Dwelling encounters:

Migration, diversity and ambivalence in an Istanbul neighbourhood

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This thesis is about processes and lived experiences of inhabiting urban contexts deeply and continuously impacted by migration driven population changes. It builds on an ethnographic study of a neighbourhood in Istanbul known as Kumkapı, which over recent decades has emerged as a zone of arrival and initial settlement for successive new waves of migrants coming from an ever more expanding geography. Consequently, today it stands as one of Istanbul's most diverse residential neighbourhoods, with its population differentiated on innumerable fronts including ethnicity, religion, race, gender and age composition, legal rights and statuses, migration channels and intentions, employment opportunities, and the like. In this dissertation I apply a novel theoretical approach drawing on the concept of dwelling for understanding how residents of Kumkapı relate to their environment and make sense of it. I propose three lines of argument that unfold sequentially through the organizing structure of the thesis. Firstly, I argue that comprehending urban contexts of migration driven diversity through a dwelling lens allows one to recognize the different temporalities that are at play in shaping the present moment. There are multiple pasts and futures inhabiting the present, shaping material forms, daily rhythms, systems of differentiation, and socialization patterns. Secondly, I argue that a dwelling lens positions the private sphere at the centre of diversification processes and recognizes space beyond its containing capacities. The ethnography explores the diverse reasons, conditions and temporalities of inhabiting Kumkapı today and how this diversity in turn leads to a breadth of residential practices. Thirdly, I argue that dwelling in urban contexts of migration driven diversity is very often characterized by a deep sense of ambivalence and continuous acts of balancing to cope with these conflicting factors simultaneously infringing upon people's lives. In building these arguments, the thesis draws together migration and urban research both within and outside anthropology in a novel way, while also contributing to scholarly debates on various themes including, home and housing, ethnicity, race, gender, informality and conviviality.

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Glossary

Aile	Family
Bayan	Female
Bekâr	Bachelor
Bodrum	Basement
Cadde	Road
Daire	Apartment
Emlakçı	Estate agent
Ev Sahibi	Landlord
Gecekondu	(literally) houses built over night
Göçmen	Migrant
Imam Nikâhı	Religious marriage performed by an Imam
Kaçak	Illegal
Kargo	Cargo
Kiralık	For rent
Kürt	Kurdish
Mahalle	Neighbourhood
Meyhane	Traditional restaurant
Muhtar	Neighbourhood authority
Müstakil	Detached house
Namaz	Muslim prayers
Namus	Honour
Oda	Room

Pis	Dirty, filthy
Rum	Group name used historically to refer to Turkish citizens of Greek ethnicity
Semt Pazarı	District market
Semt	District
Sokak	Street
Soydaş	Ethnic kin
Temiz	Clean
Varoş	Ghetto
Yabancı	Foreign / strange
Yerli	Local / native
Zenci	Black person

Acronyms

AKP	Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)
EU	European Union
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IOM	International Organization for Migration
TÜRSAB	Türkiye Seyahat Acentaları Birliği (Association of Turkish Travel Agencies)
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees

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1. Arriving at dwelling: concepts, place and methods

1.1. Introduction

Here we are comfortable, everyone is foreign so no one looks at you. (Turkmen domestic worker)

You know this place right? It is a filthy, cosmopolitan place. (Turkish real estate agent)

In our contemporary world migration and urbanization are leading to new and intensified forms of diversity. People of increasingly more varying ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds, representing diverse demographic traits (i.e. gender, age, race, sexuality), migrating for different purposes (i.e. seeking protection, employment, adventure) and under distinct circumstances (i.e. migration channels, legal rights, local and transnational networks) are finding themselves living in close proximity to one another for variable periods of time. In the recent decades, this pattern has spurred growing academic interest for understanding how people interact with one another under such conditions of intensifying and fluctuating diversity.[1] This thesis shares a similar interest in exploring processes and lived experiences of inhabiting urban contexts of diversity. It builds on the research question: What happens to dwelling(s) in urban spaces deeply and continuously impacted by migration driven population changes? In framing the research question around 'dwelling(s)', I refer firstly to two of the more immediate and literal definitions of the term in English

[1] Back 1996, Bauman 1996, Berg & Sigona 2013, Husband et al. 2016, Neal et.al. 2013, Kihato et al. 2010, Lancee & Dronkers 2011, Landau & Freemantle 2016, Phillimore 2013, Talen 2009, Van Leewuwen 2010, Vertovec 2015, Wessendorf 2015, Wise & Velayutham 2009.

language: to dwell, meaning the act of living in a place, and a dwelling, meaning a place of residence. As such, the thesis provides a detailed ethnographic account of processes and places of dwelling, explored at both the level of housing and the neighbourhood. Secondly, I use dwelling for the reference it makes to a particular ontology that has been influential in anthropology for reshaping how the relation between humans and their environments is conceived (Ingold 2000). As a concept, it points to the practical, relational, processual and always emergent ways that social and material life unfolds in any given context. This dissertation proposes the concept of dwelling as a lens for better capturing the impacts and lived experiences of migration driven changes in urban contexts.

The study is carried out in a neighbourhood of Istanbul known as Kumkapı, a place deeply marked by the many layers of tumultuous migration driven population changes that this ancient city has come to witness in its recent history. For several centuries, Kumkapı remained a residential, cultural and religious centre for ethnically Armenian and Greek citizens first under the Ottoman Empire then the Republic of Turkey. From the 1950s onwards however, this characteristic started changing fundamentally as overlapping migration flows gradually and substantially impacted the area. As non-Muslim minorities were emigrating, mainly due to nationalist coercion, first domestic, then international migrants started arriving from ever more disparate places, most seeking economic improvement, others looking for safety and protection. Today, it stands as one of Istanbul's most diverse residential neighbourhoods, with its population differentiated on innumerable fronts including ethnicity, religion, race, gender and age composition, legal rights and statuses, migration channels and intentions, employment

opportunities, and the like. This thesis presents an ethnographic account of Kumkapı based on fieldwork carried out over a period of 15 months (from August 2012 to October 2013).

If there are two features that have remained constant in Kumkapı's evolution over the past half-century, these are migration and diversification. My starting point in this thesis is set on understanding the forces behind this historical trajectory. Neither the emergence of Kumkapı as a migrant hub, nor the particular demographics of the populations it hosts are coincidental. They are the outcome of a complex web of factors including changing rights regimes, labour markets, urban visions and mobilities on the one hand, and evolving creative capacities of migrant arrivals on the other. This thesis presents an attempt to uncover, through ethnography, the marks of these different histories layered in the present.

While the site of much population changes though, one feature of Kumkapı that has remained remarkably untouched, especially when compared to the radical tourism and trade related transformation of surrounding areas, is its' on going status as a residential area. For this reason, the first part of the thesis focuses on understanding how migration driven diversification impacts housing, which also makes dwelling a feasible lens. This is examined at two levels. First, it approaches housing as a kind of 'contact zone' (Pratt 2008) where differences are encountered, made and negotiated. Secondly, it details how variations in individual background (arrival histories and motives, gender, age, race, etc.) relate to differences in dwelling forms and materialities, and in how they are used and made meaningful. Put together, I show how individuals' relational contexts,

practical engagements and temporal positioning all shape dwelling forms, choices and constraints.

Another notable aspect regarding present day Kumkapı is that it harbours highly inclusive and radically exclusionary discourses and practices at the same time. The second part of the thesis focuses on understanding why this ambivalence emerges and how it shapes dwelling. One sphere where this tension becomes most apparent is in the different forms of informality practiced in the area. On the one hand, widespread informality feeds a vibrant local economy that is open to differences and flexible to change, on the other hand, when concerning the legal status of foreigner residents, it opens the grounds for variable forms of exploitation. Another sphere where this tension becomes evident is in the comparison between the ways that Kumkapı as a place is narrated and how its residents engage with other residents. While narratives of place tend to be univocally negative, modes of convivial living are practiced in the minutia of everyday life. In studying both examples I show how dwelling evolves as a process of trying to balance these ambivalences.

The thesis takes a novel approach in bringing the concept of dwelling into conversation with debates on migration, urban space and diversity. While dwelling has been theorized in relation to nature, environment and landscapes (Cloke & Jones 2001, Wylie 2012), and also recently mobilities (Brun 2016, Crang & Zhang 2012, Meier & Frank 2016), transnationalism (Dalakoghlou 2010) and diaspora (Long 2013), its application to analysis of urban contexts remains much more limited (McFarlane 2011). As this thesis will demonstrate, a dwelling lens is useful for addressing some of the limitations surfacing in the literature on migration driven urban diversity. Firstly, much of the

research in this field engages only with the present, while histories embedded in place are narrated simply as background. In this thesis I examine the temporalities of diversity, critically engaging with it at multiple levels. The ethnography reveals that there are multiple pasts and futures inhabiting the present, shaping material forms, daily rhythms, systems of differentiation and socialization patterns. Secondly, research is centred primarily on the public sphere as a space offering possibilities of encounter. In this thesis I position the private sphere at the centre of diversification processes. The ethnography explores the diverse reasons, conditions and temporalities of inhabiting Kumkapı today and how this diversity in turn leads to a breadth of residential practices. I show that dwelling is a means of bringing the private sphere into the debate as much as a lens through which to examine the very negotiations that happen as different people dwell together. Thirdly, a reoccurring argument in this literature is the idea that diverse social realities are defined by ambivalence. Everyday local encounters and relationships can be characterized by boundary crossing, friendly reception and solidarities, as well as by boundary maintenance, intimidation, and violence at the same time. In examining the processual nature of dwelling, I take this argument a step further. I argue that dwelling in urban contexts of migration driven diversity is very often characterized by a deep sense of ambivalence and continuous acts of balancing to cope with these conflicting factors simultaneously infringing upon people's lives. With these three core lines of argument this thesis aims to contribute to discussions on the role of ethnography in engaging critically with questions about migration, urban change and diversity (Keith 2013, 2015).

Another contribution of this thesis is empirical. Over recent decades, Turkey has been rapidly transforming into a country of immigration and transit, which has been coupled with growing research interest in this field. However, there are two important research gaps that remain. Firstly, Turkish migration research is centred almost entirely on a 'group' focus, with group boundaries being defined according to one or more variables including nationality, ethnicity, migration motive, legal status and labour sector.[2] Hence little attention has been paid to the encounters and interactions between migrants and host communities or different migrant groups (Akalın 2007, Yükseker 2004, Kılıçaslan 2016). Secondly, while immigration flows to Turkey are mostly an urban phenomenon, the city, and more particularly the urban spaces receiving new migrant arrivals are largely absent from the analytical gaze (Yükseker 2004). The field of urban studies in Turkey also presents a similar gap. Turkey's urbanization is concomitant with the massive rise in internal migrations following the 1950s and there is a vast research field examining how internal migrants, including in more recent decades internally displaced Kurdish populations, experience and transform cities across Turkey.[3] However, the more recent layer of migration to the city, that of international migrants and refugees, remains under researched.[4] This thesis presents one of the first attempts to engage with the literature on urban diversity within the Turkish context.

[2] Eder 2015, de Clerk 2013, Danış 2007, Danış et al. 2009, Parla 2011, Yükseker & Brewer 2011, Suter 2013, Şaul 2014.

[3] Çelik 2005, Erder 1997, Erman 2001, Göral 2016, Kaya 2009, Saraçoğlu 2010, Secor 2004.

[4] Following the Syrian refugee crisis in 2011, in recent years the migration studies field in Turkey has seen an explosive surge of interest. A review of this field extends the scope of this research but the limitations mentioned above mostly remain, in that the focus remains on the group, 'the Syrians', and the city appears merely as the container for studying this group rather than being the analytical focus in itself.

1.2. Conceptual framework

Migration studies, the ethnic bias and 'diversity turn'

An attention to difference has remained a core feature of studying migration in anthropology, as the act of movement in space involves encounters with differences in people and place, and the creation, negotiation and redefinition of boundaries as an outcome of these encounters (Brettell 2008, Kearney 1995). As Vertovec (2010: 3) discusses in his historical overview of this field, in the 1970s and 1980s most studies focused on differences related to ethnicity, which built on the influential work of Frederik Barth (1969) that challenged primordial and essentialist conceptions of ethnic groups and pointed instead to the fluid boundaries and context-dependent (re)constructions of ethnicity. This understanding was found to be particularly relevant to migration scenarios where such contextual changes were inevitable. Therefore ethnic groups became the primary analytical lens through which to understand how migration processes impacted matters such as community formation, cultural adaptation and change, forms of social and economic organization, and identity.

During the 1990s, migration studies underwent a paradigm shift with growing interest across all social sciences in the concept of transnationalism. In the context of rising global connectivity through technological improvements in transportation and telecommunications, transnationalism has shown the ways in which migrants maintain ties with countries of origin, and operate within multiple social, cultural and political systems that extend beyond national borders of the host society. In

anthropology, it has been crucial in reconfiguring anthropological thinking on the ways that time and space is experienced, studied and represented (Glick Schiller et al. 1995, Gupta & Ferguson 1997, Vertovec 1999). It has helped reveal the 'national order of things' (Malkki 1995) and 'methodological nationalism' (Glick-Schiller & Wimmer 2002) underlying modern social sciences, which have tended to conceptualize and naturalize social phenomena in relation to the boundaries of individual nation-states. In the anthropology of migration more specifically, it has allowed recognizing how migrants shape their lives across multiple national contexts and localities. Yet in transnational migration studies as well, ethnicity has maintained its primary position over all other differences such as gender, class and religion in defining both the unit/'group' of analysis and main object of study.

In the 2000s, however, this privileged status of the 'ethnic lens' (Glick-Schiller et al. 2006) in migration research also came under critique for preventing seeing the workings and significance of other modalities of difference informing migrant experiences. As Fox and Jones point out:

> Whilst there is broad agreement that ethnicity should not be understood in essentialist terms, the practices and processes of migration have an uncanny way of essentializing it. Ethnicity is naturalised as a taken-for-granted fixture of the migration landscape. When we study transnationalism and diaspora, we surreptitiously posit the existence of collectivities whose members we assume to understand themselves ethnically (2013: 385-386).

