isolation defines the outside as stranger and even hostile. At the same time, the graffities 'free Gaza' create a tension between the Minority Senior Center and Tophaneli.

3.

Hacımimi Mosque

Mosques as tool for the regulation with their existence in public space show also the diversity in so-called 'conservative' community in the neighborhood.

Hacımimi Mosque

Hacimimi Mosque is located in Külhan Street on a small pedestrian street next to Crimean Church in Tophane. The door is usually open, the use of the space is separated for the gender. While men pray in the ground floor, women use the 1st floor for praying.

The website smartbeyoglu by the Municipality of Beyoğlu describes the mosque: "The founder of the mosque is El Hac Mehmet Çelebi, and he let the mosque build in the 16th century. In the 1900s the mosque had been devastated, but since most of the neighbors were non-Muslims, nobody cared about the mosque. In 1959 with the leadership of the *muhtar*, local authority, an association was established, and they rebuild the mosque with a semi-dome and one minaret. However, due to this rebuilding the mosque has lost its historical identity."

Today, there are around 10 mosques in Tophane and a few of them has its own associations. During the fieldwork, I met two of them, Karabaş Mosque and Beyazıd-ı Cedid Mosque Associations, which are cooperating with the Gönülbağı Association for the organization of the *iftar* tent and solidarity-charity bazaar.

"There is a mosque in this area."

Since 2013 there is a new legislation; Selling alcohol is forbidden within 100 meters of a mosque. The places, which have before 2013 can continue to serve but newcomers need to negotiate with their neighbors. A café in Karaköy for example has solved the problem with buying the alcohol from the kiosk on the other side of the street and serve it in a non-transparent glass to its customers.

This new legislation targets only selling alcohol. At the same time, in the neighborhood dominates the belief; besides selling is also drinking alcohol is forbidden in this 100 meters. "This is a *mahalle*" says N. and adds "you cannot go through with a bottle of beer in the hand."

Although there is no ban for drinking alcohol around the mosques, *Tophaneli* uses their self-organized ban signs to establish a common sense against the alcohol consumption in the neighborhood.

Fences of Beyazıd-ı Cedid Mosque

Mosque regulates...

The local website *Tophanehaber* and the *gençmahalleli* association start a petition in the park and also a twitter hash tag *#camisokağındabarolmaz* (there should not be a bar on a street with a mosque) against alcohol consumption and left rubbish on the street of Beyazıd-ı Cedid and Kılıçalipaşa Mosques which are located on the other side of the main street. *Tophanehaber* also reports that a neighboring bar does not want to let the association to organize a common fast breaking meal on the street. The use of the street by different groups cause conflicts.

petition. photo from tophanehaber.com

"Mosques are irreplaceable places in our neighborhood. They are sacred and deserve all kinds of respect. Alcohol festivals around mosque is disregarding. We will not accept."

"We are looking for authorities, who will be against the people transforming the streets of mosques into a street of bars."
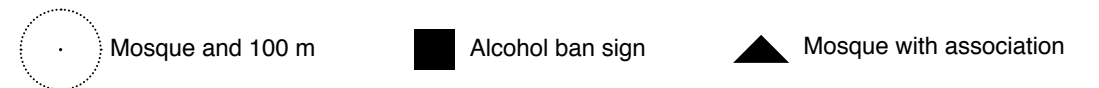

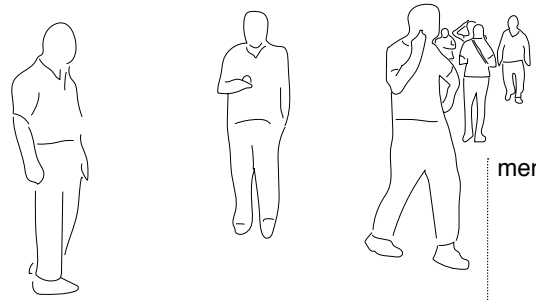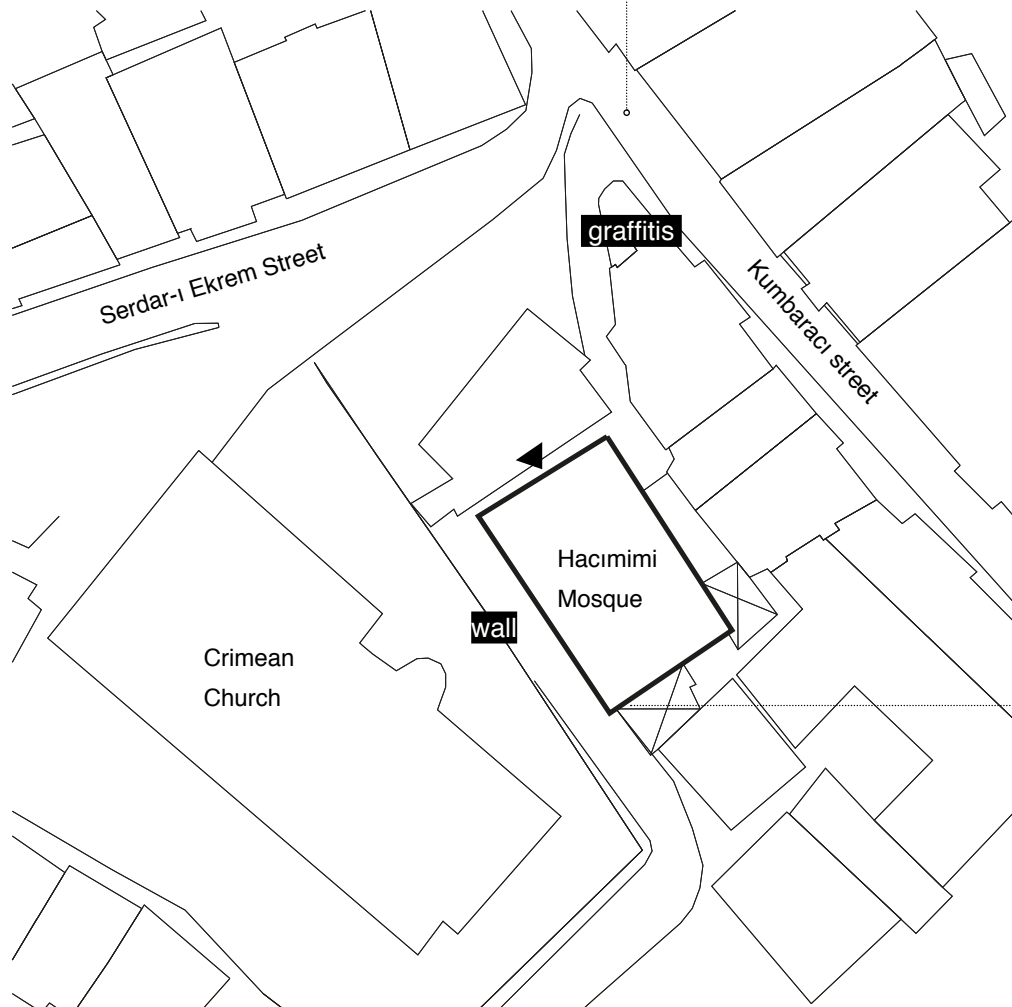"They are drinking alcohol and leaving the bottles next to the mosque. Is it freedom or rampage?

Surrounding of Beyazıd-ı Cedid and Kılıçali Paşa Mosques is transformed into tavern..."

Mosques in Tophane

Hacımimi Mosque

> Park 112

Kılıçali Paşa Mosque

Beyazıd-ı Cedid Mosque

> Park 112

⠒ Mosque and 100 m   ■ Alcohol ban sign   ▲ Mosque with association
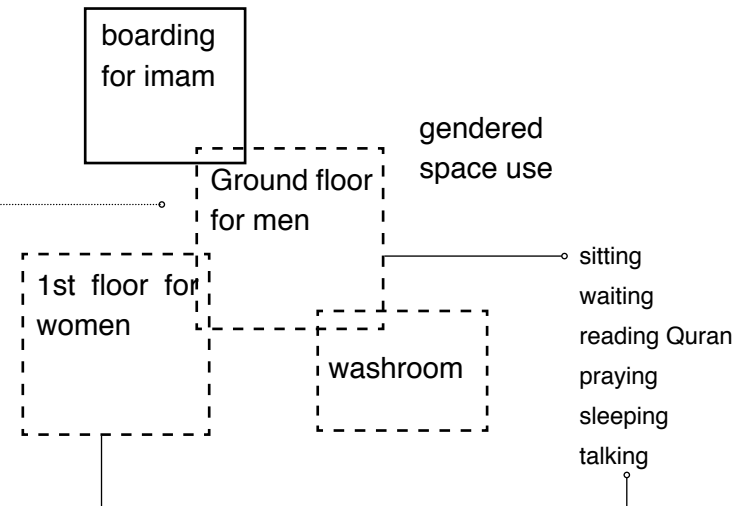
men coming out from friday pray

The visitors

The Hacimimi Mosque has the capacity for 200 people. The visitors of the mosque consist of Shafiis and Hanafis, which are the two of four religious Sunni Islamic schools of jurisprudence.

During Friday prays are the mosque usually full, though on other days it has 20-30 visits from the neighborhood. *Müftülük* (office of mufti) has organized *khutbah* from a female *hoca* every Wednesday for women. Besides, in Ramadan nearly 200 women meet daily in the mosque for reading Quran together.

Despite of the mosques' porous boundaries to the Muslims, the mosques in Tophane, regulate the accessibility of the neighborhood through turning their surroundings into a sacred place in *Tophaneli's* perception and mark borders for some practices, like drinking alcohol in public space.

graffitis

Serdar-ı Ekrem Street

Kumbaracı street

Hacımimi Mosque

wall

Crimean Church

boarding for imam

gendered space use

Ground floor for men

1st floor for women

washroom

sitting
waiting
reading Quran
praying
sleeping
talking

3s.

Situation:

Negotiating how to pray

Negotiating how to pray

Every Ramadan women come together in mosques as well as at neighbors' home to read the Quran together, which practice is called *mukabele*. A woman reads loudly one chapter in Quran and the others listen. When I met a woman who was going to Hacımimi Mosque for *mukabele,* I decided to join this ritual to observe better how woman are organized.

I received support from my mother, whose appearance at first maintains a similar profile with G. She asked G. if we could join the mukabele if outsiders were allowed. She answered, of course, we can join, that they do not have such restrictions. We should come especially at *Kadir Gecesi*, which is the last day of *mukabele*. At that day they finish the last chapter of Quran and pray in common afterward.

The *mukabele* begins at 2 o'clock; we arrive half an hour before at the mosque. A woman asks in jest "Where you have been until this time?". It is obvious for everybody that we are there for the first time at the last meeting. My mother has a small Quran with her, the same woman suggests me to bring her a big one from the mosque's shelves. However, which I pick has already an owner, so I take another.

She also asks about, why we came for *mukabele* to Tophane and where we are coming from because of curiosity. Our Arabian root from Tunisia is welcomed from a lady from Siirt. The lady next to us come from Giresun, from the black sea region, tell us also in jest, that "it is okay to be Arab but not be like these in the neighborhood". These conversations make it clear; the ethnic identity is one of the ways to evaluate the diversity in so-called *Tophaneli* conservative community.

Everyone take special Quran reading desk and sit in a circle around the walls. Taking the shoes off, and talking about the everyday life in the mosque turns into a threshold, between public and private.
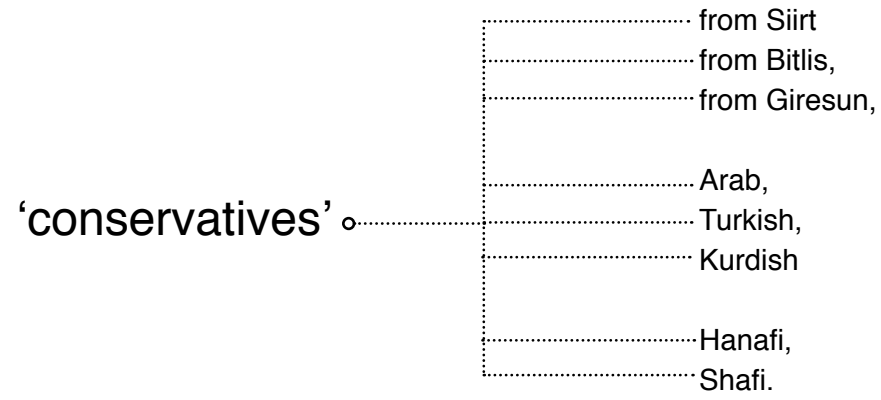
This year, *Müftülük*, religious affairs administration, organizes a female *hoca* giving every Wednesday a sermon. This week's topic is the *Kadir Gecesi* and how we should spend this holy night with prayers.

After she goes, B. starts with the last chapter; in one hour Quran has been read to end. D. suggests the community that we need to do our prostrations first. She get this information recently and therefore wants to share with the others. There are certain 14 verses in Quran when you read these verses you have to prostrate. And it is important to do it before the last pray. Otherwise, according to her it is not 'good' to do the pray for reading the whole Quran.