Consequently, migration scholars have been calling for 'de-ethnicizing research designs' (Wimmer 2007: 25). Fox and Jones (2013: 388-391) discuss four different 'remedies' that have been produced in response to this ethnicity bias in migration

research. The first approach presented is based on Glick Schiller et al. (2006, 2010) who propose moving away from ethnicity all together by focusing on other forms of sociability, identification and incorporation, such as religion and work. A similar vantage point is found in works building on intersectionality, which is a theoretical framework pioneered by Black Feminists that promotes examining how social phenomena are shaped by the intersection and interaction of multiple structural differences (e.g. ethnicity, gender, race, religion, sexuality), rather than focusing on one in isolation (Anthias 2012). A third approach is that described as 'everyday ethnicity' (Karner 2007), which does not do away with ethnicity per se, but is sensitive in not presuming its ubiquitous salience and examines how, when and where it manifests itself in the everyday lives of ordinary people. The fourth 'site specific approach' is also similar in that it does not presume the relevance of ethnicity, but begins the exploration at the level of non-ethnicized platforms, including spatial sites such as the neighbourhood (Wessendorf 2014, 2015, Wimmer 2004) within which migrants interact.

This fourth 'site-specific' approach is closely interlinked with what has been termed the 'diversity turn' in migration research (Berg and Sigona 2013: 355). Scholars have argued that the period following the 1990s has given rise to 'new migrations' (Foner 2003, Lamphere 1992), because they have consisted of more people coming from and dispersed across more places, and also entail greater differences along lines such as gender, race, religion, class, age, language, migration history, purpose and channel, legal categories, entitlements, labour market access, length of residence, modes of transnationalism, local configurations of diversity and responses to immigration.

Vertovec (2007) has coined the now popularly used term ‘superdiversity’ to describe this new condition wherein these multiple variables join and interact in informing migrant’s social experiences and practices. Rather than looking at a particular, and as previously discussed often ethnically defined migrant group, studies taking the diversity lens examine the migration settings themselves where a great variety of both migrant and non-migrant groups rub shoulders (Vertovec 2010: 6). The diversity lens entails paying attention to the new and multiple forms of social differentiation that emerge, conjoin and interact within such contexts, which prevailing conceptions of multiculturalism and ethnic communities alone fail to capture (Vertovec 2007: 1025). Berg and Sigona argue that this new research agenda is significant for pushing us ‘to go beyond static categorizations, which constrain our understanding of social life’ and pointing us ‘towards a better understanding of the contingency, spatial specificity and complex conjunctures of multiplying axes of difference’ (2013: 355-356). This does not suggest that previous systems and discourses of classification around ethnicity and race are no longer relevant, being replaced by entirely new variables of difference. Rather, it places emphasis on looking at their intersections, at how ‘‘new’ configurations of difference are being added to, ‘layered’ upon, arranged and positioned with regard to already-existing ‘old’ configurations of difference’ (Vertovec 2015: 2). It calls for examining contextual specificities, hence looking at ‘when, where, why and for whom some differences come to make a difference’ (Berg and Sigona 2013: 356) more than others.

In this thesis I engage primarily with this diversity literature, as I share the same interest in understanding the intersections of migration, differences and urban

space. And I discuss this literature through a case from Istanbul, which is an urban context where such questions have remained to date largely untouched. However, I also aim to engage with this literature critically, addressing some of its limitations. The first issue pertains to the scholarly languages used to think and write about urban diversity (Keith 2005: 12-13). While the diversity turn emerged with the goal of addressing the multiplicity of differences that are shaping migrant experiences in the contemporary era, remarkably, the methods of study and vocabulary of representation used to describe these setting still rely heavily on ethnic and racial categorizations. In this thesis I propose that one way out of this is through deep-seated ethnographic engagement with local vernaculars of differentiation. The second issue is what can be described as the 'presentist' focus of most research in this field. At most, histories are narrated as background, but there is little assessment of how the past is made present, on how the 'old' and 'new' actually become layered, and even less so about how varying temporalities inform experiences of inhabiting contexts of diversity. The third limitation is related to conceptions of space, which I will detail below.

Contact zones and spaces of encounter

'Contact' and 'encounter' are two terms used frequently in studies examining social dynamics in urban contexts of migration driven diversity (Yeoh and Willis 2005, Wise and Velayutham 2009, Keith 2005, Back 1996, Piekut and Valentine 2017).[5] The notion

[5] There are also other terms used for describing areas receiving high numbers of migrants from varying geographies such as 'gateways' (Price & Benton Short 2008), 'arrival cities' (Saunders 2011), 'estuarial zones' (Landau 2014). I do not examine them in this section as they are used mainly for naming spaces and their functions, whereas 'contact' and 'encounter' bring relationality in such spaces to the centre of stage.

of a 'contact zone' is grounded in post-colonial studies, most notably in the work of Mary Pratt who defines it as:

> Social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination – such as colonialism and slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today… It invokes the space and time where subjects previously separated by geography and history are co-present, the point at which their trajectories now intersect' (2008: 7-8).

While recognizing the radical power inequalities of the colonial encounter, Pratt proposes a 'contact' approach for exploring the interactive dimensions of this encounter, which is more often accounted in terms of domination and conquering. As such, the concept insists on understanding how shared understandings and practices, cultural appropriation and hybridization emerge under conditions of co-presence.

The idea of 'contact' has also been developing in studies examining multicultural encounters in immigration contexts. These studies mostly focus on understanding the role of social contact in facilitating relations between different cultural and ethnic groups, and reducing prejudice, tension and conflict. And they are mostly quantitative in nature. For instance, studies in social psychology have measured the influence of different types of contact in contributing to improved relations across groups (Hodson & Hewstone 2013, Lancee & Dronkers 2011). In geography, Piekut and Valentine (2017) have examined how the nature of contact is determined by type of spaces. They show that public, institutional, socialization, consumption and private spaces all have

different effects on attitudes and behaviours towards people from different ethno-religious background.

'Encounter' is another term used analytically to examine social relations across differently situated groups. In urban studies, there is a longstanding tradition building on Simmel's (1903) pioneering work that defines the city as a distinctive space where chance encounters between strangers become common (Darling & Wilson 2016). Here, strangeness is not necessarily about difference, but about being unknown to one another. And the city is set as a space where people must learn and develop strategies to negotiate encounters with unknown others. In recent decades a plethora of research has emerged where the element of strangeness is centred more directly on encounters with cultural and ethnic differences and the question is focused on how people respond to such encounters. For example, Lee (2002) examines civility as a feature of everyday interactions between Jewish and Korean merchants and their black customers in inner city neighbourhoods of New York and Philadelphia. Gilroy (2004: xi) expands on the notion of conviviality to describe 'the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere' (cf. Nowicka & Vertovec 2014, Wise & Noble 2016). In a similar vein, Wise and Velayutham (2009) and Neal et al. (2013) speak of an everyday multiculturalism/multiculture approach to identify the competent ways in which people routinely manage interactions and relations in multicultural environments. In her study of intergroup perceptions and relations in London's Hackney borough, Wessendorf (2015) introduces the term commonplace diversity to emphasize how residents of diverse urban contexts are aware of the multiplying differences that surround them, but

do not see it as something particularly unusual and rather as part of everyday lived reality.

A shared aspect in most this literature is that while focusing on ways and conditions of constructively and compatibly living together, there is also recognition that such social realities are defined by ambivalences. Les Back (1996) has pointed at the 'metropolitan paradox' in showing how stereotypes and racism towards difference can co-exist with daily interactions in multicultural neighbourhoods. Both Lee (2002) and Wessendorf (2015) show that having 'civility towards difference' and/or intercultural competence does not necessarily imply an appreciation of it, or even a neutral or careless stance, especially if attitudes are shaped by pragmatism, such as maintaining commercial interests, avoiding conflict or just getting around with day-to-day life. In their study of relations between residents and entrepreneurs in a deprived inner-city area of Birmingham, Karner and Parker (2011) demonstrate how everyday local encounters and relationships are characterized by both everyday conviviality, boundary crossing and inter-ethnic solidarities, as well as local conflict, ethnic exclusion and boundary maintenance at the same time. Valentine (2008) shows how positive encounters and daily courtesies in public spaces across groups deemed different do not necessarily change privately held prejudiced views. These negative attitudes, Valentine points, are often related to structural inequalities and disadvantage, which have a tendency to be overlooked in 'contemporary discourses about cosmopolitanism and new urban citizenship, by celebrating the potential of everyday encounters to produce social transformations' (2008: 333).

In understanding how differences are made and unmade within urban contexts of diversity, many of the studies mentioned above incorporate a spatial lens, recognizing that different spaces at the local level offer different kinds and levels of engagement across differences (Berg and Sigona 2013, Neal et al. 2013, Vertovec 2015). Most such studies focus on public and semi-public spaces as 'sites of encounter' (Wise and Velayutham 2009), including squares, streets, malls, community gardens, schools, community centres, workplaces, religious spaces and the like, and explore how their functions and use determine interactions (Amin 2002, Glick-Schiller et al. 2006, Husband 2016, Wessendorf 2015, Vertovec 2015). And most focus on whether or not these different spatialities foster 'meaningful encounters', as in changing attitudes towards differences in positive ways. For instance, Amin claims that 'the contact spaces of housing estates and urban public space, in the end, seem to fall short of inculcating interethnic understanding, because they are not structured as spaces of interdependence and habitual engagement' (2002: 969). He argues that such encounters are fostered in 'micro-publics' where regular encounter, stable relations and shared activities disrupt easy labelling and foster friendship across differences. In a similar vein, Wessendorf expands on Lofland's (1998) concept of the 'parochial realm' located between the public and the private: 'While the private realm is characterised by relations with friends and kin, the parochial realm is characterised by more communal relations among neighbours, with colleagues in the workplace, or acquaintances through associations and informal networks. The public realm, in contrast, is the world in the streets where one meets strangers' (2014: 409-410). What is notable is that in most such studies housing is relegated to the 'private' sphere limited to close relations with family and

friends characterized by sameness, as opposed to the public and associational spaces where mixing across cultural and other differences is seen as inevitable.

In this thesis I also engage with the neighbourhood of Kumkapı as a site of encounter between diverse groups and examine how people relate across differences. My ethnography of Kumkapı reaches similar conclusions as found in the literature, which is that living and interacting with differences in Kumkapı has become a normal feature of everyday life, but that there is also much ambivalence, for instance, when comparing the ways some people act and feel. What sets apart my study from this literature though is that part of my analysis engages directly with the so-called 'private' sphere, which I also define as a contact zone. I argue that in urban contexts of diversification housing is also transformed into a space where differences are actively encountered, constituted and negotiated, as in the council housing estate Gidley (2013: 361) presents, which he argues 'is not only a space of concentrated difference and division, but also an intercultural space where new modes of living together emerge.' Moreover, I reveal how housing is a sphere that is also fundamentally impacted by diversification processes, materialized in the variable dwelling forms and practices, including shared tenancies that transform houses into semi-publics. The most important contribution this thesis makes though is that I examine these spatial encounters in Kumkapı through the analytical framework of dwelling.

Introducing a 'dwelling perspective'

Dwelling, as a concept, has been crucial for reshaping understandings about the relations between humans and their environments. It builds on phenomenology, and more particularly the work of Martin Heidegger who opposed the Cartesian ontology

that posits human reason, knowledge and action as being somehow isolated from the world and imposed on it. Rather, he argued that life emerges through a continuous interaction between bodies, things and the spaces where they are located. He contrasted these two approaches to human existence through the terms 'building' and 'dwelling' and wrote: 'We do not dwell because we have built, but we build and have built because we dwell' (Heidegger 1971: 148). As such, knowledge, thought and action, which are the forms we build, are seen to arise through the process of being part of the world and actively and repeatedly engaging with all its elements, which is to dwell. Heidegger's vision of dwelling was romantic and spiritual: it emerged from being rooted in native soil and place (Cloke and Jones 2001). Moreover, he saw modernity's spread of technology, rationalism and mass production as creating detachment from earth and thus ruining possibilities of dwelling, a notion that was also picked up by humanist geographers who spoke about a loss of place and belonging (Relph 1976, Magerauer & Seamon 1989).

Most contemporary understandings of dwelling, though, represent efforts to disengage with the ideas of authenticity, localism, rootedness and stability inherent in Heidegger's thought, while holding onto the relational and performative nature of life it espouses. An important figure in this respect is anthropologist Tim Ingold. In a series of seminal essays, Ingold (2000) criticizes the 'building perspective' pervasive to anthropological thinking, including previously his own. This perspective sees human beings outside of raw 'nature' due to their distinct and creative capacity to think, imagine and design something before ordering and building it, which anthropology defined as 'culture'. Instead of this binary opposition, Ingold proposes what he calls a 'dwelling perspective'

as one that highlights the relational, practical, processual and always-emergent ways that human and material life, nature and culture, unfold in any given context. In his first essay titled, 'Building, dwelling, living', Ingold first focuses on the relational and practical aspects, stating that 'the forms people build, whether in the imagination or on the ground, arise within the current of their involved activity, in the specific relational contexts of their practical engagement with their surroundings' (2000: 186). While recognizing the distinctive capacities of human beings to imagine forms prior to their execution, Ingold emphasizes that this imagining occurs in a real-world environment of human activity and not some disembodied intellect. In the following essay, 'The temporality of landscape', he then points to the on-going emergence of dwelling through the passage of time, by showing how the whole array of dwelling activities of the past that have become settled in physical form, what Ingold refers to as 'taskscapes', fuse with those in the present moment, and are continually reprocessed in view of the future. From this perspective, attention is shifted from form to process; or rather it shows that forms are always in always in the process of becoming.

As mentioned, the Heideggerian interpretation of dwelling carries connotations of rootedness, wherein movement as such is seen as the anti-thesis of dwelling. A number of studies on diaspora, transnationalism and mobility have challenged this opposition, showing that dwelling is not just about sedentary practices and can also emerge from movement. For example, Crang and Zhang's (2012) study explains trains as a temporary dwelling habitat for millions of migrants in China who travel from cities to rural homes during the annual Spring Festival. The journey becomes part of migrant identity, Crang and Zhang explain, as they come to share similar experiences of embodiment, material

cultures and senses of stratification. ‘Dwelling in transit’ they argue, ‘is the making habitable and appropriation of a moving environment, just as much as any other life lived in the open’ (ibid: 911). Brun (2016) makes a similar analysis in her study of Georgian internally displaced persons (IDPs), who she shows live under conditions of permanent temporariness due to both their legal status as IDPs and the precarious housing conditions attached to this legal status. Dalakgohlou (2010), in turn, examines how Albanian transnational migrants develop a sense of dwelling through the process of building a remittance home, even when one does not physically dwell in the house, which he describes as a form of ‘proxy presence’.

In the context of urban studies, the comprehensive application of dwelling as a theoretical framework remains much more limited. One of the few exceptions is Colin McFarlane’s (2011) work where he brings into conversation theories of dwelling and assemblage. He opens his article with a description of a unique house built by a man living in an impoverished district of Sao Paolo, that combines a great variety of materials and decorative styles. Building on this case, McFarlane reflects on the meaning of urban dwelling and proposes thinking of urbanism, and dwelling in the city, as a process of learning, gathering and assembling.

Regardless of the site and subject of study, these different analyses make evident that the core idea of dwelling is about recognizing embodied immersion in an environment where all aspects, objects, nature, people continuously inform the life patterns of one another through a relational process. The other conceptual appeal of dwelling is its emphasis on process and temporalities, which permits what Keith (2010) terms ‘diachronic ethnography’. As described, Kumkapı is a place that remains continuously

in flux, hosting a great diversity of populations who are highly transient. Dwelling, I argue, is a useful lens for capturing such dynamism as it emphasizes living together in the city as a process of 'becoming' rather than a moment of 'being.'

Having situated the conceptual background of my thesis in diversity and dwelling, I will now introduce briefly Kumkapı, the neighbourhood where I carried out ethnographic research, followed by an overview of my research methodology.

1.3. Locating the field: Kumkapı

As it has been already for centuries, today too Istanbul's historical peninsula[6] remains at the heart of immense and highly diverse flows. Cruising along just a few of the tram stations cutting across the centre of the peninsula provides a sufficient taster. Arriving at the *Beyazıt-Grand Bazaar* tram station, you will have left behind most of the hundreds of thousands of tourists from all corners of the world flocking the wondrous palace, mosques and bazaars of the Eminönü and Sultanahmet districts. On weekdays and around rush hours, many of the men you see getting off at Beyazıt and turning rightwards to head down the hills of Gedikpaşa are likely to be working within the hundreds of small garment and apparel workshops hidden from view within the many buildings in the area. The workshops become audible on the streets through the

[6] Istanbul's historical peninsula is the centre of ancient Istanbul. It is surrounded by the Golden Horn, a natural harbour on the north, the Bosphorus on the east and the Marmara Sea on the South. The walled cities of Byzantium and Constantinople were first developed here. The Ottoman Empire also mostly ruled from this point. It is home to many of Istanbul's most popular historical sights, including mosques, churches, palaces, parks, baths and the like. The area was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1985. On 12 July 1995, the historical peninsula was also declared a 1st degree archaeological and historical protected area (decree number 6848).

cacophony of sewing machines and hammers moulding shoes. Go one station further to *Laleli-Üniversite*, Turkish and foreign students leave the tram for Ordu Avenue on the right, rushing off to class at İstanbul's oldest University dating back to the 15th century. Eager traders from Euroasia, the Middle East and Africa cross to the left side, venturing into the wholesale retail district of Laleli where the breadth and colours of product displays and advertisements in every direction exhaust the eyes. Go one station further to *Aksaray* laying at the juncture with the densely trafficked Atatürk boulevard, and witness many commuters and travellers hopping on or off the tram, as this is where two of the main transport arteries of this mega city of over 15 million lays: the Aksaray metro station and the recently opened Yenikapı Marmaray station, which is the first underground transport system to connect the European and Asian continents, contentiously built over the remains of the Byzantine Theodosius harbour. Here you might also notice many Arabic speaking tourists walking in the direction of the Aksaray metro station surrounded by more and more kebab restaurants, *nargile* (water pipe) cafes and tourism agencies advertising in Arabic. Nested within this intense commotion and facing the Marmara Sea, where dozens of freighter ships wait docked for their turn to pass the narrow straights of the Bosporus onwards to the Black Sea, lies the neighbourhood of Kumkapı (See Map 1).[7]

[7] All the place names referred to here are the historic and popularly used ones, but do not refer to administrative units with defined spatial boundaries. Administratively, these localities fall under the jurisdiction of the larger Fatih Municipality, while at the micro level they are composed of several *mahalle*'s (neighbourhoods), each being governed by an elected *muhtar* (neighbourhood authority). See Appendix 2.

Map 1: Tourist Map of Istanbul's historical peninsula[8]



Under both the Ottoman state, then the Turkish Republic, for several centuries Kumkapı remained a residential, religious and educational quarter for Armenian and Greek minority citizens. Since the 1950s however, this characteristic started changing fundamentally as the area became substantially impacted by overlapping migration flows. Kumkapı has since transformed into a place of arrival and transit from where migrants build networks and get a sense of the city before moving on elsewhere**.** While accommodating successive new waves of migrants, previous arrivals have gradually trickled down in size. As a result, today it stands as one of Istanbul's most diverse residential neighbourhoods, with its population differentiated on innumerable fronts. Its

[8] The consecutive blue, red and thin blue lines on the map correspond with the tramline described in the narrative.

yerli (native) population includes ethnically Greek, Armenian and Assyrian Christian minorities, Turks, Kurds and Arabs, most of who have migrant origins, coming from different regions and provinces of Turkey in different periods. The increasing *yabancı* (foreigner) population arriving in Kumkapı, particularly since the 1990s, have greatly intensified this already-existing local context of diversity.[9] It includes people coming from a vast range of countries anywhere between Moldova to Uzbekistan in Eurasia, Somalia to Nigeria in Africa, and Syria to Sri Lanka in Asia. Besides the diverse ethnic, national and religious backgrounds, the *yerli* and *yabancı* population are also differentiated along lines such as migration time, motive and route, gender, age and family composition, labour opportunities, legal entitlement, ties with place of origin, local reception, and the like.

I was familiar with these characteristics of Kumkapı's population prior to starting my PhD in 2010. I had moved to Istanbul in 2005 to study for a Masters degree and from then onwards I became involved in various research projects in different capacities, each one examining the legal, economic and social conditions of international migrant and refugee populations in Turkey (Içduygu & Biehl 2008, Içduygu & Biehl 2013, Biehl 2015).[10] In all these studies, Kumkapı was never the focus of my research, but lingered in the background as an important context for meeting with the different migrant populations I was researching.[11] Given the wider context of Istanbul, where

[9] See Section 1.6 for an explanation on this terminology of *yerli* and *yabancı.*

[10] In my MA thesis I explored how refugees in Turkey experience the asylum regime. After finishing my thesis I was involved in several academic and civil society research projects, including two studies on the urban integration experiences of different migrant populations in Istanbul, one on the situation of unaccompanied minor asylum seekers and another one on the travel routes of Somali and Ethiopian migrants in Turkey.

[11] While I had previously visited Kumkapı's *meyhane* (restaurant) district for dining and entertainment (see Chapter 2), I was first introduced to its migrant quarters on April 24, 2006 when I was hired to work

urban space is increasingly more segregated along lines of ethnicity, class and life-style, Kumkapı struck me as a rather unusually diverse place. I was intrigued by this diversity in itself and became puzzled by three rather simple questions: why this place? How does everyone get along? And how do differences matter? My journey into a doctoral degree were founded upon these empirically grounded questions emerging from Kumkapı, which have remained to this day at the core of my research, albeit in changed and more detailed form.

1.4. Studying diversity ethnographically

Fieldwork methods

As part of this research, I applied a combination of methods including socio-spatial mapping of the locality, informal discussions with more than 80 persons of varying national, ethnic, religious, and gender backgrounds living and working in the locality, and detailed documentation of the life histories and dwelling experiences of a select 10. Also, for a period of six months from March to August 2013, I rented a small room in an apartment building offering room rentals in shared flats to migrants. This housing complex became the primary site of my participant observations in Kumkapı.

Walking, or doing 'fieldwork on foot'

As explained above, when I 'officially' entered the field in July 2012 as a doctoral researcher, I was not a stranger to Kumkapı. But my previous presence in the area as a

with an American medical anthropologist for a few days as a translator. I only learned when we met that he was exploring the social support mechanisms of sub-Saharan African migrants and refugees in Istanbul suffering from tuberculosis, and one of our first visits was to the homes of Sudanese and Nigerians migrants and refugees living in Kumkapı.

researcher had been directed towards particular people, or 'groups', and not the place per se. Therefore, when I started fieldwork my priority was to gain a better sense of the place in all its attributes. I walked its streets extensively, experiencing and noting variations in materiality (e.g. signage and architecture), functionality (e.g. residential versus business use), temporality (e.g. changing rhythms of place according to time of day), sensory experiences (e.g. sounds, feeling safe or insecure), people, movements and interactions (e.g. who uses certain places, if it is gendered or raced, whether or not people interact on the street). I also did excursions into localities immediately surrounding Kumkapı (Gedikpaşa, Laleli, Kadırga, Yenikapı and Aksaray) and walked through the first two regularly as they were on my route to Kumkapı. Such observational walks and wanderings in and around the area remained a constant feature of my methodology over the next 15 months of fieldwork. As a tool for empirical investigation, walking affords various opportunities to observe, listen, encounter and compare. De Certau (1984) has described walking as an elementary form of experiencing, knowing and making the city. Lee and Ingold (2006) theorize the method of 'fieldwork on foot' for showing how walking, in its different rhythms, styles and routes, yields different readings and experiences of space and cultivates dwelling (See also Wylie 2012). Many times I walked alone in a 'slow-paced and looking around mode' (Lee & Ingold 2006: 70). The detailed place descriptions I present in the thesis build extensively on this accumulated experience of continuously and observantly walking to and through Kumkapı. There were also times when I walked with interlocutors, accompanying them to some other place either after a sit down meeting or after running into each other serendipitously. In these walks I came to notice how pace,

route and gaze (not just where we look but who looks at us) could change according to differences such as gender, race, age, being a *yerli* or *yabancı,* and the like. These experiences were complementary to the ways that different interlocutors narrated Kumkapı as a place, and as will be discussed further below, were also central for understanding the impact of my particular subject position as a white foreign looking female trying to apply the ethnographic method in this particular field.

Meeting people: expanding opportunities for chance encounters

Although I had carried out some research previously with persons living in Kumkapı, the people I knew were limited to the sub-Saharan African population and most had already left the neighbourhood. Hence when I began fieldwork for my PhD, the feeling I had was one of starting from scratch. In the initial stages, walking with a map, glancing around at signs and buildings, stopping to take photos and make notes in my little pocket book proved an excellent tool for facilitating random encounters. This was particularly the case for the *yerli* population. Seeing a foreign looking woman wandering the streets with a notebook and camera in hand, people hanging out on the streets or standing in front of stores were intrigued, and some would directly inquire about what I was doing, whether I was a journalist, and the like. I saw these as moments of opportunity and would respond back again asking if they lived in Kumkapı, which opened the ground for conversation. I also met many people by simply entering random stores/businesses (call shop, textile shop, laundry, real estate office, café, bakery, grocery shop), often with the excuse of inquiring about a particular sign, like a room rental advertisement or multi-lingual signage, then explaining that I am a researcher. Some of these people who I met randomly became my closest interlocutors and

introduced me to several other contacts, most of whom I would not have had the chance to meet by just wandering the streets, such as the elderly populations resident in the area for decades or some of the international migrants running informal businesses invisible from the street, like restaurants or grocery stores.

I also approached different local institutions. I interviewed six *muhtar* (neighbourhood authorities), one *imam* (prayer leader) of a local mosque, and met with different staff working at the Greek and Armenian churches, including two guards, a social assistance office manager and a church foundation accountant. Through my neighbourhood walks I had come across a few signs referring to 'hometown associations' founded by some of the native migrant populations, but was not able to secure meetings. I had pre-existing contacts with three of the civil society organizations working with undocumented migrant and refugee populations in Kumkapı and met with their representatives. I interviewed these different institutional actors on issues pertaining to their backgrounds, local work and perceptions about Kumkapı. Though I did not openly request any assistance from these institutions in meeting new residents, they did also create grounds for some chance encounters and discussions with other local residents. I also met with several graduate students who were carrying out research involving different migrant populations living in Kumkapı (two of them working on migrants from Armenia, one on migrants from Horn of Africa, one on West African migrants). We shared our research findings with each other. Lastly, a former colleague introduced me to a local primary school teacher who was very resourceful in both sharing his experiences of living in Kumkapı and introducing me to several local business proprietors.

Testing different methods: hanging out versus structured encounters

As described above, methodologically I utilized multiple entry strategies ranging from random encounters, to snowballing, to purposive pursuits as a means to establish relations with as many people as possible. In the beginning of fieldwork, my days usually consisted of 'hanging out' with different people in their homes or workplaces. These visits were most often unplanned, as I would pass by and check in to see if the person was available. Therefore, these visits were sometimes limited to just a brief greeting and chat, while at other times I ended up sitting with the person for several hours, having lengthy discussions and an opportunity to observe housing interiors or workplace dynamics. I saw these initial meetings and regular appearances as being formative to building trust relations. Therefore I refrained from being too inquisitive, limiting questions to ones about a person's background and reasons for being in Kumkapı. I also shared much information about my own background, as I wanted the persons to have a chance to know me better and understand my reasons for being in Kumkapı. Though spontaneous and informal, initially I felt very content with such aimless and unplanned 'hanging out' as it allowed me to develop a basic understanding of the many different forms of life transpiring in the locality.