So begins the discussion, how the Hanafis and Shafis can pray (do their prostrations) at same time by different ways. After a while it has been negotiated: Hanafis are going to prostrate on the ground floor, and Shafiis are going to do it on the upper floor.

The ritual, *Mukabele* creates a temporary threshold. An everyday practice like going to mosque and reading Quran in common becomes a negotiation based in-between space and time, where the otherness is experienced even in a group, which is so-called 'conservatives' and seen as a homogeneous community from the outside.

The 'composite' identity of the 'community' in *mukabele*

Finding a spatial solution inside of the mosque

'conservatives' ○········· from Siirt
from Bitlis,
from Giresun,

Arab,
Turkish,
Kurdish

Hanafi,
Shafi.

Shafis pray in the 1st floor

Hanafis pray in the ground floor

Inside the borders is not homogeneous, there is also internal 'composite'.

The threshold can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, practice or an event.

The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibility and temporality.

The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

The users of the some mosques prefer to be a closed group and establish associations.

On contrary, Hacimimi mosque asserts to be open for all. The visitors of the Hacimimi mosque have the heterogeneity. They are Shafiis and Hanafis, two different Islamic schools in Sunni denomination of Islam.

The associations are the controller of the public space in this case aiming to prevent the alcohol consumption in the neighborhood around the mosques.

At the same time, in the Muslim community in Tophane can one also experience the 'otherness' such as in the event of *Mukabele* in Ramadan, because this so-called homogeneous group is also diverse through Hanafi and Shafii identities.

Friday pray is also a ritual makes the 'otherness' visible in everyday life with changing the rhythm for one hour every week.

The porosity changes from mosque to mosque in Tophane. For example the Kadiriler Dervish Lodge seems to be closed to the 'other' according to next door neighbor, who says: "They are open but to themselves."

On the other hand, the *Mukabele*, reading Quran together in the mosque by women, becomes temporary gathering place.

The *Mukabele* in mosque shows how negotiation is needed in the seemingly homogeneous community, and how it is possible to solve the problem spatially.

4.

The Neighborhood House

The Neighborhood House as a public building is a place of political relations in Tophane.

The Neighborhood House

The Neighborhood House is one of the fifteen public buildings of the municipality in Beyoğlu district, located in the park in Tophane.

The new-built Ottoman-style building makes the change in the neighborhood observable, according to Tan:

> "The change began when the 'rather ordinary' little house of the muhtar (municipal officer responsible for and elected by the neighborhood) was converted into an Ottoman-style wooden house. The whole process was finalized within a few weeks. The structure is now shining in the middle of Tophane Park, fulfilling the desire for the revitalization of "pure" Turkish identity." (Tan, 2007: 487)
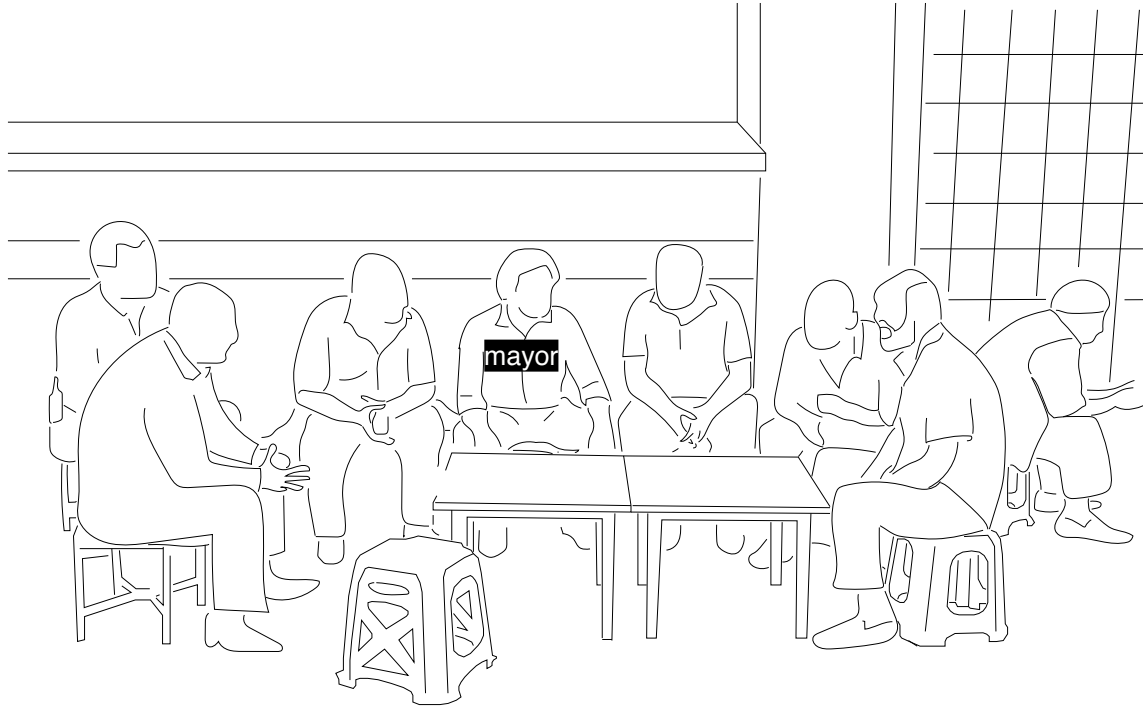
Tan thinks, the image of the neighborhood is influenced by the local municipality in a process, to transform it into a conservative, pro-Islamic area, although it remains diverse, with Romani, Ottoman Greek, Kurdish and other communities living in the neighborhood (ibid., 2011: 149).

Besides weekly 'people's parliament' meetings the Neighborhood House hosts the offices of Hacimimi and Kemankeş Mahallesi *muhtars*. The *muhtar* as the elected local authority has an important role in the neighborhood. He or she is usually known for knowing everyone in the mahalle. It was, for example, enough for the policeman, who questions me for taking pictures of a protest on the street that the *muhtar* could identify me as a student researching in neighborhood.

At the same time, the Neighborhood House is a gathering place for the women in Tophane. Municipality organizes tailoring classes, literacy courses and Quran courses for women and children, who have residence documents in Beyoğlu.

Apart from that, the building hosts the only kindergarten in Tophane, which creates a network of children in the neighborhood and the parents and creates an interface between municipality and the residents.

Beyoğlu mayor discussing with the men in the park

Women and children in the neighborhood house

mayor

BEYOĞLU BELEDİYESİ
TOPHANE SEMTKONAĞI

SEMT KONAKLARI

"Mahallemiz evimiz..."

"Our neighborhood is our home..."

mahalleli*

accessibilty

documents

residence document

ID

poverty certificate

accessibilty

soup kitchen

laundry

primary care clinic

kindergarden

Offices of muhtars

clothing support for children

home care services

food aid

supermarket shopping support card

need for...

place in a senior center for a family member

job

health care support

muhtar

assembly member

threshold

cellphone

accessibilty

Tuesdays, between 10:00 - 12:00 at Tophane The Neighborhood's House

municipality of Beyoğlu

PEOPLE'S ASSEMBLY OF BEYOĞLU
Tophane Region

"we have solved *teyzeciğim,* you will have your card tomorrow"

list of the people attended 'parliament'

4s.

Situation:

Attending 'People's Parliament'

Attending 'People's Parliament'

During my dérive in Tophane, I came across a banner of people's parliament on the mosque wall; "People's Parliament, every Tuesday, between 10 am and 12 am in the Neighborhood house". Following Tuesday I attended the parliament and for an opportunity to observe the situation.
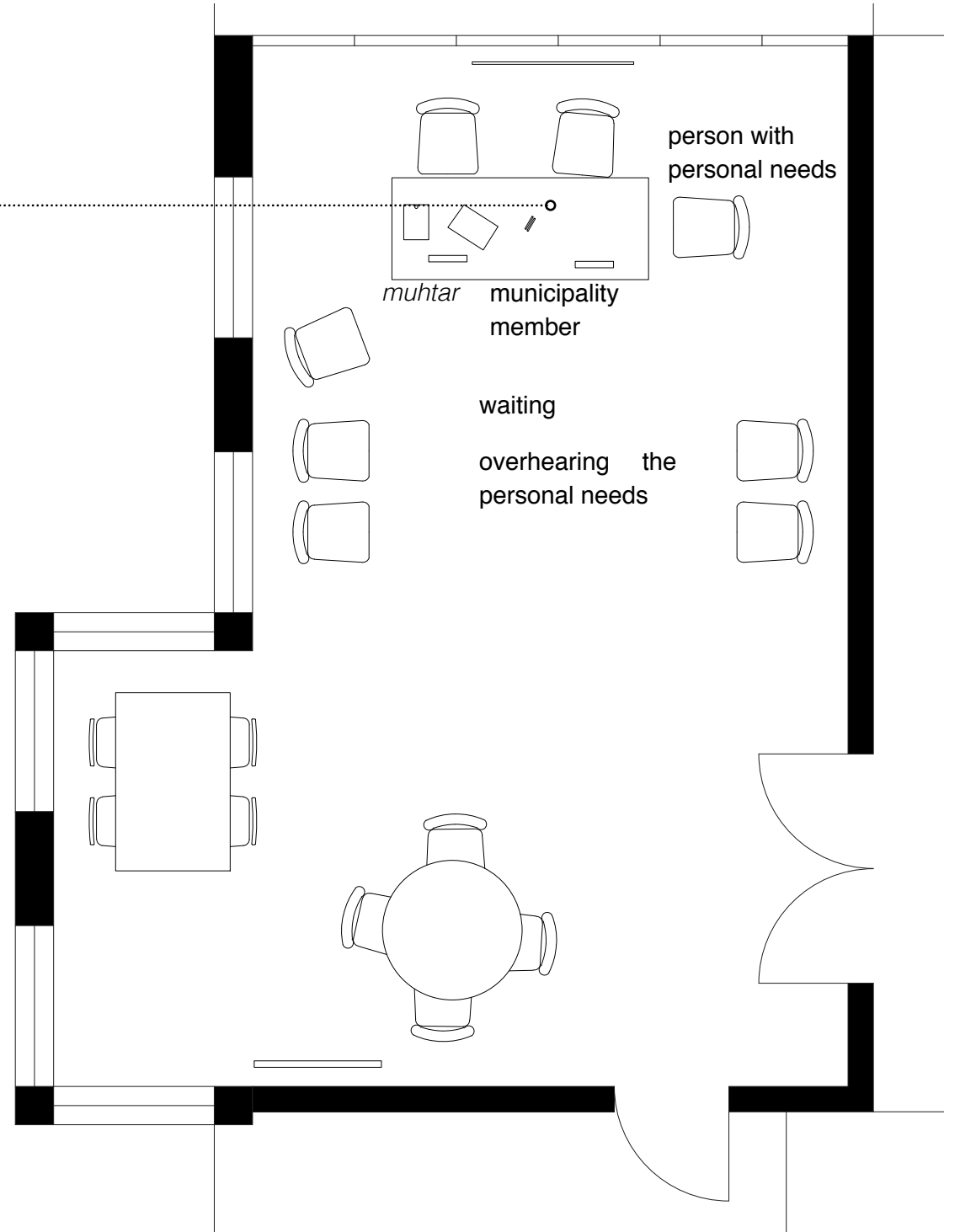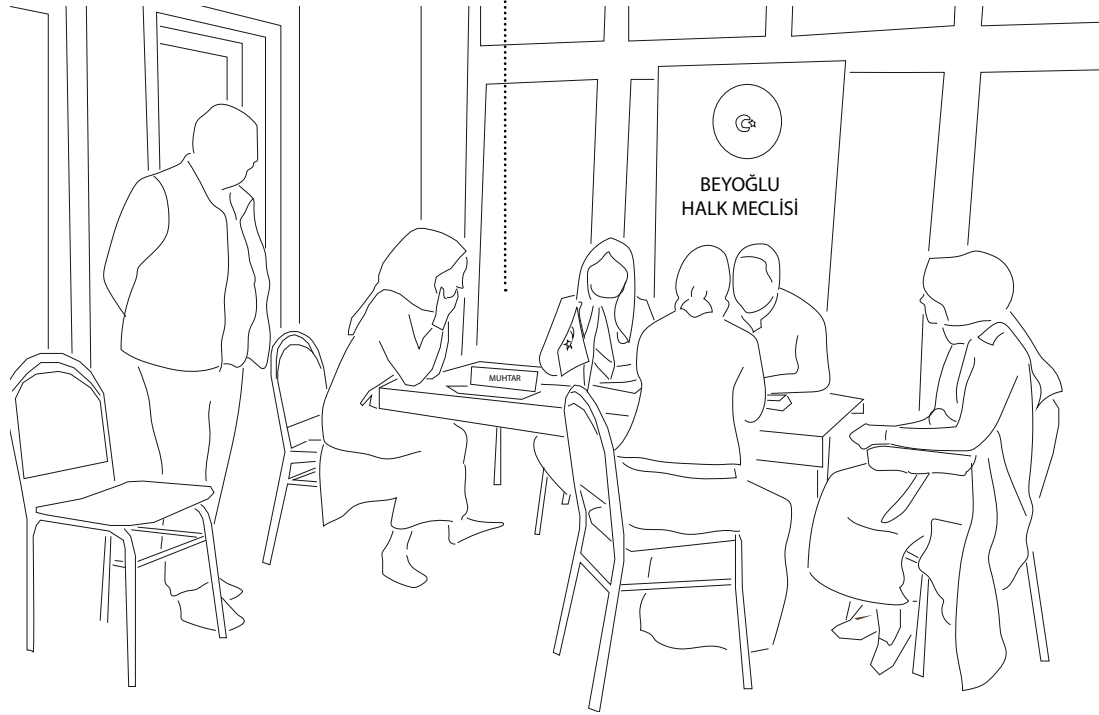
The parliament is convened in the 3rd floor of the building, on top of Hacimimi and Kemankeş *Mahallesi muhtars*' rooms and health care center.