Mid way into my field research, however, I started having some concerns about this method, as the contexts I was observing, and the stories and representations I was hearing seemed so different. Quite literally, I began feeling like I was all over the place and that I needed to start structuring where and how I was using my time. My initial response was to prepare a semi-structured questionnaire, which was composed of over 40 questions linked with personal and migratory background, housing, employment, a

normal day in Kumkapı and experiences of local conflict. But it was a short-lived exercise. I shared my questionnaire with one of my interlocutors who I visited frequently in his call-shop business and was a person well connected with both the *yerli* and *yabancı* populations in Kumkapı. His immediate response was 'no one will answer you this way, they will be suspicious about why you are asking.' I also tried using the questionnaires with a few of the interlocutors who I had already met and chatted with many times, but then realized that when using the questionnaire, the responses and the conversation in general became more timid, as if my questions were some kind of examination. Faced with this turn of events, I decided against making interviews in this formal way, and I continued in the 'hanging out' mode while gradually more guiding discussions into areas where I had questions.

Another concern I had around the same time was whether I had actually been able to tap into the immense diversity that Kumkapı presented. While the number of people I met seemed large and already difficult to manage, I started to wonder how representative they were of the totality. My instinct here was also to formalize and quantify, by preparing a detailed excel sheet listing down the different 'groups' resident in Kumkapı, which I categorized according to nationality origins for foreigners, and regional/ethnic origins for natives. I also tried to incorporate differences such as family status, gender, labour market and migration intentions (e.g. labour versus asylum seeking). I listed who and how many people I met under each 'group',[12] assessing which ones needed more attention. This exercise helped me identify some gaps, for instance, that I had not yet met with any foreigners from Horn of Africa and South Asia, or that my Kurdish and

[12] The excel list I prepared at the time included 89 persons with whom I had some degree of contact.

Turkish 'sample' was limited to male proprietors, and the like. I soon realized however that through this act of trying to structure my research through sampling on the basis of ethnic/national association, I was actually beginning to fall into and reproducing the kind of 'group thinking' that my thesis had originally set out to challenge. At the same time, my need for further structuring, reducing and focusing my fieldwork arena persisted. It was at this point that my attention shifted to housing as an organizing theme, which had already started to present itself as an interesting micro space for exploring the impacts of migration and encounters with difference.

Becoming a Kumkapı dweller: participant observation in the 'room rental' sphere

Through my many walks in the area and reading of street signs, I had become familiar with the prevalent practice of *kiralık oda* (room rentals) in Kumkapı, which often also specified different target groups like *aile* (family), *bekar* (bachelor), *bayan* (female) and *yabancı*. And in visiting people in their homes and asking about neighbours I began noticing how many apartment buildings hosted a mix of migrant and non-migrant, native and foreigner populations. As one of the goals of my research was to explore how these various populations get along, I decided that rather than pursuing different national/ethnic groups at the neighbourhood level, I could focus on a particular housing complex as a kind of micro container of this diversity.

In the meantime, some more practical and emotional concerns emerged. In the first seven months of fieldwork, I had been commuting to Kumkapı from my home located over one hour away in another district of Istanbul. Family commitments prevented me from settling full time in Kumkapı and the times of the day that I spent there were a bit restricted due to the long commute. But I began feeling an urge to at least occasionally

stay in Kumkapı uninterrupted over several days. Secondly, I was being offered countless cups of tea during my visits throughout the day, and finding public toilets, particularly ones I felt comfortable asking to use as a woman, was starting to become an issue (see also below). And lastly, when I first started fieldwork I was more patient at handling curious male gazes on the street. But with time my patience started wearing thin especially after experiencing a few unpleasant encounters, and I began longing for access to a proximate private space where I could retrieve when needed. With all these factors combined, the idea of renting a room in a house-share started seeming like a good option.

I started my search for a room by calling a couple *bayana kiralık oda* (room to rent for female) ads I had seen posted on walls and apartment doors. The first three adds I called all involved sharing a room in a flat with another couple (Turkish-Azeri, Kurdish-Turkmen, Kurdish-Uzbek). I did not feel at ease about entering into such an intimate arrangement, preferring also that there were more people sharing. Slightly discouraged, I continued my search. There were many moments during fieldwork that I identified with a feeling of serendipity, like when running into a person on the street who I had been pursuing for some time but had lost contact with, or of learning about close and/or random associations between persons I had met independently. Finding my room was also such a moment. About two weeks previously, a Turkish interlocutor had introduced me to a Senegalese woman while visiting his store. Our conversation was limited as her Turkish was very basic and she did not speak English. Several days later I ran into her on the street as she was leaving an apartment building, we exchanged greetings, she told me that she lived in the basement and invited me to visit some day. Then again some

days later, as I was wandering through the same street I noticed a ‘room for rent’ sign on the front of the building. I called the number on the flyer. The landlord was in the building already and met me at the main door to show me the room.

Upon entering the flat I was struck by its design, as it did not appear like the ordinary two to three bedroom homes I had seen before. The flimsy black metal door of the flat opened to a wide rectangular space with a light blue tile floor, and five white laminated doors - one on the right side facing the front of the building, three on the side and one facing the back. It seemed as if I had entered the hallway of a hospital floor. Next to the main door was another metal door half in shaded glass, which was the entrance to the bathroom that had two inbuilt cabins on the long side, one for the toilet, and the other with a shower. A white ceramic washing sink stood in the open. The open kitchen was next door to the bathroom, consisting of a long marble counter with a sink stretching along the wall, which veered into a small inlet opening out onto an even smaller balcony where only a single person could stand. A washing machine and stove stood on the right side of the inlet, and on the left were a boiler, some shelves and a fridge. The landlord showed me to the room at the end of the corridor. It was some five square meters in size, had light pink coloured walls, laminate flooring and a window opening out onto the parking lot in the back. I agreed to take it immediately and made it my base in Kumkapı for the next six months.

The building in itself had a somewhat unique architecture for the area with protruding black glass windows covering parts of the facade, making it look more like a business complex then residential apartment. Indeed this was the original intention. Hasan, my landlord, had migrated to Istanbul in the 1970s from the Trabzon province in the Black

Sea region. He lived in Saudi Arabia for several years in the 1980s, working in construction as a temporary labour migrant. He was not a local of Kumkapı, never having lived there, and undertook construction work in different parts of the city. In the mid-1990s, a friend of his, who owned the land where the apartment now stands, invited Hassan to build a property on his land in return for shared ownership. They constructed a building intended as a business centre or hotel. They tried to sell it at first but did not find any interested buyer for their asking price. Then they rented out the flats as office and storage spaces for companies running stores in Laleli. And then in the mid-2000s they decided to refurbish some of the flats with the idea of renting rooms to foreigners. The division of the building was reflective of its gradual evolution. The ground floor was used as the workshop of a textile company, who used the first floor as an office and storage space. A mixed group of Senegalese women and men inhabited four rooms in the basement flat, alongside four Syrian men sharing one room. My flat was on the second floor, which I shared with a Turkmen couple, an Uzbek couple, an Egyptian couple, and a single Turkish man who was an old friend of the landlord. He had helped in the building renovation and was in charge of subletting rooms in our flat and the two flats above. The third floor flat was also divided into five rooms, and was rented out entirely to one woman from Uganda, who then rented out the rooms to other Ugandan women and men. The fourth floor was shared between a single Turkish man, again a friend of the landlord, a Kenyan couple, several Cameroonian women, and some Syrian men. There were two small rooms on the rooftop, most probably built illegally. Hassan used one as his office, and a Sri Lankan-Senegalese couple lived next door.

My level of engagement and interaction with neighbours in the flat and building more generally greatly varied. Some of them became friends instantly and shared their hospitality, life stories and experiences of living in Kumkapı and this building without any hesitation. I tried to return their openness by sharing my expert knowledge where relevant, like about the asylum system and migrant aid organizations or programs assisting migrants. I also became a close witness to some of the disputes my neighbours entered into with other neighbours and/or my landlord, and played a mediatory role in a few cases. There were many neighbours especially in the other flats that I only had brief or no chances to meet, because of language barriers, not having a medium to introduce myself,[13] as well as frequent changes in tenants. For six months, this housing complex became the main site of my participant observations in Kumkapı, and some of its residents became my primary interlocutors.

Dwelling biographies: housing as an analytical lens

When I first moved into my flat I had considered the idea of examining the building (i.e. the life trajectories of the different individuals, relations between neighbours, and the like) as the sole focus of my research. In other words, I thought of approaching the building/my flat as a kind of micro container for exploring diversity. But I gradually gave up on this idea. First, the more I got drawn into disputes and gossip between neighbours, the more difficult it appeared to define the ethical boundaries. Regardless of my researcher identity being clear to everyone, I sensed that neighbours had started confiding in me more as a friend. Secondly, the 'group thinking' was persisting in my

[13] As opposed to the street level, knocking doors randomly in the building, even though I had a tenancy there, seemed too invasive. Either my landlord or neighbours in my flat introduced me to neighbours in other flats, or in the case of the basement, I already knew one person.

mind. While my building set a perfect example of the 'new' diversities in Kumkapı, it lacked any connections with the 'old', especially the ethnic-Armenian and ethnic-Kurdish presences, which for me were an important part of Kumkapı's story that I wished to discover. Therefore, I continued pursuing and meeting with other residents besides those living in my building. This turned out to be very fruitful. The more homes I visited across the area, the more I came to notice that diversity was not limited to social and demographic variables; it was also reflected in the quality of dwellings and the ways that they are being used and made meaningful. Instead of viewing housing as a mere material container, I incorporated it as part of my analytical lens. In the final stages of fieldwork, I concentrated my research on tracing the detailed biographical accounts and everyday lives of a few interlocutors living in diverse dwelling arrangements in Kumkapı.

Reflecting on limits and challenges

Doing ethnography 'at home'

Anthropology has come a long way from the days when the discipline's methodology, that of carrying out research over an extended period in 'the field', was defined by the idea of 'being there' in a faraway place (Coleman & Collins 2006). Today, as Ulf Hannerz (2006) summarizes, anthropologists study here and there, and up, down, through or sideways, and also backwards and forward. In other words, 'the field' is no longer necessarily a fixed and real space, but can entail multiple sites, virtual reality, institutions, and the like. More attention is also given to time, through explorations of how the past and the future become part of the 'ethnographic present' (ibid.). In the context of this study, the scientific community would most probably classify me as an

anthropologist 'at home' in the sense that I carried out this research in the country where I have lived since I was born. I am a native speaker of the Turkish language and closely identify with the people, culture, history and state of the country. Moreover, I carried out the research in Istanbul, a city where I have been resident since 2005. Without getting into the debate about whether or not 'being at home' in some way impairs ethnographic immersion,[14] I will note only that my position as an 'anthropologist at home' is not entirely obvious. Firstly, I am the child of a Danish mother and American father who met and settled in Turkey in the 1970s. My childhood and youth in Turkey was marked by a sense of straddling between the disparate social and cultural norms entering my everyday life. My name and physical appearance cannot conceal my heritage, therefore I have gotten used to receiving a puzzled look every time I meet a Turkish person for the first time, followed by comments such as 'oh, I thought you were *yabancı* (foreigner)!' or 'how come you speak such good Turkish?' Secondly, my fieldwork materialized in a site that is connected to innumerable other places and people, so much so that it confounds any possibilities of conceiving it as 'here' or 'home.' Moreover, it is a place where being the 'Other', a minority, a *yabancı*, is the norm rather than exception. And in some ways it was this exact quality, which made me feel 'at home' in Kumkapı among a community of strangers. I recognized that my experience as a white and Western *yabancı* in Turkey had been a privileged one in social, economic and legal terms. I knew also that most locals cast me as a different kind of *yabancı* and saw me as an unusual case because of how Turkish I appeared in

[14] Some anthropologists are critical of the idea of doing ethnographic research 'at home' on the premise that 'true ethnography' requires immersion in an entirely other way of life, and a radical separation of 'home' and 'the field'. For a critique see Gupta & Ferguson 1997, Coleman & Collins 2006.

speech and mannerism. Nonetheless, I also strongly felt that my dual and ambiguous position placed me in an especially advantageous situation for carrying out research in a place like Kumkapı, where negotiating the native and stranger divide remains a central aspect of everyday life in the locality.

Can an ethnographer become 'immersed' in diversity?

Another idea central to the anthropological method is 'immersion.' In classical anthropology it entailed spending an extended period of time in that far away place and becoming fluent in the language and culture of a particular group of people studied. Clearly, becoming immersed as such is impossible when the focus of the research is about a place where the number of languages spoken and the range of cultures present are overwhelmingly diverse and the population highly transient. This begs the question; can urban diversity be studied ethnographically? Or rather can an ethnographer become immersed in diversity? A similar question was waged against the method of 'multi-sited ethnography' (Marcus 1995), which emerged in the 1990s in response to a growing interest in studying globalization and transnational processes. In response to concerns that multi-sited research involves a loss of immersion due to less amount of time being spent in a single place or with a single group of people, Frohlick argues:

> Rather than mourn the loss of long-term immersion (as it is no longer tenable, for a variety of reasons), it may be more productive to rethink how immersion is constituted, not only by ourselves as individual fieldworkers but by our research subjects who are also trying to place themselves and negotiate their locations in various overlapping and disparate worlds and circuits… I suggest we think about immersion not only as an issue for anthropologists but also as part of the wider problem of discrepant mobilities (2006: 100).

A parallel argument can be made with respect to studying migration driven urban diversity, where it is not just the researcher but the research subjects as well who find themselves having to navigate through and make sense of a complex and continuously shifting social realm where everybody is from everywhere. Surely, language did set limits on my immersive capacities. For example, I was not able to speak at length with recent arrivals that did not speak English or Turkish, unless using a translator. But I did not see this as making my research less ethnographic because my interest was not in 'groups' individually but in the spheres of intersection between them, where meanings come to be learned and negotiated. And in this realm, it is more often the language of the host community that comes to predominate as the shared medium of communication. Moreover, when shared language is limited between the different parties there is also greater reliance on bodily gestures and displays of action (e.g. when trying to teach a particular task). On the other hand, it can also be said that my immersion in Kumkapı was relatively boundless. At different times, I met, spoke and dined with some people who strictly avoided any contact or engagement with the other. My goal was to get an idea of the multiple worlds rubbing shoulders in Kumkapı, but the people inhabiting these worlds did not necessarily have the curiosity and desire to know one another in the way I did as an ethnographer. As such, it is important to mention that the level of comparative detail described throughout this thesis does not suggest that this totalizing perspective is equally known or shared by all.