Furnishing of the room is not convenient for a round table discussion, as one would expect from a meeting called "people's parliament". The room is organized very hierarchical, the chair of the municipality member and the *muhtar* is well defined with their own tables with their position tags and the flag behind them. The municipality member, who usually attends the parliament was not there because of a funeral. Two or three people come to ask him, it seems, he solves many 'problems'. After the *muhtar* and the municipality member come, people began approaching them one by one and telling about their personal needs in turn; such as a need for a place in a senior center for an elderly father, because the care of him causes problems. Others in the room listen in the things told and get every detail. This obligatory transparency can be seen in a way as violence: "Transparency makes human being glassy. Therein lies its violence." (Chul Han, 2015: 12)

At one moment, it is my turn and I have to disclose my interest as a researcher. This is not welcomed. I am told I need to have a document from my university. I explain I have no political agenda. Neither they do, they say. Then it is okay for me to stay.

The 'people's parliament' is not a place for discussion and negotiation. It deepens the patronage relations between the government and people, as personal requests are granted, a relation based on sense of obligation is constituted.

On the other hand, one expects from the concept of parliament at least a discussion about some problem in the neighborhood. Sadly, I miss the examine the openness of the event, while I open my researcher identity instantly. As the officers explain, they did not ask anyone, about their political identity, but the community seems to be very homogeneous thus far. Nothing about collaboration and negotiation is to find in this 'people's parliament', although the idea of having a in-between place and time like the name promises, could be the threshold for the collaboration concept of Terkessidis (cf. 2015). Terkessidis stipulate collaboration for holding the diversity, in his word parapolis, while many problems have to be dealt with at once, many voices are heard at the same time, and many demands are communicated at any time. (ibid.: 9)

BEYOĞLU
HALK MECLİSİ

MUHTAR

person with
personal needs

muhtar   municipality
member

waiting

overhearing   the
personal needs

Inside the borders is not homogeneous, there is also internal 'composite'.

The threshold can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, practice or an event.

The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibility and temporality.

The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

The political identity, even the form of the building, mark the social boundary in the neighborhood. At the same time, the health care center, kindergarten, the help organization to poor neighbors enable a way of communication between the authority and the neighbors, this diversity provides internal multiplicity.

'People's parliament' every Tuesday is an event where people meet. According to the *muhtar* and municipality member: they are the thresholds of the municipality and providing its accessibility for the people. Besides *muhtars* have also the role of 'controller' in neighborhoods.

The porosity of this accessibility depends on the power relations and on the connections with political persons in the neighborhood. Otherwise, the documents like residence paper, poverty documents and Identification cards make the service accessible.

The Neighborhood House provides a zone for negotiation through the "People's Parliament" organization but it is not a place, where people discuss the problems in their neighborhood, rather it is a place, where patronage relations with the government are reproduced.
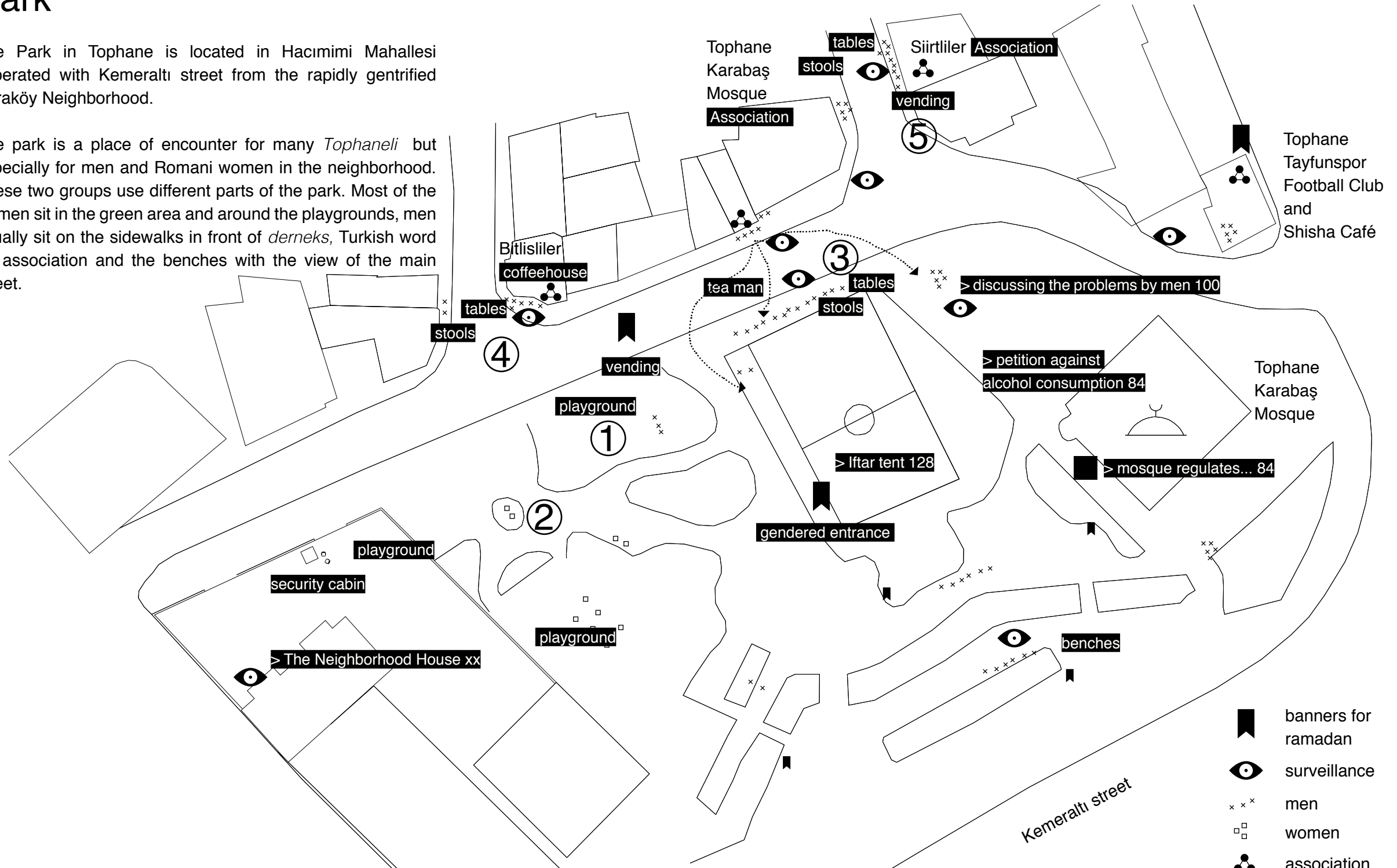
5.

Park

The Park is a place of encounter but also where social boundaries are visible.

Park

The Park in Tophane is located in Hacımimi Mahallesi seperated with Kemeraltı street from the rapidly gentrified Karaköy Neighborhood.

The park is a place of encounter for many *Tophaneli* but especially for men and Romani women in the neighborhood. These two groups use different parts of the park. Most of the women sit in the green area and around the playgrounds, men usually sit on the sidewalks in front of *derneks,* Turkish word for association and the benches with the view of the main street.

tables
stools
Siirtliler Association

vending

Tophane
Karabaş
Mosque
Association

⑤

Tophane
Tayfunspor
Football Club
and
Shisha Café

Bitlisliler
coffeehouse

tables

③

> discussing the problems by men 100

tea man

tables

stools

tables
stools

④

vending

> petition against
alcohol consumption 84

Tophane
Karabaş
Mosque

playground

①

> Iftar tent 128

②

> mosque regulates... 84

playground

security cabin

gendered entrance

playground

> The Neighborhood House xx

benches

Kemeraltı street

banners for
ramadan

surveillance

men

women

association

Dwelling

K. describes Tophane: "I like my neighborhood very much. I was at my son's home in Kasımpaşa for five days. His flat is in the basement, I really got bored. I miss my *mahalle*. This is like heaven, this is beautiful, I do not like Kasımpaşa." After greeting a woman, she adds: "Look, they recognize that I am not here for a while, they love me. I make people laugh." She sits usually on the pavement in front of her house and also in the park.

Most of the Romani families moved out from Tophane to Kasımpaşa (*Muhtar* 2017), however, they are still visible in the public space by dwelling in the park and on the streets.

①

②
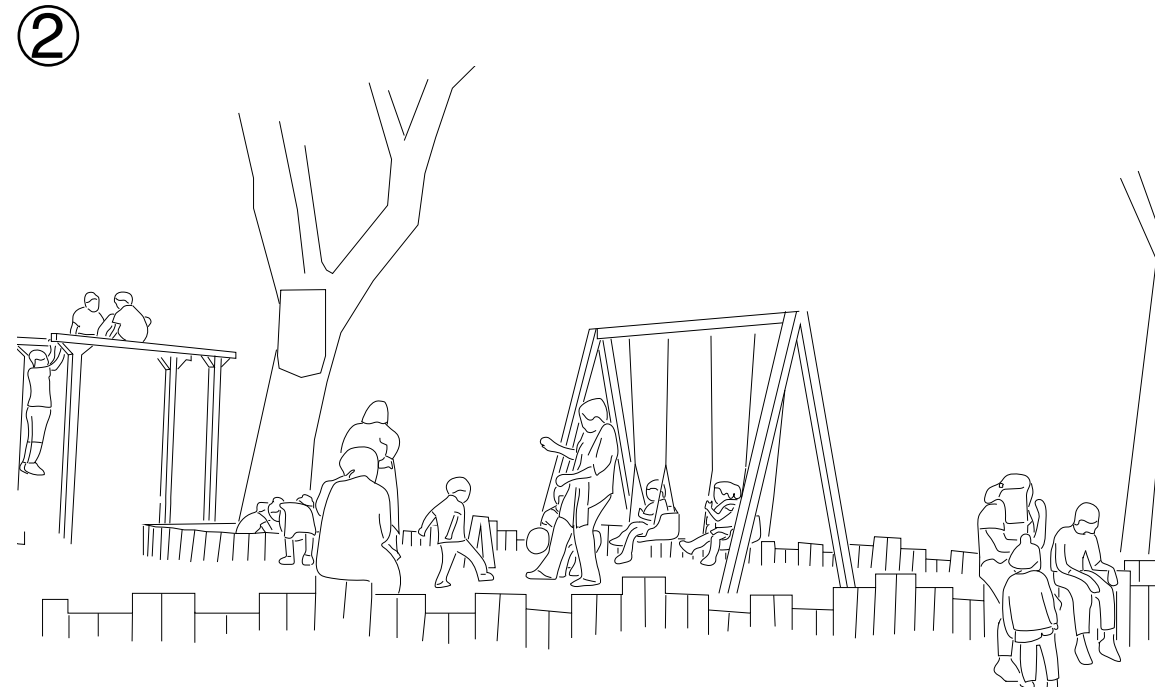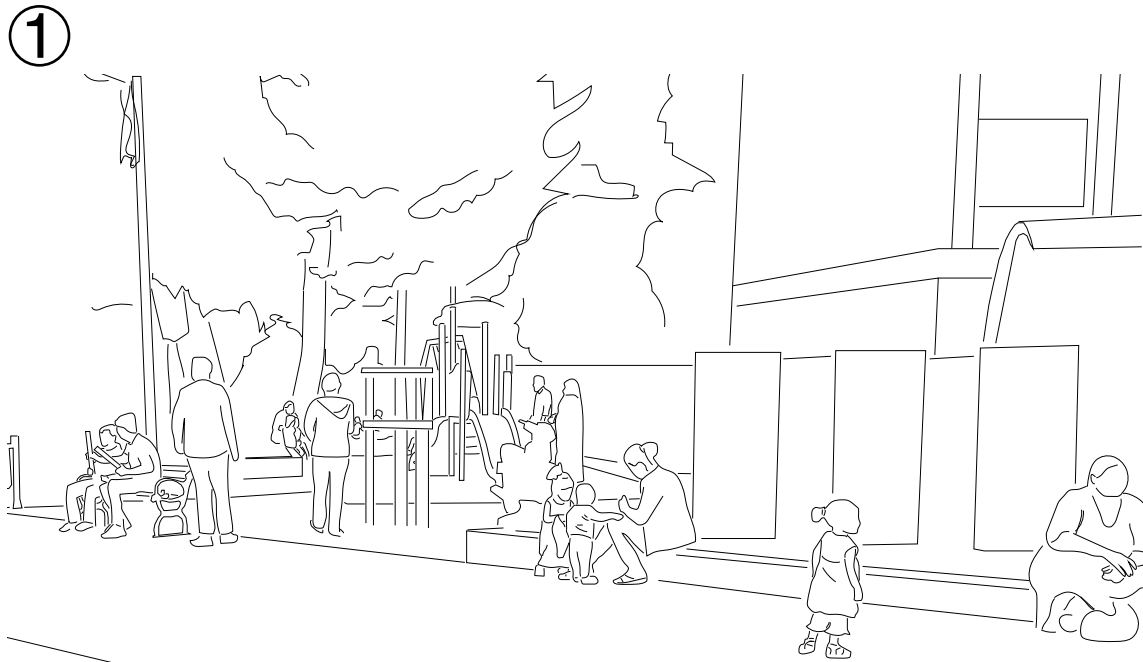
Regulating public space

Being visible in public space through banners can be considered a regulation strategy in Tophane.

"Negotiating public spaces has become part of the realities of everyday life in globalized urban spaces. It is connected to the politics of identity and consists of the struggles for territorial control between individuals and communities of different ethnicities, races, cultural backgrounds or religious orientations." (Fenster 2006: 113)

Best examples for the act of controlling are the banners of Gönülbağı Association alias *Dernek* for the Ramadan and alcohol ban signs on the mosques' walls, makes the 'outsider' sure, in this neighborhood they need to 'follow the rules'. At the same time municipality also uses the football field fences as a communication tool also through banners.
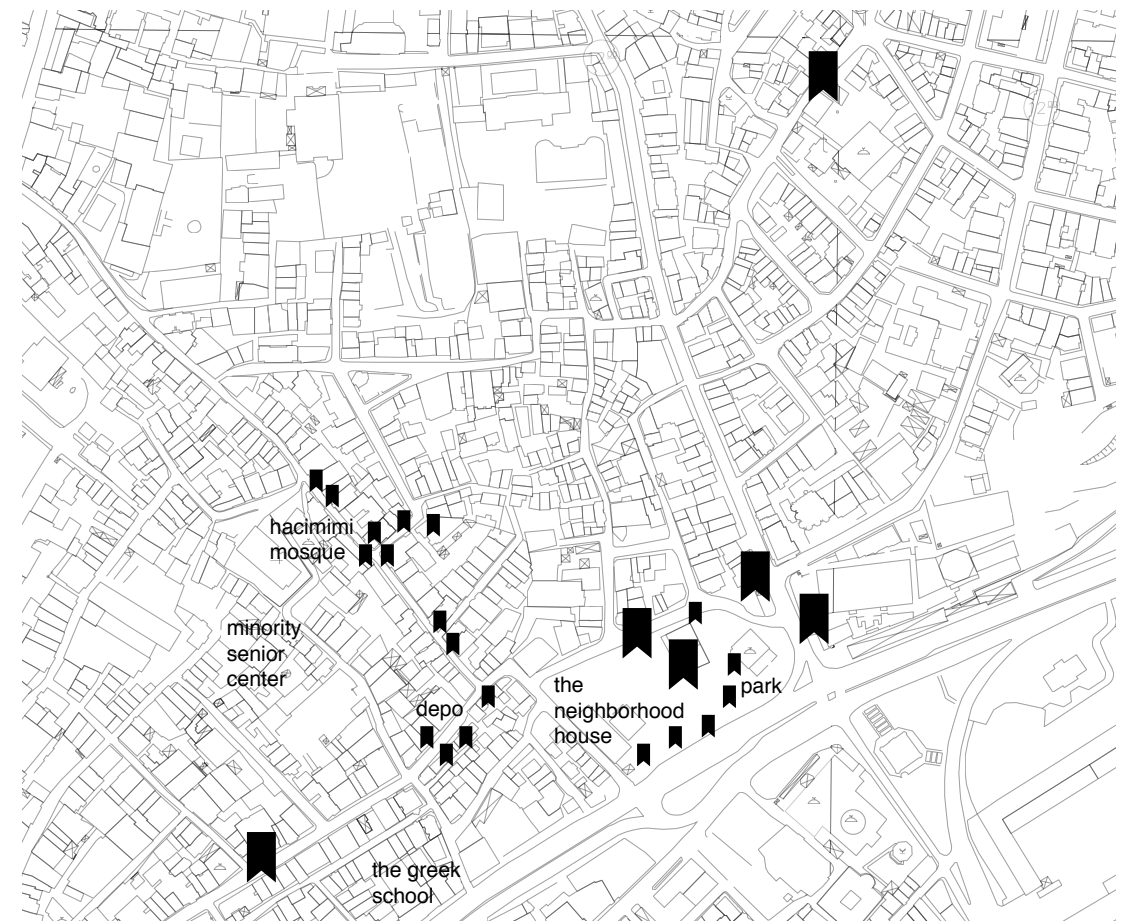
Controlling through gaze

When the people in Tophane speaks about *mahalle* and *mahalle ruhu*, this can be roughly be translated as 'neighborhood spirit', they mean usually that everyone in the neighborhood know each other, exchange greetings and help each other. This practice of knowing each other means that the outsiders are quickly spotted and potential threats to the 'peace of the *mahalle*' are diverted.

The local men sitting in the park and in the coffeehouses seem to assume that their duty is to provide the security of their neighborhood. Therefore, I also as an outsider, was watched closely, questioned about, who I am and what I am doing in Tophane many times. That is also characterized *mahalle baskısı* by constant surveillance of public spaces in an area through the power of the gaze (Borovalı, 2015: 93). It is almost impossible to move in the neighborhood without crossing the park and coffeehouses, where men are sitting and observing the passers-by.

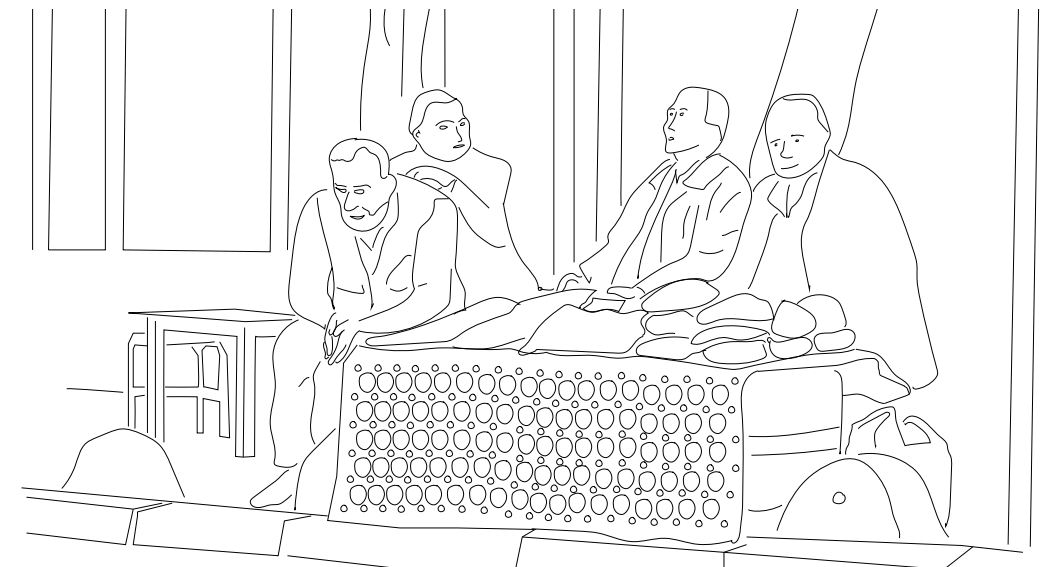For the men in Tophane going to coffeehouses (*Hemşehri* Associations) around the park is both, an everyday practice, which enhance the solidarity, and also a tool to keep the control in the neighborhood through gaze and information exchange.

④

③

⑤

Dernek

Park is the center of the neighborhood, where the questions about who is visible in public space come in the discussion.

Mahalle as a an urban enclave tends to become the prevailing mode of circumscribing a common world for people to recognize and, indeed, to "inhabit".

> "Common worlds tend to be defined and reproduced as worlds with recognizable boundaries. In them belonging crafts consent and consent crafts belonging." (Stavrides 2016: 31)

Tophane can be seen as a common world for the *Tophaneli*, and people who comes to live in Tophane need to acknowledge the living 'codes' of Tophane.

> "Within the boundaries of a common world, people accept and perform shared identities, shared habits and, often, shared values. As subjects of belonging to this common world, people tend to experience it as explicitly separated from a hostile or simply alien outside. Participationg in a common world is often connected to practices of securing the limits of this world and to practices that reproduce this separation." (ibid.: 31ff)

"Tophane is male, macho and conservative" says A. in Depo. At the same time, a woman from Bitlis who lives in Tophane for 41 years describes the neighborhood: "Tophane is like our village. We can breathe in here when we come to Tophane. Our *mahalle* is safe and clean. You know, there is *cemaat* women and girls can walk freely in the streets, nobody can bother you. When they assault a woman, *cemaat* does not forgive.[...] *Cemaat* is everywhere but yes their *dernek* local is in the park."

Dernek is the turkish word for association.

Cemaat is the Turkish word for community.

N. says about the community: "I am a *Tophaneli* and was in this community. You can call it community, dernek, group, local, I would like to use *dernek*. There are 8-9 associations in Tophane. People need to establish *hemşehri,* fellow countrymen associations. The flats are small 1+1 in here, they need place for performing observances like extending someone's condolences."

The concept of *Dernek* includes *Gönülbağı* association, *gençmahalleliler*, *Tophanehaber*, *hemşehri* associations, mosque associations and Tophane's football club.

Beside *hemşehri* associations, there is a football club, Tophane Tayfunspor local in the park. A former player A. who runs today a shop in Tophane with his son, mentions that the building of the club is also a gathering place for *dernek*, since they opened there a shisha cafe. "Women coming as customers need to be watch out and pay attention the way they sit". He adds: "*Cemaat* disturbs the shops here, why do you sit like that, why you do this. [...] The other day there was a man with a beer bottle in his hand, they gave him a hard time. It is wrong, you cannot interfere with people like that."

There is a strong sense of community in Tophane and the park and its surrounding associations' control, appropriation and solidarity in *mahalle*. The word *mahalle* has some specific connotations, which are not exactly match by the word neighborhood, both support and also control each other (Borovalı, 2015: 91). That can cause also a *mahalle baskısı*, translated literally pressure by the neighborhood.

Dernek

vertical power relations

revealing oneself

political party members

municipality   o- - - - - - - - - - - **visibility** - - - - - - - - - - - on football field's wall in the park

rich neighbors

banners about ramadan   o- - - - - - - - in the neigbourhood

regulating

Gönülbağı association   o- - - - **visibility** - - - - Tophanehaber local media website

controlling

cooperation

*unlimited freedom is violence

SINIRSIZ ÖZGÜRLÜK ŞİDDETTİR

ordering   sticker

*Ramadan, we the whole neighbourhood have been waiting you.

visibility

Hemşehri associations   o

Mosque associations   o o

Genç mahalleliler (young locals association)   o- - - - - football tournament between neighbourhoods religious activities

People from Siirt Halenze association

Bayezid-i Cedid Mosque   o- - - - - - - - - charity bazaar - - - - saturdays: 17:00

People from Bitlis association

Karabaş Mosque   o- - - - - - - - - - - - coffeehouse - - - - - - shutter - - - - - - - - - - is closed during daytime in ramadan and friday pray

regulating - - - - - - - - - - - alcohol ban signboard - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - sacred public space   rules

Tophaneli

5s.

Situation:

Organizing common meals

Organizing common meals

Ramadan is a period; in this month the sensibilities become sharper. Many restaurants are closed around the park and some writes on the windows, that they are open till the *sahur,* meal eaten before starting fasting at 3 am. *Mahalle* holds on the Ramadan's rhythm.

Like the banners reminding the Ramadan, *Gönülbağı* Association organizes a *iftar* tent in park for ten years. There are two opinions about the *Gönülbağı* association: for some people, they are rich people from Tophane, who wants to help their neighbors. For others, they have also connections with the government. Financial support of the daily *iftar* meal is provided by varied people, each gives 10.000 Turkish Lira for one day. The name of the supporters are not made public in the common pray at the end of the meal.

The football field is transformed to a *iftar* tent; the place enables to more than 600 people warm food for 30 days in Ramadan. As Stavrides speaks about thresholds and otherness, he gives the example of common meals:

> "Otherness is often experiences as the inhabiting of in-between spaces and times. In a self organizing neighbourhood these spaces and times are created in assemblies, demonstrations or common meals." (2010: 13)

The common *iftar* can be considered as a threshold, where the 'otherness' experienced. It is not only for the residents of Tophane, people from other neighborhoods are also welcomed. However, a woman warns people while waiting the *iftar* time, that 'they' should watch out their bags, because 'outsiders' are coming also to the meal.

The park in Ramadan is more crowded than regular season. Many people start to wait from 6 pm till the meal at 9 pm.

There is a dessert stand behind the football field for Ramadan, where usually men sit and drink tea. At the same time, the Mosque Association works normally as coffeehouse is closed and took down the shutters. However, men continue to sit and wait. In front of the shutters has *Genç mahalleliler* Association a stand; the children sell *pide*, special bread for Ramadan and they aim to use the money for the poor in *mahalle*.