Gendered dilemmas of carrying out the ethnographic method

Gender surfaced as a highly significant feature shaping my fieldwork experience. Having grown up in Turkey, I was already accustomed to social and spatial segregation

along gender lines, but I also knew and felt where it was ok for me to cross these lines as a researcher. I came to Kumkapı with such prior knowledge and experiences and relied on them while navigating the field. For instance, my random entries into businesses purposefully excluded some of the local coffee shops that are marked in Turkey as male spaces. It was also one of the reasons why I decided not to pursue further meetings with the neighbourhood associations mentioned previously: the premises of two organizations I visited involved entering a large social room filled with men playing table games and drinking tea. I refrained from visiting bachelor men alone in their homes, knowing that such an act could easily be misinterpreted. But I saw no problem in approaching the male proprietors with businesses on the street, given that their customers also included women. Also, having carried out research in Turkey over many years in many different places, I felt confident about my skills in using forms of speech and mannerism required to access and navigate in realms where being a woman, alone and inquisitive could potentially lead to rejection.

Unlike my previous research sites, though, in Kumkapı there was a subtlety I had not accounted for: its central function as a kind of space of exception for pursuing intimate and sexual engagements between *yabancı* women and *yerli* men. I have always found that friendliness, kindness and sincerity are essential to being a successful ethnographer and gaining trust, as you are asking people to welcome you into their worlds over extended periods of time for research purposes. But in Kumkapı I found myself caught in a dilemma as I was starting to sense how such an approach was leading to many more instances of men misjudging my intentions and testing my boundaries by acting in ways that go against gender norms in Turkey. For example, normally in Turkey people

meeting for the first time, especially with the opposite gender, will speak to each other in formal plural prose (*siz*) instead of using the first person (*sen*), and use a handshake at most, though that is also restricted to the more secular classes. It felt odd to me when some of the male proprietors I met spoke to me immediately in first person even though I was using the formal prose, or when they tried to pull me in for a peck on the cheeks after a handshake, which is generally limited to only the closest of friends. Some also asked me questions or made comments I would normally consider inappropriate coming from a male stranger, especially if it was raised after I mentioned already being married. Friendliness, I was learning, was prone to being misinterpreted in a context such as Kumkapı, especially if you have the appearance and name of a *yabancı* woman. Such gendered experiences were also central to shaping some of the changes and transitions in my fieldwork methodologies mentioned above.

1.5. Thesis outline

In Chapter 2 I set out the historical and geographical context of the thesis, examined at two different scales and through two different lenses. First, I look at the changing forms of migration that Turkey has experienced in its modern history, distinguishing the variable triggers, populations and conditions these migrations involved. Then I shift to the urban scale and analyse how these migration histories have transformed and marked the city. I present a detailed ethnographic reading of the different temporalities and materialities of the urban landscape where this research took place, exploring their links with the different migration histories mentioned previously. In exploring the processual

and inter-relational emergence of the city, this description also sets the stage for the dwelling approach I apply throughout the rest of the thesis.

The next two chapters move further down in scale, examining how migration and diversification permeate the sphere of housing. In Chapter 3, I present the local discourse on housing allocation, focusing on six terms that are widely used in Kumkapı by landlords, real estate agents and neighbourhood authorities to categorically differentiate between certain 'groups' and particular characteristics ascribed to them. In applying a dwelling lens, I focus on three elements. First, I examine the temporalities of this classification system which I show builds on both legacies of the past and practical engagements in the present. Second, I assess how these differences are spatialized, both in terms of how they build on differences in spatial practices and how, in turn, they determine patterns of housing allocation. Overall, I present housing as a sphere that both creates and mediates differences.

In Chapter 4 I examine how migrations to Kumkapı are linked with the diverse residential forms, practices and experiences. I present six detailed biographical accounts of persons differentiated along lines of citizenship, ethnicity, age, gender, family status, length of residence and the like. Each account focuses on the persons' histories of arrival in Kumkapı and their housing careers during this period, detailing differences in dwelling arrangements in terms of physical form, occupancy types, domestic materialities and meanings attached to these spaces and objects. My analysis centres on two issues. First, I explore how differences and temporalities intertwine in shaping dwelling forms, choices and constraints. Second, in analysing how housing trajectories

evolve, I reflect on dwelling as a process of resolving tensions between ambivalent needs, desires and ideals.

In the final two chapters I shift back to the scale of the neighbourhood and focus on the processual nature of dwelling through two separate examples. In Chapter 5, I discuss the different forms of informal practice that are prevalent in Kumkapı, examining their occurrences in two spheres, first in relation to local economies, and second in relation to the legal status of foreigner migrants residing in the locality. This chapter draws two strands of literature in urban and migration studies together, which examine informality in different terms. Whereas the former accounts tend to homogenize informalities as bounded and static, I emphasize here the varying degrees, malleability and dynamism of informal practices and examine how contextual and temporal dimensions impact formal and informal conditions. Moreover, I assess how positions along the formal/informal continuum are made and re-adjusted through processes of valuation and negotiation.

In Chapter 6 I examine and compare the different ways that people conceive Kumkapı as a place and their practices of dwelling together. I explore these questions through the concept of conviviality, which focuses on people's abilities and competencies to forge positive relations across differences. The chapter is structured around different patterns emerging in narratives about Kumkapı as a place, examined under four headings: loss of neighbourliness, transit zone, place not appropriate for family, and filthy/bad place. I demonstrate that each discursive representation highlights particular difficulties of living together. However, I demonstrate that while narratives of place tend to be univocally negative, modes of convivial living are practiced in the minutia of everyday life. As in the previous chapter, I emphasize that it is better to conceive conviviality not

as a present or absent quality, but rather a continuum of views and practices, and a process of becoming rather than a fixed entity.

1.6. A note on terms

As will be further discussed in Chapter 4, there are subtleties regarding who is a *yerli* and *yabancı* in Kumkapı, depending also on the context they are used. Here, and throughout most of the thesis, I use the two terms to distinguish people/groups who are territorially rooted in and are citizens of the Turkish state, and those who are not. I have purposefully chosen not to use the binary of local (also translated into Turkish as *yerli*) and migrant *göçmen* (migrant), first because the latter did not surface as a term frequently used in the locality, and second because the vast majority of the local population are anyways all migrants, citizens and non-citizens alike, and whether or not one has migrated is not a strong variable of social differentiation.

As mentioned, the *yerli* population is ethnically diverse, therefore throughout the thesis I use ethnic identifiers, such as ethnic-Armenian and ethnic-Kurdish to mark differences. Turkish is also used as an ethnic identifier, and not citizenship status. Kumkapı is host to a sizeable migrant population from Armenia. Therefore I use 'Armenian' when referring to this population, and 'ethnic-Armenian' for the minority citizens of Turkey. In differentiating the *yabancı* population, I use nationality origins, as my research did not go into questions about internal ethnic divisions within the various countries.

2. Layered histories: tracing present pasts

Modern day Turkey is located in a geography, which in the past century alone has seen millions of people moving through its territories in different directions and for different reasons. The small Istanbul neighbourhood of Kumkapı is a place where this vast migration history remains deeply marked in human, material and temporal form. Since the 1950s in particular, the locality has seen the mass departure of communities settled here over several generations while emerging as a zone of arrival and initial settlement for successive new waves of migrants from an ever more expanding geography. Kumkapı can be conceived as a place that shows and reminds the passage of time, or to borrow the phrasing of historian and literary critic Andreas Huyssen (2003), it is an 'urban palimpsest'[15] where diverse layers of the past hover below the surface. This chapter sets out to uncover these time-depths of Kumkapı as a place and reflect on how these different pasts inhabit the present.

Why is an understanding of these layered histories important for analysing present day dynamics of diversity in an urban context such as Kumkapı? First of all, it brings into discussion the interplay between macro and micro forces. The different migration histories that have impacted Kumkapı are not unique or particular to this place, or even to Istanbul for that matter. They are reflective of the ways that states and markets, and different global structural trends, including nationalism, urban industrialization, globalization and neoliberalism, variably shape the movements of people and their conditions of reception in points of destination. Rights regimes and labour opportunities

[15] In textual studies a palimpsest refers to a piece of writing material in which the text has been scraped or washed off so that the page can be reused for another document.

dictate when and where people move to and their conditions of urban settlement. On the other hand, new arrivals' creative strategies to dwell in the city often foster new economic opportunities and spheres of governance. Pathways of urban development and migrant incorporation are created and evolve at this intersection (Keith 2005, 2005b). Kumkapı's present day status as a transitory residential hub for a great diversity of migrant populations is unique within the mega metropolis, but it is not a coincidence. It is one that has been shaped by a particular intermingling of different forces in the city. Secondly, acknowledging these layers allows one to better understand reasons for variations in urban rhythms and materialities of the present, as different pathways have different consequences for how the city works, how it is formed and used. Related to this point, it exposes how dwelt life of the past lingers in the present, and the ways in which contemporary lives are variably built upon these traces through acts of re-appropriation and negotiation.

The chapter begins with an overview of the different forms of migration that Turkey has experienced in its modern history, distinguishing the variable triggers, populations and conditions these migrations involved. It also signals how these histories connect to some of the themes to be discussed in forthcoming chapters. Then I move down to the urban scale and analyse how these migration histories have transformed and marked the city. Building on some of the core concepts that Tim Ingold (2000) develops in framing what he calls a 'dwelling perspective', I present a detailed ethnographic reading of the different temporalities and materialities of the urban landscape where this research took place, unravelling their links with the different layers of migration discussed previously.

In this way, the chapter sets both the contextual and conceptual background of the thesis.

2.1. Arrivals and departures

In research narrating Turkey's migration history, scholars have relied on two methods to explore the subject.[16] The first is temporal, where different time periods correspond with certain structural changes in Turkey's political and economic landscape and distinct patterns of migration, namely nation-state building (1923-1950), urban industrialization (1950-1980), and economic liberalization and ethnic conflict (1980-present).[17] The second approach focuses rather on movements, distinct in their direction, as in whether one is leaving their habitual place of residence or is entering a new one, and in whether they occur across international borders, namely emigration, immigration and internal migration. This thesis explores how the different arrivals and departures linked with different types of migration impact urban space. Therefore, it has purposefully chosen the second narrative history method that focuses on movements rather than structural changes. Where necessary though, history is temporally rewound in the sense that episodic changes in economic and political contexts are (re)addressed vis-à-vis its impact on different movement types.

[16] This section was prepared through a review of a broad range of sources. Citations are emphasized when referring to a particular subfield of this literature (e.g. internal, international migration) or when specific data is being mentioned. For a broad ranging overview, see Akgündüz 2010, Erder 2015, Karpat 2017, Kaya & Şahin 2007, Kirişçi & Içduygu 2009, Özbay & Yücel 2001, Tekeli 2008.

[17] These temporal/political-economic boundaries are indeed fluid. For example, nation-building effort were also strong in Turkey during the 1990s, as exemplified in the state's response to both external refugee problems (i.e. Bulgarian Turks versus Iraqi Kurds) and internal displacement of Turkey's ethnic Kurds (Kirişçi 2000). The distinction between the different time periods is therefore more about newness and/or intensity.

A brief note should be made on terminology as I use emigration and immigration here purely to emphasize the direction of movement, as in whether the migrants in question are leaving their habitual place of residence or entering a new one. Globally, in legal contexts in particular, these terms continue to be associated with ideas of permanent settlement. In contrast, the discussions below also include migrants who are crossing international borders and whose intentions are to remain temporarily. As such, the terminology is used to distinguish directions of movement but not necessarily migratory intentions.

Emigrations

In the mid-19th century, the multi-ethnic system of the Ottoman Empire that had reigned over vast territories for four centuries began crumbling with the rise and spread of nationalist ideologies and uprisings. Following several successive wars,[18] by the end of World War I the Empire lost all its territories in the Balkans to newly independent nation-states.[19] In this period, migration emerged as a key tool for nation building. Millions of people who did not fit the constructed identity of the new nations were forced to either assimilate or move elsewhere (Chatty 2010, Kasaba 2009). When the Republic of Turkey was established in 1923 on the remaining Ottoman heartlands in Anatolia and Eastern Thrace, the ethnic and religious composition of these once highly cosmopolitan lands had already changed quite significantly. The most notable impact was on the Greek and Armenian presence, two groups with ancient historic roots in Turkey's territories. During the First World War and its aftermath alone, an estimated

[18] The Russo-Turkish War (1877-78), Italo-Turkish War (1911-1912), Balkan Wars (1912-1913), World War I (1914-1918) and Greco-Turkish War (1919-1922).
[19] Serbia, Montenegro, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria and Greece.

1.2 million Greek Orthodox minorities fled to Greece, and a further 190 thousand were sent as part of the population exchange agreement signed between Turkey and Greece in 1923, leaving behind a mere population of 110 thousand according to the 1927 census in a total population of close to 14 million (Içduygu et al. 2008). In the same period, the Armenian population of Turkey declined from an estimated 1.2 million in 1914 to 77 thousand in 1927 following the tragic events of the Armenian genocide of 1915 that involved massacres, death marches and forced conversions.

The (forced) emigration of non-Muslims continued during the Republican Era as well, as the new political establishment made it clear that they are unwanted citizens in the new nation of Turks. The Treaty of Lausanne signed in 1923, which recognized the sovereignty and borders of the Republic of Turkey, also provided for the protection of non-Muslim citizens in the country, granting them the formal status of minority. Following the legacy of the Ottoman *millet system*, non-Muslim minorities maintain their independence in religious, educational and cultural affairs. Moreover, the Turkish constitution recognizes all citizens of Turkey as equal regardless of religion and language (Article 10). However, throughout the early decades of the Republic, this formal equality was not matched in practice, characterized instead by policies of assimilation and intimidation. These practices were partly grounded in efforts of the new Republican establishment to construct a homogenous and unifying national identity, centred on Turkish language and Islam. An equally significant factor was the deep mistrust that founders of the Republic felt towards non-Muslim populations, whose factions had supported occupying forces during the fall of the Ottoman Empire

as part of their own nation-building efforts. The political elite viewed non-Muslim minorities as disloyal citizens and future traitors of the young nation state.

This mistrust translated into different measures of physical, psychological and economic control and destruction, which are key to understanding why non-Muslim minorities emigrated and how their properties and neighbourhoods became available for new ethnically Turkish settlers. In 1934, the Settlement Law (no. 2510) was passed, which stipulated the geographical re-distribution of populations whose mother tongue was not Turkish, designed with the purposes of cultural assimilation and preventing non-Muslim settlement in strategic locations.[20] This law will be mentioned several times in this section, as it was also relevant to other minority populations in Turkey like the Kurds, as well as 'co-ethnic' immigrants. In April 1941 on the eve of World War II, the Turkish government ordered the conscription of all non-Muslim men aged 26-45 as reserve soldiers, who were then sent to work in labour battalions for over a year. Only a couple months after their release from service, in November 1942 the Capital Tax Law (no. 4305) was passed, introducing a one-time tax to raise funds for Turkey's possible entry into the War.[21] By the time the law was nullified in 1944, an estimated 98% of real estate belonging to non-Muslims were either (cheaply) bought by Muslim individuals or confiscated by the state (Aktar 2006). In the 1950s, tensions with Greece over Cyprus

[20] Shortly after the Law was passed, events known as the Thrace Pogroms took place, involving violent attacks against Jewish citizens living in the Thrace region of Turkey bordering Europe. 15.000 Jewish citizens fled the region as a result, some 8000 moving to Greece and the rest to Istanbul.

[21] In principle the law respected equality, but in practice non-Muslims were levied five to ten times more than Muslims. After the Second World War ended, this time the growing conflict between Turkey and Greece over Cyprus became a tool for stimulating the endemic mistrust against non-Muslims. This law impacted the Jewish minority in particular, both materially and symbolically, due to the similarities it carried with events taking place in Europe at the time and led to a significant migration movement following the establishment of the Israeli state in 1948 (Içduygu et al. 2008).

started to escalate, leading to further migrations through both intimidation and force. Most notably, on 6-7 September 1955, an event known as the Istanbul pogrom took place when angry crowds attacked the cultural, economic and religious presence of non-Muslims in Istanbul.[22] And in 1964, more then 10.000 Greek citizens were expelled from the city, following the annulment of an earlier agreement that granted them right of residence in Turkey due to family and commercial connections.[23]

While these different developments spanning over several decades may appear as isolated acts and incidents, some merely responding to international political concerns (e.g. World War II, Cyprus conflict), they can be seen as part of an overarching and systematic campaign to destroy the economic presence of all non-Muslim minorities in the country and to reinforce the on-going process of economic Turkification.[24] The final act in this pattern was in 1974, during another peak in the Cyprus conflict, when Turkey's Supreme Court ruling made it illegal for minority foundations to obtain any new property, except for those that had been officially declared in 1936, as required by the Law on Foundations (no. 2762, passed in 1935). Following this decision, minority foundations lost all the properties that they had received since 1936 by community

[22] According to Güven (2005), there were 15 deaths, between 300-600 wounded, and 60 reported cases of rape, though the latter is assumed to be much higher. Close to 4500 workplaces and 900 houses were reported as being damaged during the pogrom.

[23] As per the Ankara Agreement signed between Turkey and Greece in 1930, regardless of birthplace and nationality all Greeks living in Turkey were granted right to residence. The decision to annul the agreement impacted over 10.000 Greek citizens living in Istanbul, but as many had married with Turkish citizens of Greek origin, the decision led to the departure of more than 40.000 ethnic Greeks.

[24] For example, in public and political discourse the events of 6-7 September 1955 were framed as a reaction to Greece's Cyprus policy, and more specifically to rumours that the Greeks had attacked the birth home of Ataturk in Thessaloniki. However, as Güven (2005) argues the pogrom was part of a much more endemic and organized minority cleansing operation, made evident by the fact that while 59% of attacked properties belonged to Greeks, the remaining 17 per cent and 12 per cent were Armenian and Jewish respectively, which is similar to their population percentages at the time. See also: Aktar 2006, Bali 1999, Içduygu et al. 2008.

members through donation or inheritance, taking away significant sources of revenue necessary to their very survival. By ruining economic and communal foundations, and shattering minorities' sense of security and belonging in Turkey, these various developments served to prepare the grounds for their 'voluntary' emigration. According to the 1927 census, non-Muslims constituted close to 3% of the country's population; this dropped to just over 1% in 1955 (Güven 2005), while estimates in 2000 point to a mere 0.2% (Içduygu et al. 2008).

Istanbul had been largely exempted from the measures taken against non-Muslim populations during the late Ottoman Empire and early decades of Republic, including the Armenian Genocide and Greek population exchange that led to a near obliteration of these populations in Anatolia. Moreover, the non-Muslim citizens fleeing Anatolia due to ongoing persecution and/or impoverishment had sought refuge in the cosmopolitan environment of Istanbul, leading to their populations' growth and concentration in the city. Güven notes: 'The goal of the Turkish state to 'purify' Anatolia from Christians and Jews through settlement policies and to concentrate them in Istanbul unless they have not already emigrated abroad, had already been realized in the 1950s. In 1955, almost all non-Muslims of the Republic lived in Istanbul'[25] (2005: 141). But Istanbul too presented a temporary refuge, because for the political elite the time to 'purify' Istanbul had arrived (ibid). The Istanbul pogrom in 1955 was a first step in this direction. Many Greeks, Armenians and Jews left the city, being shocked by the extent of violence and lack of state protection. The expulsion of Greek citizens in 1964 led to the near extinction of this population in Istanbul, which had been their homeland of

[25] Records of the American Consulate in Istanbul state that there were 103.809 Greek Orthodox, 60.260 Armenian-Gregorian, 76.965 Jews and 21.950 Roman Catholic (Güven 2005: 141).

centuries.[26] In the midst of such unfortunate incidents, coupled with discriminatory legal initiatives (see above the Tax Law of 1945 and Law on Foundations in 1974), the properties owned by non-Muslims were abandoned, sold for low value or confiscated by the state.

This history is highly significant for understanding Kumkapı today as it is one among several such neighbourhoods in Istanbul, which as a consequence of these developments transformed from being residential quarters of non-Muslim populations into hubs absorbing new migrant arrivals.[27] While the human face of these native populations have declined significantly or entirely within these localities, as will be shown in the second section, their material remnants, such as religious and educational institutions that were part of their dwelling, remain visible, pointing to absent presences. Nostalgic memory looms large in these localities, where the past is very often depicted by Turkish and remaining non-Muslim minorities as a time of peaceful harmony and cosmopolitan co-existence, while the events leading to a rupture in this past are rarely spoken about. As Amy Mills (2010) highlights in her ethnographic study of Kuzguncuk neighbourhood in Istanbul, one of the first Jewish settlements in the city, these nostalgic memories are less about the past and more about a disillusionment with the present moment. This is a present characterized by social alienation, unfamiliarity and a lost sense of locality-based belonging caused by the dramatic changes in the demography, layout and pace of the city. Chapter 6 will examine such selective and nostalgic

[26] In 1955 there were just over 100.000 Greek Orthodox citizens in Istanbul. In 1978 this dropped to around 7000 (Güven 2005: 151).

[27] Other examples are Elmadağ (Danış & Kayaalp 2004), Kuzguncuk (Mills 2008), Fener-Balat (Soytemel 2014) and Tarlabaşı (Perouse 2011, Yılmaz 2008).

remembrances about dwelling in Kumkapı in the past and the factors ascribed to its supposed ruination in the present.[28]

Internal migrations

In the early decades of the Republic, internal migrations were small and limited to the movements of civil servants across the country, and of remaining non-Muslim populations in Anatolia heading to Istanbul (Içduygu & Sirkeci 1999). Following World War II, however, internal migrations became a prevailing phenomenon defining Turkey's economic, political and social landscape. Starting in the 1950s, the first flows were heavily characterized by rural to urban migrations. These were triggered by push factors such as agricultural mechanization and changes to traditional land tenure leaving rural masses without work and/or land,[29] and pull factors, including growing demand for workers in urban industries (Karpat 1976). In the first decades, migrants were primarily men.[30] The largest migration flows originated from the Black Sea, Central and Eastern Anatolia provinces and were concentrated in the three largest cities in Turkey: Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir.[31] From the 1960s onwards, both the geography and demography of migrations evolved to include more urban to urban migrations across

[28] In the 1960s, economic factors took centre stage in generating new emigrations from Turkey. Compared to the departure of religious minorities mentioned in this section, Turkish labour emigration had little direct impact on Istanbul or Kumkapı specifically and is therefore not mentioned here. However, I did encounter a few respondents during fieldwork that had briefly joined these labour circuits, primarily to Middle East and Russia. For some background on Turkish labour emigrations see Appendix 3.

[29] Efforts toward agricultural mechanization had started already in the early 20th century under both Ottomans and the Turkish Republic (Tekeli 2008). However, they remained unsustainable given the global depression starting in 1929 and the Second World War.

[30] Based on an analysis of the 1960 census Tümertekin (1968: 128) notes that men composed more than 60 per cent of migrants moving to urban settlements, while women were in the majority in rural populations.

[31] In 1960, Istanbul, Ankara and Izmir absorbed 40 per cent of internal migrations. 58 per cent of Istanbul's population were born in other provinces (Tümertekin 1968: 128, 151). According to my calculations from the 2000 census the non-local population in Istanbul still remains high, at 62 per cent.

Turkey (Gedik 1992) and female migrants arriving as family members (Özbay and Yucel 2001). In the early decades of the Republic, Turkey's urban population had remained stagnant at around 24 per cent. From the 1950s onwards it increased rapidly, to 38 per cent in 1970 and 60 per cent in 1990. Today Turkey's rural population amounts to less than 10 per cent.

In the 1950s, existing housing stocks in cities were insufficient to accommodate all migrant arrivals. Therefore migrants started appropriating public lands in the urban periphery where they constructed illegal houses known in Turkish as *gecekondu* (which translates as 'built over night').[32] Public authorities overlooked these informal settlements, as the state was unable to provide social housing and needed migrant labour for urban industries. In fact, Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, a populist politician who ruled during the 1950s, implicitly supported the formation of these informal settlements by undertaking urban development projects that developed the infrastructure of these settlements, such as bringing electricity and water, and building highways to connect the settlements to centrally located manufacturing sites. Given this security, *gecekondu* settlements vastly expanded both vertically and horizontally. Migrants' choices of settlement were based around kinship and regional networks. By building a *gecekondu* home, migrants were able to deploy traditional mechanisms of reciprocity for incorporation into employment markets and as insurance against risk (Erder 1996, Keyder 2005). By the 1960s however, *gecekondu* construction emerged as a profitable market to such an extent

[32] Migrants would build the properties 'over night' to avoid the housing authorities stopping their work. Once the house was built, it would be less likely for authorities to order its demolition.

that newcomers were increasingly more restricted to renting, creating new layers of stratification among migrants (ibid).

Indeed Kumkapı, as a historic inner city district, cannot be considered a *gecekondu.* However, there are underlying similarities in what the case of Kumkapı reflects about urban dwelling for migrants. Firstly, while newcomers might be lured and welcomed to the city with work opportunities (Chapter 5), access to secure housing often remains fragile (Chapter 4) and this has given rise to creative strategies of dwelling (Chapter 3). Secondly, it is a space where the boundaries between the formal and informal are continuously negotiated (Chapter 5). Hence like the *gecekondu*, the case of Kumkapı also shows the ways in which the state becomes absent or present in the ways that urban arrivals shape their dwelling strategies.

Related to this, the literature on urban migration in Turkey points to the changing perceptions towards internal migrants arriving in cities following the 1980s and highlights several key factors. Firstly, this is the period when Turkey began liberalizing its economy. Through a government decision issued on January 24, 1980, Turkey shifted from import-substitution industrialization to a market oriented growth strategy. As argued by Keyder (2005), during this period land emerged as a new commodity, dramatically changing the political reception of *gecekondu* settlements. Employment conditions worsened, as possibilities of obtaining secure jobs in the public and manufacturing sectors with formal benefits greatly diminished. Migrants who were previously seen as poor people lacking resources to find adequate shelter were being regarded instead as 'invaders of public property and beneficiaries of unfair privilege' (2005: 130). In this period, poverty in migrant neighbourhoods

became re-signified as a matter of crime and social decay, embodied in the term *varoş* (ghetto) that began replacing *gecekondu* for describing these places (Erman & Eken 2004, Işık & Pınarcıoğlu 2001). The same term also came into use for describing inner-city areas of physical and social decline (Şen 2015).

The second factor behind changed perceptions relates to the distinct ethnic profile of migrant arrivals during this period, when Kurds became more prevalent in internal migration flows. Kurds are the largest ethnic minority group in Turkey, composing between 13 to 16 per cent of the total population (Heper 2007). Historically, Kurds have remained concentrated in the Southeast and Eastern Anatolian provinces of the country. Kurds did not participate in separatist nationalist movements during the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the way that the Greek and Armenian minorities had. On the contrary, Kurdish tribes fought along with the Turks during Turkey's War for Independence and were also complicit in some of the atrocities against the Armenians, with whom they shared the same lands in Eastern Anatolia. Also, since Kurds shared the same religion with Turks, founders of the Republic refused to identify Kurds as a minority group under the Lausanne Treaty.[33] Nonetheless, the position of Kurds in Turkey and their relations with the state has been highly problematic throughout the country's history.[34] For many decades, the state's response to Kurds was characterized by an outright denial of a separate Kurdish ethnic identity and a discourse about Kurds as merely

[33] The Lausanne Treaty only officially recognizes non-Muslim populations as minorities, whereas Muslim ones, like Kurds, Circassians and the Laz people were not recognized.

[34] There were 17 Kurdish rebellions between 1920 and 1938, two of them, the Şeyh Said Rebellion in 1925 and Dersim rebellion in 1937 being major ones that were brutally suppressed by the state, leading to many deaths. Kurds were also impacted by assimilationist policies of the state, including the Law on Settlement mentioned in the previous sub-section.

backward and tribal 'mountain Turks' who were in need of further development (Yeğen 2007).