At 5 pm comes the food in a van, three persons in orange uniform set the tables and serve the food before people taking seat in the tent. Some children in the park help them putting bottles of water and coke on every table.

Half an hour before the *ezan*, people form a line in front of the football field. Although there is gendered entrance, man, who come with his wife allowed to sit together during the dinner. There are six lines of tables and only one of them is reserved for the 'families' and 'women'. Firstly, women take their seats and than men are allowed to come inside the tent. People, who cannot find a place to sit, take the meal and eat outside in the park.

On the table coke and salats are to share, this need to share something makes people to speak with each other, also argue and negotiate about the portions.

The practice of eating common meal strengthens the bonds thats make up a *mahalle* and confers a sense of solidarity and reminds the 'newcomers' that Ramadan and its sensibilities have an important role in everyday life in Tophane.

The iftar tent as a place of encounter

temporary construction
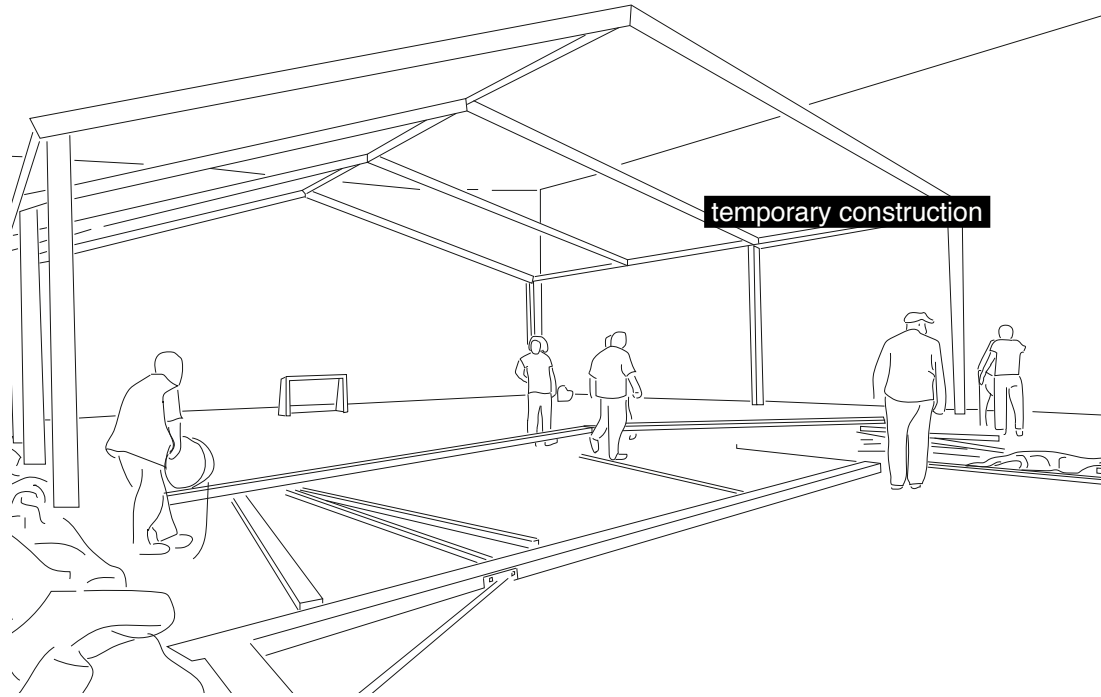
The tent is constructed with the help of *Tophaneli.*

Children sells *pides* for solidarity.

Children help the organization of the meal.

Residents of Tophane wait for the *iftar*.
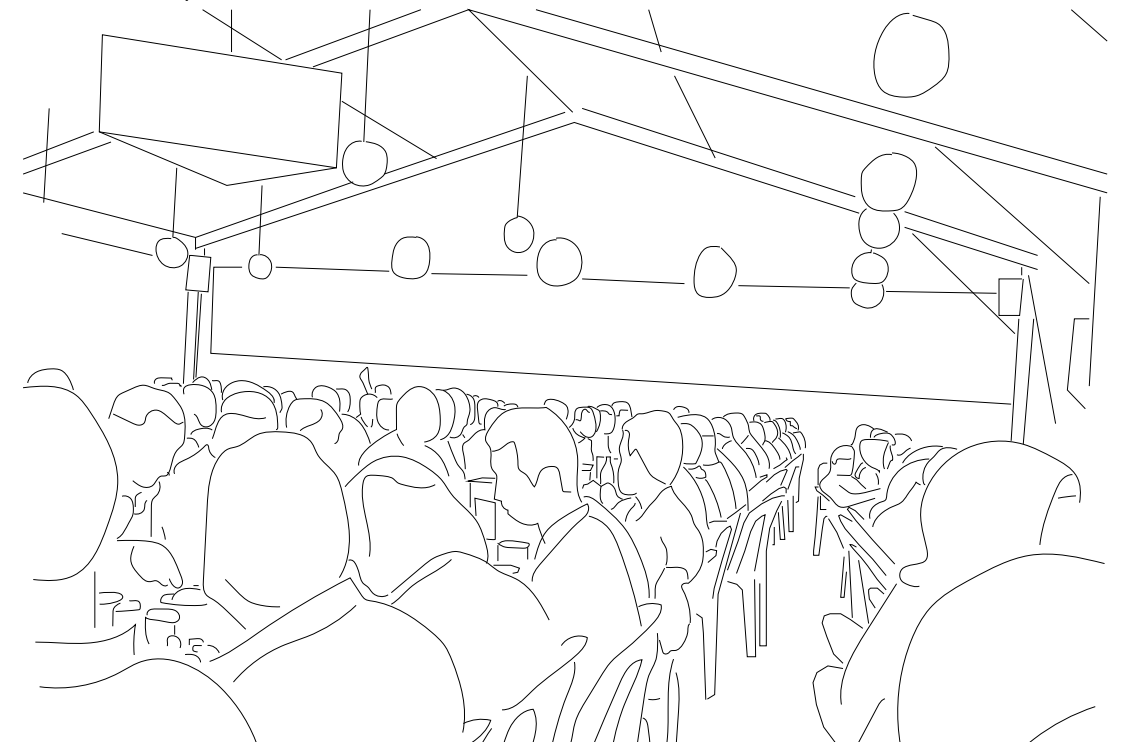
People have common meal in the neighborhood.

130

131

Inside the borders is not homogeneous, there is also internal 'composite'.

The threshold can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, practice or an event.

The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibility and temporality.

The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

The interest of protecting the lifestyle of *mahalle*, the framed identity one could say, rules in park so in public space in the neighborhood. The banners for the Ramadan and the *Tophanehaber* local news website mark this social boundary, and the men sitting in the coffeehouses and different *hemşehri* associations are the checkpoints of this community in Tophane (cf. Stavrides). Even these heterogeneity of actors makes the internal 'composite' visible.

Everyday practices such as sitting and drinking tea in park blur the boundaries inside and outside. The by *dernek* organized *iftar* tent and the common meal every evening in Ramadan, can be seen as a place of encounter, where the *Tophaneli* and people from neighboring mahalles; from outside homogeneous but 'composite' identities comes together.

The porosity of the park and the event 'organizing common meal' pretends to be open. But the religious identity itself creates a boundary, which is in Ramadan and during Friday prayers more rigid and gets sharper through regulations like banners, different opening hours.

The dominant user group of the park has 'framed' identity; the religious allegiance is chosen for the representation. The framed perception of lifestyle in *mahalle* composes conflicts with the newcomers. The situation of the 'appropriation' to the *mahalle* provides 'otherness' and their 'framed' identity makes negotiation in public space difficult although the park is spatially open, there are social borders to cross.

6.

Depo

Depo is an art institution in Tophane; its avlu makes being in the neighborhood work.

Depo

Depo is the one of the first galleries in Tophane, a former tobacco warehouse located in Lüleci Hendek street. The building was used as a tobacco warehouse until the 1950s.

Since the 9th International Istanbul Biennial in 2005 the old warehouse was periodically used as an exhibition and project space. In 2008 Depo, an initiative of Anadolu Kültür, a not-for-profit organization working in the field of culture, has moved in renovated tobacco warehouse and their first exhibition took place in 2009. Afterwards, Open Radio moved in to the additional building of the old warehouse.

Depo describes itself as "an alternative space within the rapidly institutionalizing and commercializing artistic milieu of Turkey." The primary focus of the place is hosting collaborative projects, organizing workshops with the children in the neighborhood and providing a space for solo and group artists.

The founder of the initiative Anadolu Kültür and Depo O. has tobacco warehouse building over his family. Therefore, he has connections and power to negotiate with the *Tophaneli*.

During the opening of the Depo, the founder asked former football player A. to work in Depo, since he was working with him thereat. A. has refused him unfortunately, the reason was; he did not want to get trouble with the neighbors.

However, Open Radio tried to inform *Tophaneli* after they move in about who they are with the help of a weekly radio program called *"Burası Tophane"* (This is Tophane) that has included interviews with the neighbors.

Although Depo and Open Radio make an effort to establish an elaborated relationship with the neighbors, many other art galleries ignored *Tophaneli* totaly. "They thought: "alternative

Art" is something that *Tophaneli* should be thankful for that"" says Çavdar an urban activist (2010). Depo and the other galleries did not think to inform *Tophaneli* about the transformation process comes with them to the neighborhood and suggest to struggle against the gentrification together, since alternative places would be also displaced like the neighbors, if the rent prices increased (cf. Çavdar 2010).

Hiding

First grand opening of biennial in Depo causes some conflicts in the neighborhood. Therefore, the team decides not to use the main entrance opening to the Lüleci Hendek street. The entrance after this event is moved inside the dead-end street and they start to use a partition during opening at the end of the dead-end street as a result of negotiation with the neighbors.
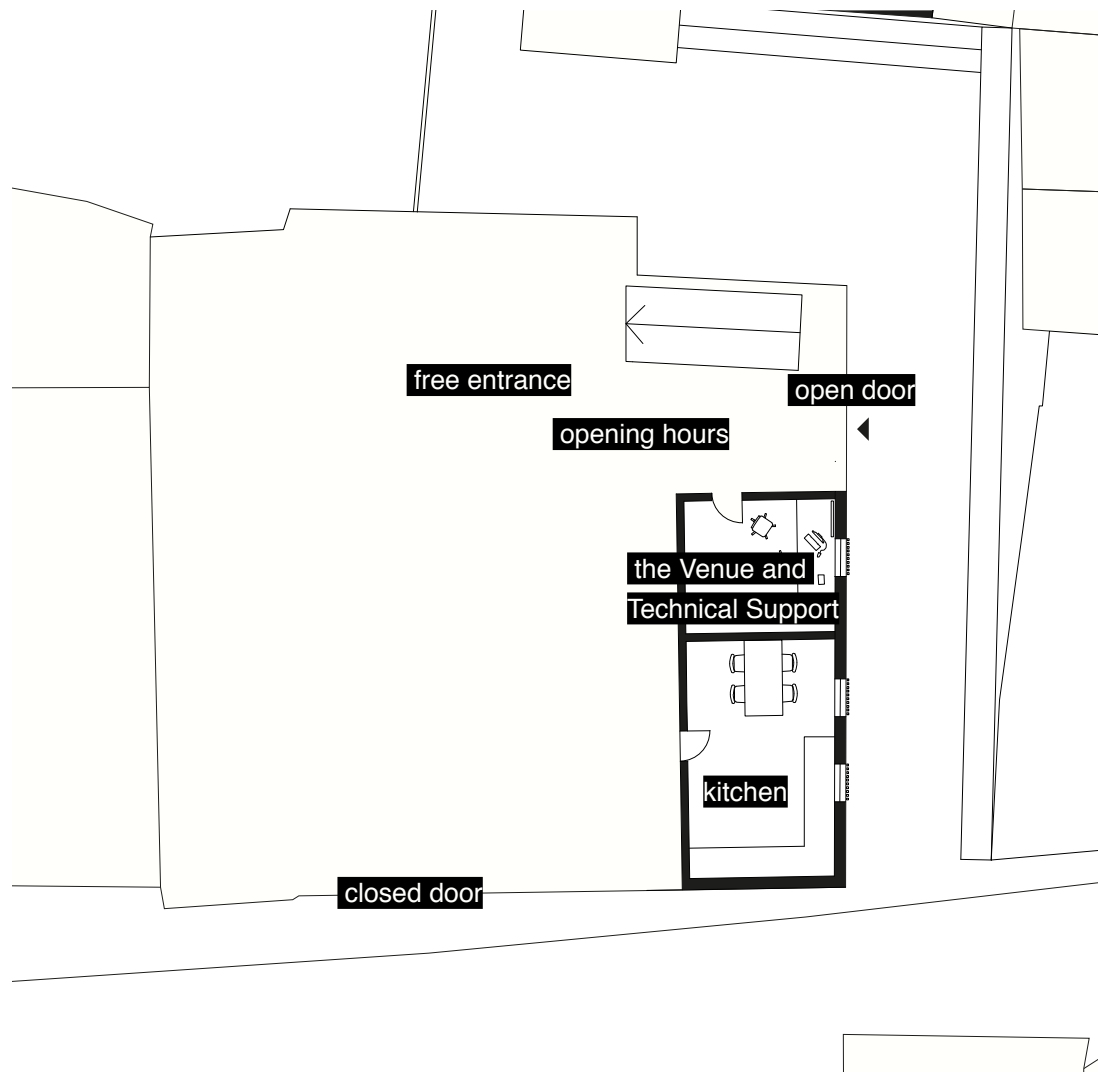
This position of 'pullback' explains also the border definition in Tophane of A. from Depo as the dead-end street including the neighbors in this street. However, 'pullback' causes self-a sense of censorship, too. An artist for example removed the vagina photo from her exhibition at her own request. Then, Depo acts during LGBT exhibitions 'carefully', "because" says A. "their visibility is too much." Another self-censorship example they did not offer alcohol during the opening of the exhibition about Gezi and did not use banners for this exhibition, although A. admits: their communication channels are different from the banners in the neighborhood and not targeting the *Tophaneli*. Otherwise, they call the police just in case during an exhibition about 'Armenian genocide'. And they were attacked by some people because of an exhibition about the Turkish writer Aziz Nesin.

Besides all of this, the exhibition about Gaza and Rachel Core with the participation of her parents is the first event that interests some *Tophaneli*. They got their first visitor from the neighborhood and a *bakkal*, small grocery store want to be sponsor for the exhibition. Having the same interest of same issues become porous threshold.
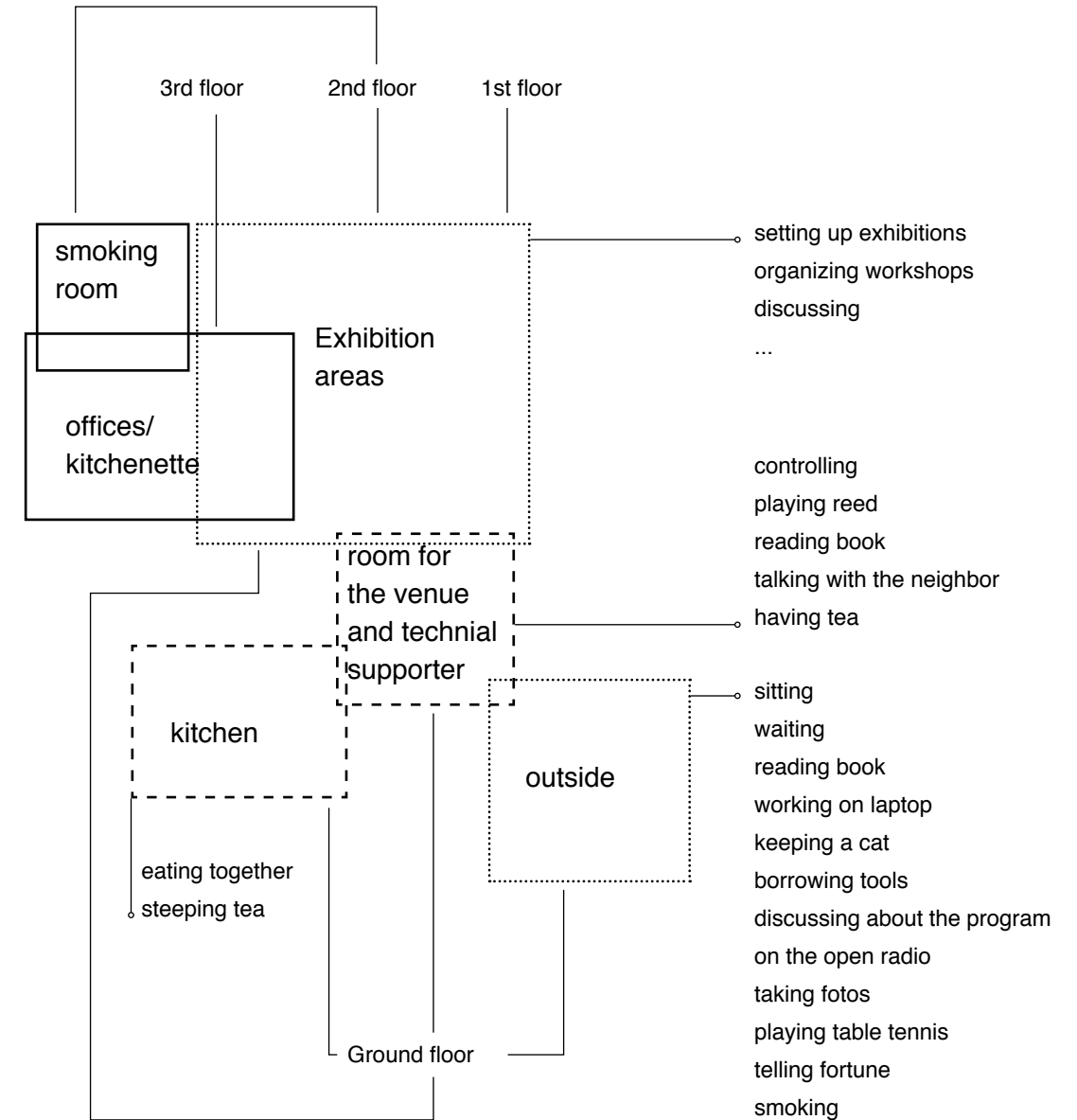
closed door
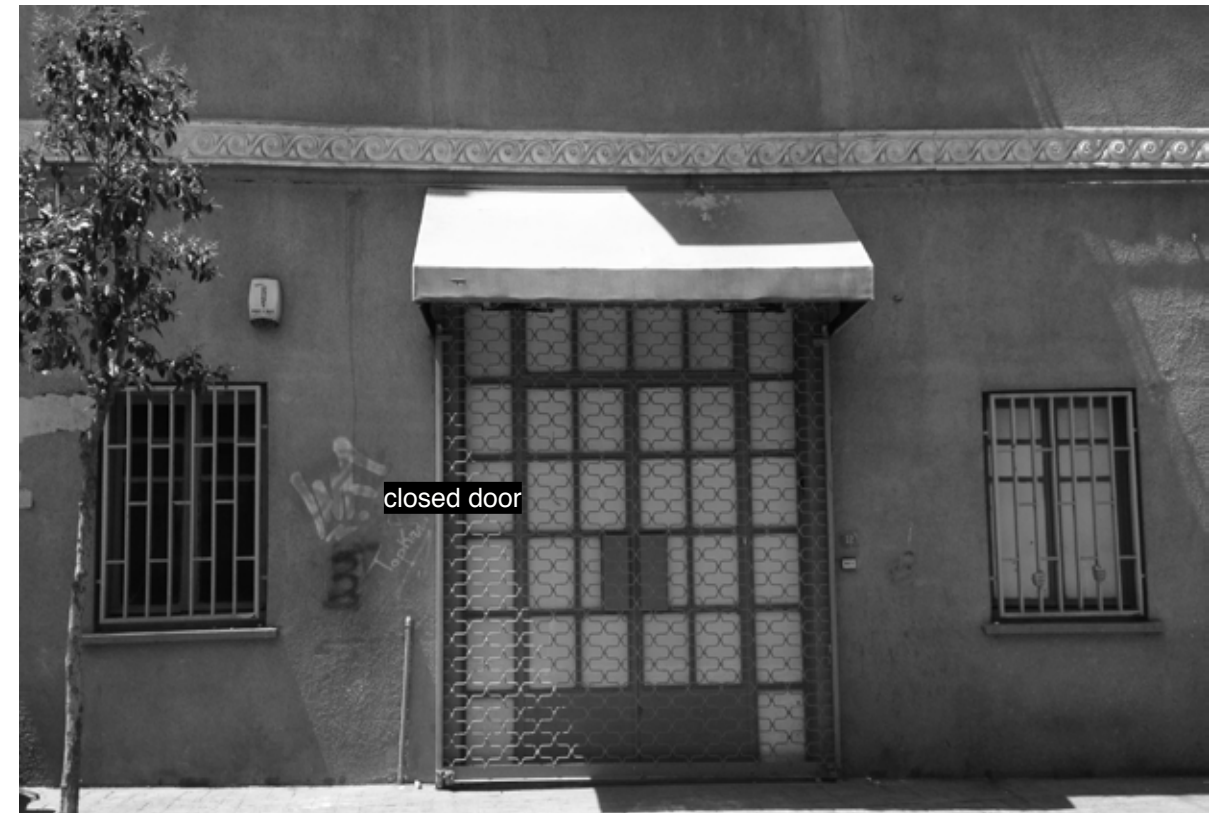
Controlling without being visible

The Venue and Technical Supporter T. allows him control of the access without being visible. His window looking at the entrance of the dead-end street makes possible observing who comes in and out the street. The door is usually open during the visiting hours. T. locks only his room, when he is away.

Visiting hours: Everyday except Mondays between 11:00 - 19:00

free entrance

open door

opening hours

the Venue and Technical Support

kitchen

closed door

3rd floor   2nd floor   1st floor

smoking room

offices/ kitchenette

Exhibition areas

room for the venue and technial supporter

kitchen

outside

eating together
steeping tea

Ground floor

setting up exhibitions
organizing workshops
discussing
...

controlling
playing reed
reading book
talking with the neighbor
having tea

sitting
waiting
reading book
working on laptop
keeping a cat
borrowing tools
discussing about the program
on the open radio
taking fotos
playing table tennis
telling fortune
smoking

6s.

Situation:

Using
Partition

Using partition

Depo uses four exhibition walls as partition during the exhibition openings at the entrance of the dead-end street. The act, using partition can be seen as a separation method. However, it also can be considered as a connection between two social identities in Tophane; namely the gallery visitors and people living in the neighborhood.

> "By choosing two items from the undisturbed store of natural things in order to designate them as 'separate', we have already related them to one another in our consciousness, we have emphasized these two together against whatever lies between them. And conversely, we can only sense those things to be related which we have previously somehow isolated from one another; things must first be separated from one another in order to be together." (Simmel 1997: 64)

The idea of using some exhibition walls as a partition was proposed by the owner of the neighboring café N., because of some complaining *Tophaneli*, who does not want to see people alcohol drinking on the street. N. says: "This is a *mahalle*, alcohol is not legal. You can drink at the Istiklal street, but do not pass here with alcohol in your hand." There is no legislation about consuming alcohol in the housing area. N. adds: "*Tophaneli* thinks then, look, they are drinking but they put a partition, because they respect us."

The partition and using the side door on the dead-end street as entrance give Depo the opportunity to 'close' its door temporarily. While being it still open to its neighbors on the dead-end street.

This conflict moment can provide a negotiation zone like between Depo and *Tophaneli*. Depo's *avlu* as in-between space and the deal using partition during exhibition openings

becomes a porous threshold, since partition do not need walls and can provide temporarily opaqueness between groups but one still do not need to knock a door to come inside, one only need to desire to see the other side; its permeability is more than a wall and door. A temporary partition can be a symbol to manifest the right that "I want to live like this way but in this neighborhood".

Inside the borders is not homogeneous, there is also internal 'composite'.

The threshold can be a person, an institution, a spatial artifact, practice or an event.

The porosity of a threshold depends on flexibility and temporality.

The threshold can produce otherness, but it can also provide a zone for negotiation.

Depo as an art institution, displays the 'composite' of the country with its exhibitions about the minority groups in Turkey.

On the other hand the team is seemingly 'homogeneous' from outside but the definition of its boundaries with its neighbors in *avlu* expands the internal composite.

The venue and technical supporter T. of Depo is a threshold person, who control the porosity of the boundaries but also facilitates the communication with the neighbors, through often and face-to-face relation with them. At the same time the founder of the Depo O. is also a negotiator, since he owns the building from his family and has the social power to negotiate in Tophane.

On the other hand, the exhibition contents about common concerns with *Tophaneli* such as about Gaza create also thresholds and *Tophaneli* visit Depo.

Using temporary partition in *avlu* creates connection points and appropriating the dead-end street as a living-room, as open *avlu* makes crossing border possible for everyone.

Depo has free entrance for the exhibitions and workshops but *Tophaneli* seems to be not interested in most exhibitions of Depo. At the same time Depo shows limited effort to change the situation and open the place to the neighbors.