Kurds had been part of the economically motivated internal migrations following the 1950s to some extent, but from the mid-1980s forced migration and internal displacement became a defining feature of Kurdish migrations in and from the region. In the mid-1980s, the Turkish military forces and the Kurdish rebel group called the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) entered into armed conflict. During the mid-1990s the conflict reached its peak in terms of violence and the military introduced new insurgency strategies involving the destruction and forced evacuation of villages, in order to deprive rebels of any potential support base. The great insecurity, gross human rights violations, economic hardships and forced evacuations of the emergency ruling in the Kurdish regions of the country led to a great escalation in migration to cities further West.[35]

In sum, both an ethnic dimension and changed motive driven by adverse political and economic conditions came to characterize internal migrations following the 1980s (Çelik 2005, Kaya 2009, Secor 2004, Özbay 1997, Saraçoğlu 2010). As explained above, processes of land commodification and policies against squatter settlements severely hampered the urban integration prospects of incoming migrants. Kurdish migrants were particularly disadvantaged though, arriving in the city with little social, educational and material capital.[36] Because of the ethnic

[35] There are contesting figures as to how many people were impacted by village evacuations. While state figures quote roughly 400.000, the estimate provided in human rights reports is between 2-4 million (See Çelik 2005: 140).

[36] Due to the poorer developmental conditions of their regions of origin, many arrived in cities with low educational credentials. The high rates of illiteracy and lack of Turkish proficiency among

conflict, costing many lives on both sides, Kurds arriving in Western cities were also heavily discriminated against in both housing and employment, being relegated to the most deprived and derelict areas of the city, Kumkapı being one of them, and the lowest ranks of the informal market (Kaya 2009). Today in Kumkapı with the arrival of international migrants it is possible to speak of a shift in relations and an upward mobility of the Kurdish population who dictate housing and employment conditions (Chapter 5). However, as will become evident in Chapter 6, negative stereotypes about Kurdish populations are also highly prevalent in Kumkapı. And the context described above is highly significant for understanding these stereotypes' underlying structural sources.

Immigrations

As stated in the first section on emigration, the period corresponding to the fall of the Ottoman Empire and foundation of the Republic of Turkey is one where migration served as a nation-building tool. This was a two way process. While those who did not 'fit' the new nation were pushed out and forced to leave, those with the potential to strengthen national identity were welcomed. The criteria for inclusion and exclusion were determined primarily along religious lines. In the period between 1923 and 1997, it is estimated that approximately 1.7 million Muslim and ethnically Turkish people mainly from Bulgaria, Greece, Romania and Yugoslavia migrated to Turkey (Kirişçi

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Kurdish women in particular is a noted feature (Kaya 2009: 145). Because of the particular nature of their migration, in the 1990s Kurdish migrants stood out as "villagers' without villages" (Erder 1997), implying an inability to maintain or rely on support networks in their homelands that had been crucial for the survival of previous generations of voluntary labour migrants in Istanbul.

2000).[37] Notably, these populations were received in Turkey as *soydaş* (ethnic kin), receiving several benefits, including easy access to citizenship, allocation of farmlands for economic integration, and were socially received as compatriots returning to their 'homeland' (Erder 1997, Özbay & Yücel 2001). These privileges were formalized under the Law on Settlement passed in 1934, which defined a *göçmen* (migrant) as a person of 'Turkish descent and culture.'[38]

At the turn of the 21st century though, shared ethnic origin was no longer the primary force behind immigration to Turkey. There are several causal factors. On a more global level generally, advancements in travel and communication technologies during this period has facilitated increasing mobility across longer distances. A more specific factor relates to Turkey's geographical location at the centre of a region that has seen much political and economic turmoil over recent decades, including the Islamic revolution in Iran, the Iran-Iraq war, the fall of the Soviet Union, the break-up of Yugoslavia, the Gulf war, post 9/11 interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan and most recently the ongoing war in Syria. Events such as these, along with growing global economic disparities have pushed millions of people to Turkey for seeking asylum, improving livelihoods and/or transiting elsewhere.

[37] This included people who were forced to leave their lands also due to nation building efforts, such as the movement of around 400 thousand Muslims from Greece to Turkey under the population exchange in 1923, and the mass expulsions of more than 150.000 Bulgarian Turks in 1950-51 and 310.000 in 1989, who were fleeing forced assimilation under the communist regime. This figure also includes around 30.000 ethnically Turkish and/or Muslim immigrants from other countries, including Kazakistan, Krygizistan, Turkmenistan, China and Afghanistan.

[38] Though the formal immigration and citizenship laws of Turkey, such as the Law on Settlement of 1934, make a clear emphasis on 'Turkishness,' recent studies examining the immigration practices of the state in Turkey in the first half of the twentieth century reveal that the definition of Turkishness in this period was much more nuanced and generally being Muslim was given priority in its interpretation, while also Balkan migrants were treated more favourably than those from the Middle East (Çağaptay 2003, Kirişçi 2000, Danış & Parla 2009).

There are also several pull factors linked to Turkey's political economic developments. The liberalization of the Turkish economy in 1980 led to an opening of its borders to capital and commodity flows. During this period, the government realized the potential of the tourism industry, both for creating employment and bringing in foreign currency necessary to maintain the balance of payments. In order to promote trade and tourism, a liberal visa regime was introduced, leading to a massive growth in numbers of foreigners traveling to Turkey.[39] While the majority of these entries are indeed tourists, it also includes migrants coming to Turkey for purposes of trade, labour, seeking asylum and/or transit.

Besides ease of access, another pull factor is the relative political and economic stability of the country, especially following the rise to power of the Justice and Development Party (henceforth AKP) government in 2002. In the previous two decades, Turkey's globalization process was hindered by the insecure political and economic climate characterized by short-lived coalition governments, the Kurdish conflict, the disastrous earthquake of 1999 and economic crisis of 2001. In 2002, the AKP came into power winning a majority vote. Under AKP rule, Turkey maintained rapid and steady economic growth, rising to the 17th most powerful economy in the world. The government implemented significant democratic reforms as part of Turkey's European Union accession process. Turkey became a key player in international affairs by expanding its global political, economic and social influence, particularly across the Middle East and Africa. With such developments, Turkey has attained a central position

[39] In 1988, nearly 3.5 million tourists entered Turkey. This number increased to 10 million in the year 2000 and was over 28 million in 2010. Figures are obtainable through the websites of the Turkish Statistical Institute and the Ministry of Tourism.

on ‘the mental maps of prospective migrants’ (Düvell 2014: 5). Moreover, it has evolved into a net immigration country, attracting high and low skilled labourers, traders, students and retirees from vast geographical and socio-cultural backgrounds. Today, it is also host to the world’s largest refugee population, composed primarily of Syrian refugees. These different push and pull factors have led to substantial growth and diversification in Turkey’s immigrant population, which is reflected in the different data available on international migration flows (See Appendix 3).[40]

As mentioned at the beginning of this section, early immigration flows to Turkey mainly consisted of co-ethnic migrants arriving with the intention of long-term settlement, which in turn was facilitated by the Law on Settlement. Today though, international migrant arrivals in Turkey are highly diverse in their national, ethnic, religious and racial backgrounds, migration and settlement motives, labour opportunities and the like. Concurrently, legal mechanisms of settlement have become much more complex and stratified. Another important distinction of contemporary international migrations is that both motives and opportunities are increasingly more characterized by temporariness. One example of this is Turkey’s centrality for ‘transit migrants’ who arrive, legally or illegally, with the intention of moving onwards, mostly illegally, to EU countries (Düvell 2014). Turkey also hosts ‘circular migrants’ who come from countries allowed visa-free entry and stay for certain periods, many of who engage in informal trade and employment activities during this period (ibid.).

[40] Political and economic progress of Turkey has seen a radical downturn since 2013 (e.g. Gezi protests, resurgence of Kurdish conflict, successive terror attacks, etc.). It can be argued that the 2010s will be another turning point in Turkey’s migration history (both because of the changed political context, as well as the Syrian refugee influx which increased between 2013-2014 from 200.000 to 1.5 million, and is estimated to be over 3 million in 2017). But such an analysis extends beyond the scope of this thesis, as the fieldwork was carried out in 2012-2013 and Syrians were not prevalent in my research site.

Asylum seekers and refugees in Turkey can also be considered a temporary population, less so because of their intentions and more to do with legal frameworks. Even though Turkey was one of the original signatories to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, it remains one of the very few states in the world to maintain the 'geographical limitation' clause of the 1951 Convention. Accordingly, Turkish authorities only accept international legal responsibility in protecting refugees coming from Europe, which is defined by the borders of the European Council. So-called 'non-European' refugees are only permitted to stay in the country temporarily until the Directorate General for Migration Management grants them conditional refugee status and UNHCR resettles them.[41] Recognized refugees are generally resettled to third countries, including Canada, Australia and USA. The entire asylum process (from refugee recognition to resettlement) may take up to five years, if not more (Biehl 2015).[42] Moreover, the Turkish state applies a dispersal policy with non-European asylum seekers, meaning that for the entire duration of their stay they must live in cities designated by the Ministry of Interior, which are mostly provincial cities located in the interior of the country. Consequently, asylum seekers are barred from living in major metropolises like Istanbul and Ankara, though these cities offer them better survival chances during the prolonged asylum process due to widespread employment

[41] In previous decades, while the EU and international community were pressuring Turkey to remove the geographical limitation, the Turkish state insisted on maintaining the limitation for several reasons including domestic security considerations, proximity to countries on its' Southern and Eastern borders marked by instability, and fears over becoming the EU's 'dumping ground' (Kirişci 2008). Today however, it is likely that this pressure on Turkey is no longer voiced, as the de facto situation is that the country is hosting the world's largest refugee population, albeit in their own terms.

[42] During my fieldwork in Kumkapı, I only encountered few Syrian refugees. Yet it is worth mentioning here that the legal context for Syrian refugees in Turkey is distinct. Compared to other 'Non-European refugees', Syrians are subject to an entirely different asylum regime called 'Temporary Protection', which also grants only conditional refugee status. The name of this legal framework for Syrians is in itself highly emblematic of the temporariness instilled by laws.

opportunities, well established migrant communities and other social support networks (ibid). Hence the asylum seekers who choose to live outside of their designated city must do so informally.

Kumkapı is a place that accommodates such temporary and informal migrants and refugees, as opposed to the 'other' kinds of international migrants like students, highly-skilled professionals and retirees who are in a relatively more privileged status in terms of accessing residential and/or employment rights. As with the internal migrants discussed in the previous section, they are a population that straddles between the lure of economic opportunity and fragility of physical dwelling. Chapter 3 will show how temporariness shapes experiences and practices of physical dwelling in Kumkapı, including the forms of housing and domestic materialities that residents choose. It also reflects on how being 'temporary' is linked with uncertainty and ambivalence (e.g. waiting for statuses, to save enough income to realize next phase of migration project), which again shapes housing decisions. Chapter 5 points again to the ways in which temporariness links with different urban informalities, including deciding to take the risks of having irregular migration status as well as bearing the weight of exploitative living and working conditions.

2.2. Urban traces

The multiple migratory movements and histories described above are deeply and distinctly embedded in the physical, social and temporal space of Kumkapı, as well as its immediate surroundings. They overlap, run parallel with and crisscross one another,

and also intersect with other processes of urban change. In this section, I trace the urban imprints of these layered movements. I reflect on the different material and temporal consequences of these distinct but interlinked historical trajectories related to migrant mobilities and the evolution of cities.

In exploring these urban imprints, I introduce some of the core ideas pertaining to the concept of dwelling, as advanced by Tim Ingold in his essay 'The temporality of the landscape' (2000: 189-209). Here, Ingold centres his argument on a critique of both naturalistic views of landscape, that see it as a neutral and external backdrop to human activity, and culturalistic views, which see every landscape as the outcome of cognitive and symbolic ordering of space. Rather, Ingold defines a landscape as the form in which dwelling takes place and shape, and continually evolves with the passage of time. The process of dwelling, then, is realized through everyday practical movements and activities, comprising what Ingold terms tasks, carried out by all agents in a landscape, including humans, animals, plants, materials, water, air and so on. These tasks are rhythmic, being shaped by unique cycles and repetitions, like the lifecycle of a human being and seasons. Together they form a complex ensemble that Ingold describes through the concept of a 'taskscape.' Rather than one superseding the other, Ingold argues that form and process, landscape and taskscape, are mutually shaped. He notes, 'the landscape takes on its forms through a process of incorporation, not inscription… Thus the forms of the landscape arise alongside those of the taskscape, within the same current of activity… Since, moreover, the activities that comprise the taskscape are unending, the landscape is never complete: … it is perpetually under construction' (2000: 198-9).

In the following, I borrow from Ingold's conceptions of landscape and taskscape to understand the historical depths of spatial forms and temporal rhythms in present day Kumkapı. However, I examine movement in a different way to Ingold. For depicting a sense of the temporality of the landscape, Ingold refers to a landscape painting called *The Harvesters* made by Pieter Brugel the Elder in 1565 (2000: 201). He examines the different features of the landscape presented in the painting, showing how dwelt life emerges and becomes embodied through movements in this landscape, such as descending and climbing its hills and valleys, walking through its paths and tracks, cutting through the corn fields or resting under a tree. In his depiction there appears to be a harmonious emergence between past and present in the way that forms and movements mutually evolve. However, habitual patterns of movement, of dwelt life, may be ruptured easily and unexpectedly, which in Ingold's painting could entail the introduction of a new technology making some of the human tasks redundant, the sudden displacement of the peasants working the fields or a massive road construction cutting through the fields. Here, I aim to explore both continuities of dwelt life, but also to account for the traces of such ruptures and the re-emergence of dwelt life, particularly those that have been caused by migrations, which entails people leaving one environment of habituated tasks for another.

The section opens first with descriptions from Gedikpaşa and Laleli, two localities placed on the hill that borders the plain where Kumkapı lies. There are several reasons for including these two localities here and in this order. Firstly, they were part of my own taskscape, in the sense that I frequently tracked up and down through these hilled localities in my route to and from Kumkapı. This gave me a chance to observe and

compare the distinct spatial, temporal and functional features of these three neighbouring areas. Secondly, in the narratives of many Kumkapı residents, these two areas surfaced as important places in different ways, especially as places of work. Thirdly, the comparison shows how and why similar migratory forces can have radically different impacts on proximate urban spaces. This becomes evident through the different functional uses and temporal rhythms of space.