Using partition at the exhibition openings seems to be a solution of a negotiation process for finding a way of living together.
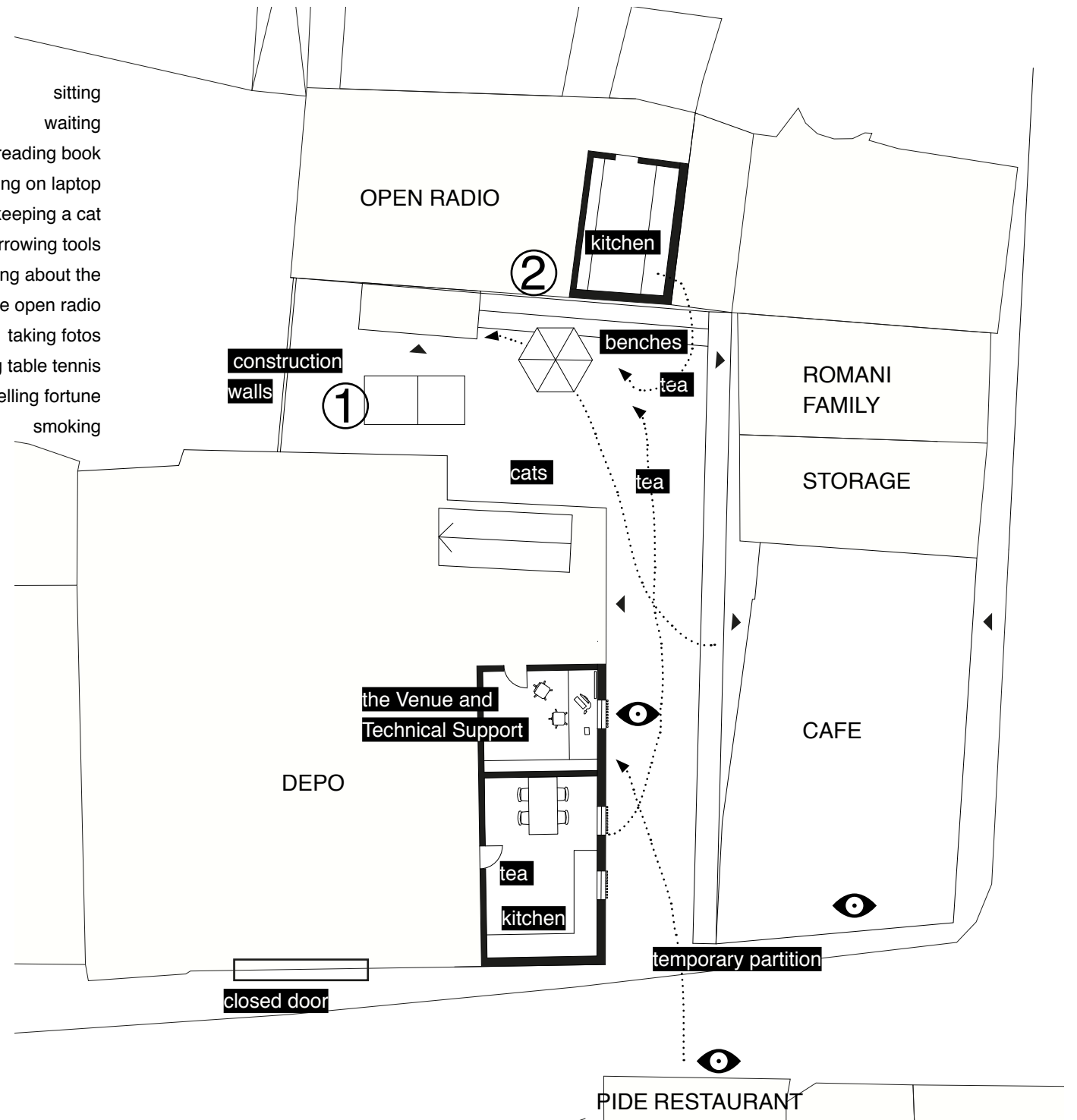
Zoom in:

Being neighbors in the dead-end Street

The micro-neighborhood in
Avlu

"Cities have always been arenas of social and symbolic conflict." (Berking et al., 2006: 9) Tophane and mainly Depo's *avlu* is the location where the conflict between so-called 'intellectuals' by *Tophaneli* and the locals in a being gentrified neighborhood is observable.

Avlu as a shared outdoor space is in a fragile balanced system, a litte bit of everything happens here all at once. "Equilibrium in a social order can sacrifice dissent for the sake of harmony" claims Sennett, on the other hand, it seems the dead-end street allow neighbors to feel safe and secure with the 'others' (2010: 264). Although the community of A. from Depo says that they want to have less contact with *Tophaneli* as far as possible, *avlu* as shared space makes another type of relationship achievable. *Avlu* suits the small, face-to-face, decentralized unit conceptualization of the community mediated across time and distance in everyday life (cf. Young 2010).

sitting
waiting
reading book
working on laptop
keeping a cat
borrowing tools
discussing about the
program on the open radio
taking fotos
playing table tennis
telling fortune
smoking

OPEN RADIO

kitchen

②

benches

construction
walls

①

tea

ROMANI
FAMILY

cats

tea

STORAGE

the Venue and
Technical Support

DEPO

CAFE

tea

kitchen

temporary partition

closed door

PIDE RESTAURANT

Controlling by all through sharing space

The Koltukçular dead-end street, *avlu* works as a common living room for the neighbors, namely Depo, Open Radio, S. and her family, and the café.

The benches provide a sitting place where Open Radio and Depo team spend time in breaks to smoke. They appropriate the place for leisure time with a ping pong table.

"I will take the tea from Open Radio, ours went bad." says T. from Depo. The kitchens on the ground floor of Depo and Open Radio are used in common. Depo offices are on top floor and they have their own small kitchen and smoking room and do not use *avlu* as much as T. who has the 'security' room at the entrance. Tea is always ready in one or the other.

S.'s mother used to work the tobacco storage and her husband M. shines shoes in Karaköy almost everyday. When T. sees them, he usually asks, if they want some tea. The act of drinking tea makes social sharing possible. S. and M. also use the benches in *avlu*, host guests in there. They organized the wedding party of the granddaughter in *avlu* and in Depo's ground floor. The grandson's military farewell also took in *avlu* place. Furthermore, as a gesture the family painted the facade of their houses in the same color with Depo and Open Radio.

An other commoning act is keeping cats together in *avlu*. Cats are called with their names. They built also a cat house for them. Caring for the cats together strengthens the bond between neighbors. They ask each other, if anyone had fed them or if they have seen them today. The *pide* restaurant gives plastic plates for the cats.

Shared space provides to share the knowledge, too. During

my participant observations in *avlu*, I helped N. from Café to translate a brief from a friend in Germany. T. and Open Radio team also usually help the illiterate neighbors read things.

①

②

tea

benches

cats
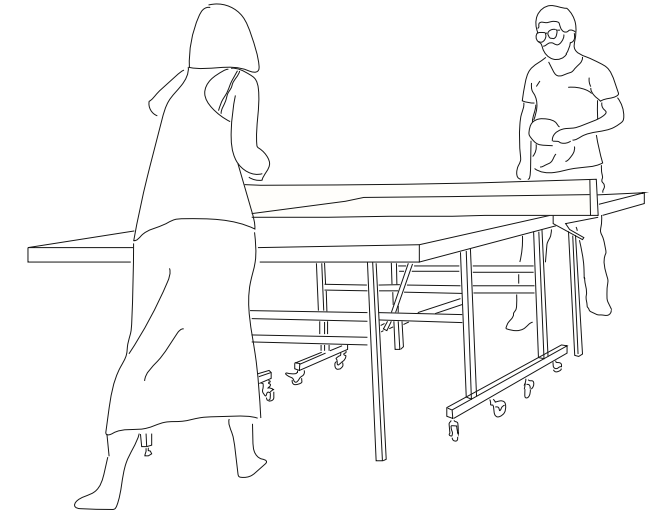
Trusting and protecting each other

Being neighbor in *avlu* arrange to trust in each other, through getting to know about each other, and thus, through equal right to control and appropriate.

T. supports S., while he gets money out of her bank account and gives her so that she can pay the rent. She trusts in him to give her bank account information more than her own son, because her son used to gamble and therefore she bewares to give him money.

At the same time, N. from the café claims that he protects Depo against *Tophaneli*. In interview, he mentioned three events, but there are actually more than these three. "*Tophaneli* wanted to attack the opening of the exhibition about Aziz Nesin". He says that he had stopped them. However, they attacked with splashed white dye to the wall of Depo. After he found out, who made this, he 'pulled their ears'.

He adds: "I warned them, if they do something wrong, unfair to Depo, I will be against them. I am a powerfull man, I mean with power not the power of 'muscle'. I hear something about the grumbles from the *Tophaneli* about Depo. They want to say with announcing it to me "do not be a part of it". But I believe, we need to respect each other, everyone believes in something, it is not a problem, for me, they can have the ideology of Gezi. However, because of that *Tophaneli* do not like them. But I try to help my neighbors."

Networking

Avlu is a micro-cosmos in Tophane with its 'neighborliness of strangers' (cf. Sennett 2001) and their networks. Depo and Open Radio have the audience from creative scene, organizing exhibitions about minority groups in the city and have international contacts can reach many people through their communication tools.

Romani Family and the Café have contacts to the park and *dernek* of Tophane.

radio recievers

contact to dernek

Open Radio

interest of investors

Romani Family

Depo

Café

contact to dernek

artists and visitors

international contacts

Learning from Tophane

The Minority Center

event

The Hacimimi Mosque

Mosque's visitors dwell in park.

radio recievers

Open Radio

interest of investors

contact to park

Romani Family

Café

Depo exhibits about the minorities

Park

event

same location

Depo

event

contact to park

The Greek School

event

audience

international contacts

The Neighborhood House

event

Even 'composite' identities still produce spaces according to their chosen allegience mostly the one most under pressure.

> "A city is a place where people can learn to live with strangers, to enter into the experiences an interests of unfamiliar lives. Sameness stultifies the mind; diversity stimulates and expands it." (Sennett 2001: 2)

In Tophane I discussed six case studies and situations of different identities, to trace how 'composite' identities produce spaces or fail to do so.

The Greek community who are not in Tophane anymore, act still a role in the tales by neighbors about past. And so is, the vacant school building hosting exhibitions witnessing their absence, today. On the other hand, another minority group still living in Tophane, tries to be as 'invisible' as possible; They have big walls and barbed wires and the door is mostly closed; they observe outside through security cameras and access is only possible with ID control possible.

An other example, existence of mosques become an excuse for drawing boundaries of religious places where certain practices are not allowed, but at the same time in Hacımimi Mosque, Hanafi and Shafii women need to negotiate how they should pray and hence, find a spatial solution in the same mosque to solve the 'problem'.

The park is another place where social boundaries are marked and controlled through gaze of men sitting at the coffeehouses around the park and the elements like banners and signs organized by *dernek* make the boundaries visible for 'others'. On the other hand, organizing common meals in the football field in the park and sharing food becomes a negotiation zone.

Furthermore, Depo defines its borders with to neighbors in *avlu* and using temporary partition only for the exhibition openings to close the *avlu* with aims to be temporarily not seen by 'others'.

These strategies and tactics of marking and controlling the borders and willing to have the privacy mirror the need for security of their chosen allegiance mostly the one under pressure. It is achieved through cameras, guards and other high-tech surveillance techniques or like in the case of the park, through a 'tightly knit community' (cf. Tan).

So instead occasionally become composite spaces/ times but neighborhood remains a 'patchwork'. A good example for 'composite' space is the *avlu*. The dead-end street unite S. and her family, the café, Depo, and open radio as a 'composite' community of *avlu*.

A 'dead-end street' as an in-between space can provide face-to-face relations with the 'other' due to heterogeneity of the neighborhood.

Uğur Tanyeli an architectural historian sees dead-end street in cities a 'problematic' solution in a growing city of the need to reach the main streets. For him, the irregular division of the big parcels did not allow to have a geometrical street but which depends also on the privacy concerns of Islamic culture (1987: 157). For Jacobs not many people go towards the barriers. Therefore, borders create a 'vacuum of usage' that causes insecurity and simplifies the usages (2009: 277ff.). To dead-end streets in Anatolian Ottoman and Islamic city context, the usage and the approach of this typology has been different; it is semi-public street safe for children and semi-private space for adults (cf. Alkan and Nafa 2008).

I see, however, Depo's *avlu* as possibility space that can work as a passage towards otherness ensuring spatial and temporal relations in a 'patchwork' neighborhood.

Sennett uses the phrase 'neighborliness of strangers' referring Emmanuel Levinas (cf. 2001). In the setting being neighbors in *avlu* is the otherness experienced as a process ends with trusting and protecting each other despite of the differences. *Avlu* give users a sense of belonging, a territory where they feel safe and protected but still the chance to be 'open'. It is like a living-room with three walls around and without having a ceiling. Therefore, the space provides:

> "the right to appropriate urban space in the sense of the right to use, the right of inhabitants to 'full and complete use' of urban space in their everyday lives. It is the right to live in, play in, work in, represent, characterize, and occupy urban space in a particular city—the right to be an author of urban space." (Fenster 2006: 114)

At the same time, *avlu* enables all neighbors to control the space, diversity of controllers makes probably the space flexible for different user groups. Right to control the space gives also the feeling of the ownership to all members and the boundary permeable for different groups with the heterogeneity of checkpoints. With *avlu's* stillness, Depo organizes opening parties for the exhibitions, Open radio uses for smoking and playing ping pong, S. and her family sit on the benches, and Café has two tables on the street.

> "Limitability, the experience of temporarily occupying an in-between territory, can provide us with an alternative image for a spatiality of emancipation. Creating in-between spaces might mean creating spaces of encounter between identities, instead of spaces corresponding to specific identities." (Stavrides 2010: 39)

In these days, public space is oppressive in Istanbul most specially in Tophane as for example, *Mahalleli* with the several associations purpose to regulate the urban space, on the other 'side' newcomers complain about the sounds of *ezan*, prayer calls and make the authority turn the volume down. The act 'decoding' towards others makes the act 'being open' to the others suspicious. Therefore, face-to-face relations are important getting know each other in the stillness of *avlu*. And also this stillness through face-to-face relations makes the negotiation possible. For Stavrides that is an emancipation process as the establishing of the means to negotiate between emergent identities (2010: 39).

In the dead-end street in Ottoman context the public, semi-public and private overlap. That makes it with the diversity of the neighbors considered in this work, a material in-between space of hope in the city with collaborative approach (cf. Terkessidis 2015).

Discussion and Reflection

Negotiating Tophane

Beyond the material borders in Tophane, the streets are used like a 'collective' living room. There are also social borders and these can only be crossed with the help of a person, an event or a ritual. A person as reference provides the trust rapidly. A simultaneous event makes the gathering with the 'others' possible. A ritual with its rhythm brings 'stillness' and supports face-to-face relations, brings the trust based on time.

When another new 'newcomers' move in: 'Intervention' by planners

Tophane has been always in flux. Today's *mahalleli* were once also 'newcomers' despite of their present claim of ownership. The urban politics in Turkey promote urban transformation projects that cause gentrification and homogenization of the city center.

On the other hand *Tophaneli* try to defend 'their' neighborhood where the 'newcomers' are acknowledged their established rules and lifestyles.

One of the last 'newcomers' in the neighborhood are the residents of Tomtom Gardens. The investors behind the project envision integrating with the neighborhood with initiating a design bazaar. Although the project presents itself as integrated, the uniformed cleaning staffs of Tomtom Gardens refer to it as a site, Turkish word for gated community.

Just behind Depo, the construction of a new building continues: During lunch break N. comes to avlu to collect payments and empty glasses and informs us about the last updates from the new housing project: "They will demolish this wall, they already got the permission for a passage. They are now digging 4-5 meters down because of the underground car park. It seems

they will have an entrance to the car park. We had our own street; we were acting like at home. Anyway, we will yell one or two times, we will make some noise and they will not pass."

This new housing project by ŞANALarc is called The Hacimimi Project using the administrative name of the *mahalle* to brand it separate from Tophane. The project plans five new blocks for currently decayed, abandoned parcels and a car park. It will be finished in three years and will host approximately 200 tenants that will bring a different social structure to the neighborhood; one of the blocks will neighbor Depo's *avlu*.

In my conversation with the architect Alexis Şanal, I learned the project wants to open a passage from the *avlu* connecting to a courtyard. The will have its main entrance at the Hacımimi Külhanı Street and will house social businesses with 'business' hours between 9 am to 5 pm. Thus, the porosity of the passage will be regulated. According to her the passage supports the social businesses and "the ground level will host a highly active and proactive community" including Depo and Open Radio, since they are also "social businesses". The tenants are possible future audiences of the exhibitions and the Depo can use the courtyard of the new project and the passage for their openings. She understands Depo's concerns about *avlu* but she "can only show them a better solution by doing the project".

Furthermore, according to the architect the footpath going through the dead-end street and the new block will support neighborhood traffic, however, it will be used mostly by the project's residents opening to the 'dead-end' of the project.

She argues streets in Tophane are in a bad condition and not walkable. They must be vitalized with the help of lighting and good connections then even the Minority Senior Center residents would go for a walk.

Depo

Wall -> Passage?

Porosity and Stillness

"Neither the architect nor the urban planner, neither the sociologist nor the economist, neither the philosopher nor the politician, can pluck the new forms and new relations out of the air. To be more specific, the architect cannot work miracles any more than the sociologist. Neither one creates social relations. Under certain favorable conditions, they can help tendencies to find the expression (to take on form). The people mentioned above, either separately or as a team, can clear the path. They can also propose, try out, prepare forms. They can also (and most importantly) make an inventory of their acquired experiences, draw lessons from failures, help give birth to the possible, through a maieutic nourished by science." (Lefebvre 1996: 430)

In the light of this quote by Lefebvre and strategies and tactics (cf. de Certeau 2010) of juxtapositions in Tophane, I find relevant to discuss what can be learned from the present situation in Tophane for the future, because the 'new' depends very much on how the present has become (cf. Dell 2016). Does the everyday life work better when the harmony in the 'dead-end' street is sacrificed for a passage regulated by the business opening hours?

"Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs. Think of a city and what comes to mind? Its streets. If a city's streets look interesting, the city looks interesting; if they look dull, the city looks dull." (Jacobs 2010: 273)

Streets and their sidewalks in Tophane are narrow, congested and controlled by appropriation and by gaze. Residents appropriate the narrow sidewalks with chairs and tables. They gather at the entrance of the houses or on the pavement. Vendors sell things, children play in the streets. Besides these practices, streets are also used by car and also for parking.

For Jacobs "a well-used city street is apt to be a safe street". (2010: 275) and "a lively street always has both its users and pure watchers" (ibid.: 277). But when it becomes disturbing to walk in the streets? The 'uneasiness' during the walk in Tophane is not because of 'violence' but rather because of the feeling of 'entering of a private zone' because of excessive appropriation.

Benjamin describes the porosity of the urban space with the potential of being appropriated.

"Just as the living room reappears on the street with chairs, hearth and altar, so, only much more loudly, the street migrates into the living room" (1985: 174).

Streets have the porosity between inside and outside, between private and public in Tophane. But the social boundaries are still not necessarily permeable. Besides the momentary negotiations about the different issues such as car parking, garbage, searching or making room for passing cars there is no space to spend time together to negotiate socially and establish a relation based on interaction and trust. The scale of the narrow streets and the intensity of the activity on them simply do not allow it.

Compared to the street, the typology of a dead-end street can be considered as porous yard that has the 'stillness' for encountering and touching the 'other'. Historic neighborhoods like Tophane the layering and the heterogeneity of neighbors allowing 'neighborliness of strangers' (cf. Sennett 2001) possible. And as Hannah Arendt says: "Every action, every interaction is a new beginning and as such bears a character of unexpectedness" (1998: 177f).

In this regard, Depo's effort to use the dead-end street for their exhibition openings and the deal using a temporary partition during the openings precious. As I discussed before a temporary partition at the entrance of a dead-end street is more

flexible than a wall with a door and it is more permeable than a courtyard with a door at the entrance. The typology of dead-end street is also more porous than a passage, since there are no material borders at the entrances and the street just continues to the 'inside'. The dead-end street is a possibility space between public and private, and the heterogeneity of the its users makes it a space of encounter and let to realize their 'composite' identities through assemblage of neighbors in *avlu*.

After Hacımimi Project

In the first scenario, Depo acts with the new residents and a new balance is created which favors income homogeneity. Depo will use the *avlu* less which will become a entrance to the passage. The opening events will 'retreat' into the new project's courtyard. Depo will have less contact with N. and S., agents for negotiating with the rest of the neighborhood.

In the second scenario of the neighborhood, Depo continues to use its avlu with its neighbors and the opening events take place in *avlu* as usual. That makes Depo a 'threshold' as institution between newcomers and *Tophaneli*. Already T. from Depo tries to convince N. about new neighbors that they will be his future customers and the situation will be good for him. Thus, *avlu* continues to be a place of encounter and S. and her family continue to use it as their living-room and maybe Depo intends to be open as former 'newcomers' and becomes a significant role in the neighborhood as 'negotiator'.
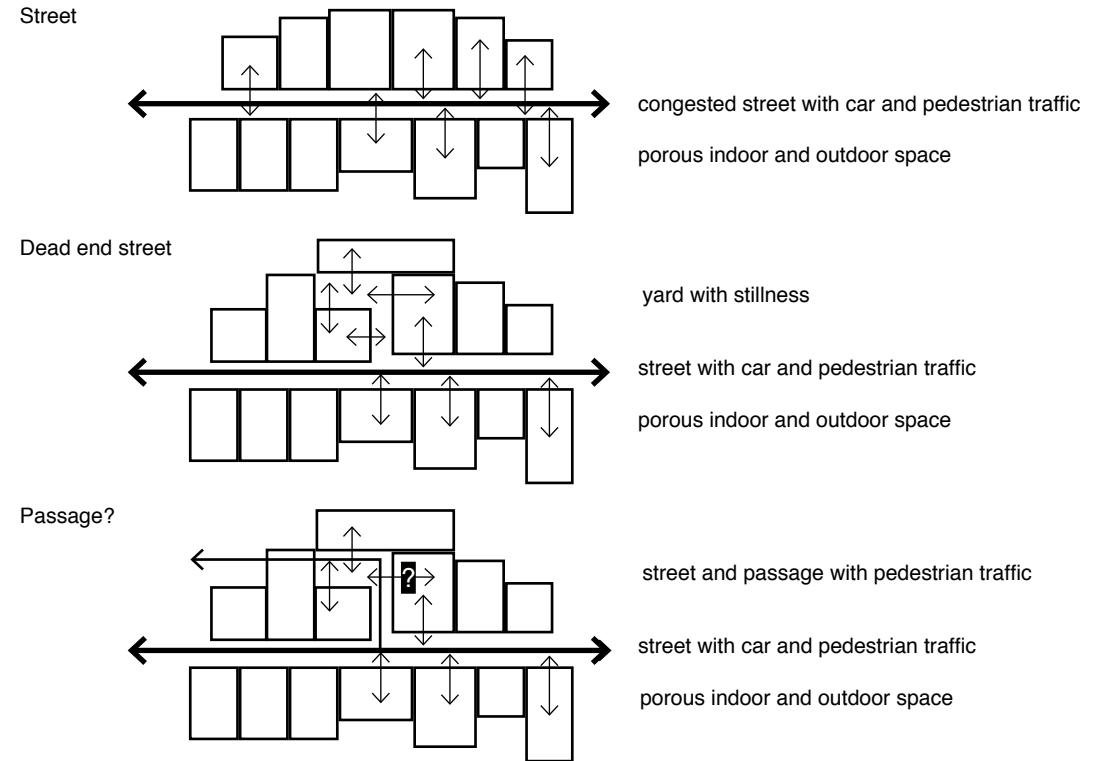
Dead-end for dialogue?

Terkessidis suggests even if we can not always change the big picture, filling in-between spaces with collaborative approaches would be an important step towards a deepened democracy, a better coexistence, a fair distribution of education or a new quality of working conditions (2015: 12).
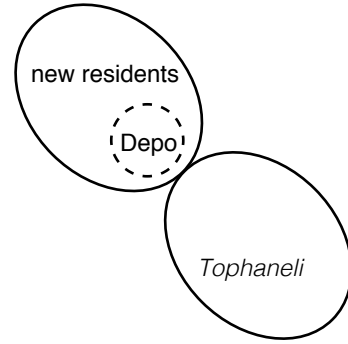
1. Scenario: Depo acts with new residents and a new balance is set up.
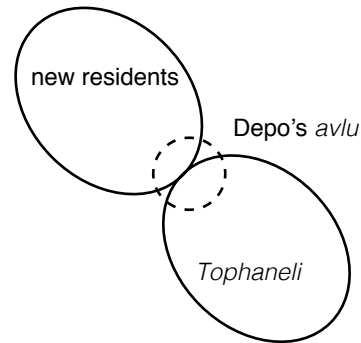
2. Scenario: Depo continues to use its *avlu* and becomes a threshold between *Tophaneli* and newcomers.

Street — congested street with car and pedestrian traffic / porous indoor and outdoor space

Dead end street — yard with stillness / street with car and pedestrian traffic / porous indoor and outdoor space

Passage? — street and passage with pedestrian traffic / street with car and pedestrian traffic / porous indoor and outdoor space

As an architect studied Urban Design; I see the typology of 'dead-end' street as a porous in-between space in the neighborhood to fill with collaborative approaches for a better coexistence; despite of the its association of 'closing and barricading artifact' in the planning. To share a space brings different groups together and the 'stillness' let them to negotiate and to make a deal for living together. That is the reason why I focus on dead-end street in the discussion.

During my research in Tophane, I have struggled for crossing material and social borders. Some borders was easy than I thought, for some I need to have a 'threshold' person or practice to introduce me and to step in. The situation makes me aware of the 'fear' (cf. Lindner 1981) in research field, but also of the possibility that one can cross the border in one way or another. However, I should admit that I could not really reach the 'core' in *dernek*, being a woman makes that difficult.

Therefore, I see this research as a first step for understanding of the present situation; the social and spatial boundaries between seemingly 'homogeneous' communities and their internal structure. The analysis of case studies makes it visible that the relation between the spaces is still not a complex network. However, the micro neighborhood Koltukçular dead-end street alias Depo's *avlu* shows; the 'stillness' encourages people to touch and share.

There is a potential in the other dead-end streets of Tophane like the one the Minority Senior Center [2] is located and the small pedestrian street of Hacimimi Mosque [3] sharing with Crimean Church wall which places can be places of encounter and making the 'composite'ness in Tophane public.

Street network in Tophane

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List of figures

I created all diagrams, figures, and photographs or use them in public domain unless specified otherwise.

Icons were inspired by works by Noun Project contributors. http://thenounproject.com/

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