The Hills: Gedikpaşa and Laleli[43]

Gedikpaşa has a very long history as a residential settlement dating back to Byzantine times. After conquering Istanbul, the Ottoman administration applied a resettlement policy to both repopulate the city and break the predominance of Greeks. Gedikpaşa was one of the localities chosen for relocating Anatolian Armenians and for several centuries it remained a residential neighbourhood associated with Armenian ethnic identity. The area is also historically associated as being a location for *bekarhane* (residences for bachelors) or *bekar odaları* (bachelor rooms), which were places designated for accommodating labour migrants. These types of accommodation were located in the upper parts of the Gedikpaşa hill close to key business areas including the Grand Bazaar. Their presence in the area was contentious, for example in 1811 the *Bekarhane-i Gedikpaşa* was demolished amidst widespread efforts to clean the city of these settlements (Şabudak 2014). But the settlements continued to exist in the area informally (ibid.). As will be discussed in the next chapter, today the practice of bachelor rooms is also prevalent in Kumkapı, where it has taken on new forms and meanings.

[43] The map of the areas described here is included in Appendix 1.

Following the 1950s, Gedikpaşa was impacted by the expansion of small and medium sized industries and workplaces throughout the historical peninsula (See Appendix 5). The residential identity of the area rapidly disappeared as it emerged as the centre for Istanbul's shoe sector. During the late Ottoman and early Republican periods, the shoe sector remained primarily a Greek and Armenian trade, located mainly just north of Gedikpaşa in localities such as Divanyolu, Tavukpazarı and Uzunçarşı (Hür 1995). In the 1950s, it started both expanding into Gedikpaşa and Beyazıt, and moving into Turkish hands after migrants learned the trade through apprenticeship. And it has continued to incorporate successive waves of migrant arrivals to the city as both employees and employers.[44] Today, the trade has entirely changed hands, but as Hür (1995) mentions many of the technical terms in shoemaking still used come from Greek and Armenian languages, reflecting a past being made present through language.

As a result of the shoe sector expansion, today Gedikpaşa has almost entirely lost its historic residential function, with most building being transformed into *işhanı* (business inns) accommodating shops, workshops, depots and bachelor rooms.[45] The upper parts

[44] Müftüoğlu's (2005) comprehensive study of the shoe sector in Gedikpaşa shows the significant role of migrants in the expansion of the sector. In 1995, 78 per cent of all business owners were born outside of Istanbul and 58 per cent migrated to Istanbul between 1950-1970. The shoe labourers are also primarily migrants but of more recent decades: 61 per cent of all labourers in the shoe sector were born outside of Istanbul and 60 per cent migrated after 1976. Finally, the figures also show how migration forms are transforming involving initially more rural to rural migration, and lately including also urban to urban and international migrations. Of the business owners that migrated in the 1950-1970 period, 81.8 per cent were born in villages. Of the labourers who migrated in more recent decades, 51 per cent were born in villages, 40 per cent in cities and notably 8.5 per cent born abroad. These figures also testify to the history of changing migration patterns mentioned in the previous section.

[45] This transformation of Gedikpaşa's is again reflected in Müftüoğlu's (2005) study for which she surveyed all buildings in *Mimar Hayrettin Mahallesi* where Gedikpaşa is located, identifying a total of 519 buildings and 1606 units. She found that 88 per cent of buildings in the area were being used as work places, the remaining 12 per cent serving either residential or other purposes (e.g. Church, mosque or school). And of all workplaces, 64 per cent were linked with the shoe sector, the remaining involving mainly services.

of Gedikpaşa along Divanyolu Avenue are mostly lined with shops (including many wholesale shoe, bag and slipper shops), cafeterias and fast food shops catering to both tourists and traders. Walk some 20 meters downhill, it becomes clear that one has entered a manufacturing zone, audible through sounds of shoe hammer blows, sewing and press machines, along with music being played on tape or someone singing for self-entertainment during a long day of labour. One might also hear the sound of packaging tape rotating around large carton boxes or big white burlap sacks filled with wholesale purchased orders. As most workshops are small, if the orders are large the packaging action might happen on the storefront or even right in the middle of the street if it is closed to traffic. Shop signs abound in the area, most including a reference to *ayakkabı* (shoe) and/or *deri* (leather). Handwritten paper adverts are posted on walls here and there, some calling attention to machines for sale and others to labour demand, often including the term *sayacı,* which refers to a person who cuts out shoe uppers. Today, the workshops in Gedikpaşa are no longer limited to the shoe sector, including also the production of other fashion products like *çanta* (bags).

On Sundays, when all workshops are closed, there is complete silence in the area. The only exception is mid-way down on Gedikpaşa road or *Sarayiçi Sokak* (*sokak* meaning street), parallel to Gedikpaşa road, when hymns and chants start echoing in the air as one approaches the *Gedikpaşa Armenian Protestant Church* (1912) and the *Surp Hovhannes Church* (1846). Besides the shoe trade, these two churches are possibly the only other remaining marks of Gedikpaşa's history as a Greek and Armenian settlement. The latter one is hardly visible from the street, hidden behind large fenced walls and a gate. It mainly serves Turkish Armenians, some living locally, others old residents or

their relatives. The Protestant Church, on the other hand, stands tall in the open and is used by a great diversity of people for different purposes. On one occasion when I visited the church in July 2012, the main chapel was host to an event called 'Worship Experience' where American, Mongolian, Nigerian, Philippine, Ethiopian and Iranian worshippers shared their different ways of prayer using music and dance. At the same time, pilgrims from South Korea were holding a separate ritual event in the lower chapel. While there, I met some Iranians who were Christian converts and asylum seekers and learnt that the church was providing them with temporary shelter in a basement room. On another occasion, I visited the large basement of the church that was also beıng used as an informal school for children of Armenian migrants during the week. In 2013, the school provided classes for over 100 children aged 6 to 12. As a micro landscape and taskscape within itself, this church shows how forms and practices of dwelling evolve through a re-appropriation of space by new arrivals in view of present needs. In other words, while a certain history (the Armenian presence in Turkey) is kept alive through maintaining the place (i.e. not letting it go to ruins and keeping it open and active), with new tasks being incorporated, new layers of meanings are also added, some with no direct links to this history.

Following Gedikpaşa to the east, Laleli stretches north and south along *Ordu Caddesi* (*Cadde* meaning Road). Its historical record as a settlement does not go back that far like Gedikpaşa or Kumkapı, nor is it characterized historically as a Christian minority settlement. It gained significance after Sultan Mehmet III built the *Laleli Külliyesi* in 1763, *külliye* being a complex of institutions like a school, foundation, clinic, kitchen and other charitable services for the community (Kuban 1995). In its recent history

though, Laleli has seen many more functional changes than the former two. A major change occurred after the First World War, when the locality was re-planned with orthogonal streets and some of the first apartments of the Republican period were built here, including the *Harikzedegan Apartments* built just next to the *Laleli Külliyesi* in 1920. After this, the area evolved as a reputable housing zone. Urban sociologist Çağlar Keyder who grew up in Laleli recounts this character, noting, 'Laleli has always been a residential neighbourhood favoured by bureaucrats whose offices were only a short distance away, university teachers[46] and personnel and modest tradesmen', adding 'this was a profoundly local world in the immediate post-1945 era' (1999: 173-4).

Like in Gedikpaşa, this context changed abruptly in the 1950s. One factor was the expansion of Ordu Road and the conversion of Aksaray and Beyazıt squares into traffic circles, a project realized by Prime Minister Adnan Menderes, who Keyder (1999) describes as a person fond of cars and large boulevards. Menderes left his mark on Istanbul in the form of demolishing large swaths of old neighbourhoods, many of them habitats of the remaining non-Muslim populations, getting rid of streetcars and introducing the inner city to great traffic and congestion. In this process, Laleli emerged as the centre of the automotive sector, accommodating showrooms for used cars and spare part shops. Keyder notes: 'Traffic associated with this new trade clogged the streets and effectively put an end to the closed and intimate life styles that had characterized the neighbourhood earlier' (ibid: 176).[47]

[46] Istanbul University, one of Turkey's oldest universities that set its foundations in the mid-15th century when the Ottomans conquered Istanbul is located nearby in another neighbouring area called Beyazit.

[47] The historical marks of this trade can still be seen today in the larger area, with the spare parts and car repair shops remaining concentrated across the Atatürk Boulevard in Yenikapı.

As Turkey started emerging as a tourist destination in the 1970s, Laleli was set for a second change when prospective entrepreneurs in the hotel sector entered the locality, hoping to benefit from its central location vis-a-vis the old city tourist attractions. Old apartment buildings were converted into hotels, and the area gained a reputation as a district for small and inexpensive hotels for tourists on limited budgets. During the late 1970s and early 1980s, Istanbul emerged as a magnet for Arab middle classes from the newly oil-rich countries of the Middle East, and Laleli was at the centre of this tourism. For instance, the *Harikzedegan Apartments* were converted into a hotel in 1980. This is a powerful example of how the past, in this case the design and vision of Laleli as a modern residential dwelling place, paved the way for its emergence as a hotel district, though this was not the future imaginary at the time.

In the same period, Laleli was being introduced to an informal transnational trading practice known as *bavul ticareti* (suitcase trade). During the 1970s Hungarian, Yugoslav, Czech and Polish tourists to Istanbul brought trading items with them in suitcases, such as foreign cigarettes and alcohol, porcelain and crystal goods and electrical equipment to exchange with traders in the Grand Bazaar and its surrounding Beyazıt for leatherwear, garments and gold (Yükseker 2004). In the early 1980s Algerians, Libyans, Egyptians and Iraqis also began arriving as suitcase traders (Peraldi 2004). After the fall of the Soviet Union, ‘world events prepared a new opportunity for Istanbul and Laleli’ (Keyder 1999: 177), with suitcase trade seeing an unprecedented growth, consisting predominantly of women traders from Russia. As a result, all remaining residential buildings in Laleli were converted into malls, including mainly wholesale shops, as well as shipping companies locally referred to as *kargo*. Less

accessible top floors became storage places, manufacturing workshops or residences for workers.

Today entering the streets of Laleli feels like one has entered a colossal open-air shopping mall, with dizzying window displays of mannequins exhibiting latest fashion designs under bright fluorescent lights and huge signboards sporting store names. Through careful observation in and around the neighbourhood, I noticed an informal planning practice at play in Laleli: women's fashion dominates the Northern and Western parts along Ordu Avenue and Ataturk Boulevard, men's fashion is located on the smaller streets in the interior, while *bebeciler* (a term used to refer to those selling baby/children's clothes) are in the south where Laleli meets Kumkapı. 'Russians' (implying various nationals of former Soviet Union countries) remain the preferred clientele, which is reflected in the predominance of advertisements in Cyrillic alphabet, though there are also some in Arabic. One might also encounter paper signs posted on a shop window stating *eleman aranıyor* (seeking personnel), plus different specific adjectives such as *bayan* (female), *Rusça bilen* (Russian speaking) and *Arapça bilen* (Arabic speaking). In one instance, I encountered a sign stating *36-38 beden bayan eleman aranıyor* (seeking female personnel, size 36-38). When I inquired in the store why size was specified, they commented that the assistants were also expected to model the clothes, either in the store or during sales done via international video calls (cf. Dağdelen 2008: 211).

The Laleli market has its seasons of calm and frenzy. From around Christmas up until February, and during the summer months, bored shopkeepers can be found outside their shops chatting with neighbours and trying to pass the time. During spring and fall,

Laleli's streets buzz with traders wandering from shop to shop searching for the best offers. As in Gedikpaşa, the sound of rotating packaging tape scratches the ear as you walk past. Porters pace speedily through the streets pulling large carts loaded with piles of sacks and alert meandering traders to watch their backs as they approach them. Hotel lobbies and *kargo* offices become almost impenetrable with the heaps of parcels waiting to be shipped. Most of Laleli's main streets are closed to traffic during the daytime, so traders feel more relaxed wandering about the area. In the evening, both shipment delivery cars and food vendors crowd the streets. Depending on the season, food vendors appear selling seasonal delights like grilled fish and fried liver sandwiches, rice with chicken, fresh orange and pomegranate juice, and sliced apples or watermelon. As in Gedikpaşa, on Sundays, there is total silence in the area as all shops are closed and most traders have already returned home or gone elsewhere.

Today Laleli is a market run by migrants, as the surge in suitcase trade in the area in the 1990s coincided with two other analogous migratory movements in Turkey: the internal migration of ethnic Kurds and refugee influxes from the Balkans, Bosnia and Bulgaria. This is reflected in the profile of business owners and workers. In her study of suitcase trade in Laleli during the late 1990s, Deniz Yükseker described Laleli's human profile as the following: 'Bulgarian Turks have mostly become salespeople or interpreters in stores. Among the Kurds, the younger and poorer have become porters and street vendors. The more resourceful, and those with some start-up capital, have opened apparel and leatherwear stores' (2004: 52). The 2000s then saw the growing integration of Russian-speaking female migrants into the market as sales assistants, and the like (Eder and Öz 2010). Today, the human marks of these diverse migrations spanning

decades still hold. Like in Gedikpaşa, my research into Laleli was mainly limited to observations during walks through the locality, though I did briefly chat with several storeowners as well as visit a hotel contact in the area many times. During these few encounters alone I was able to observe the diverse ethnic and gender composition already stated. Among those I met there was a Kurdish clothing store owner working in partnership with his Russian wife who used to be his client, a clothing store co-owned by a Turkish man and a Bosnian man whose sales assistant was an ethnic Arab, an ethnically Turkish Bulgarian cargo shop manager, a Moldovan female sales clerk and a Kurdish hotel owner (female) who employed a Georgian cleaning lady and catered to a wide range of customers coming from Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Iraq, Uganda and Nigeria.

The Plain: Kumkapı

Stretched below the hills of Gedikpaşa and Laleli, Kumkapı has a history dating back many centuries as one of the port settlements located in Istanbul's historical peninsula (Akın 1995). In the Byzantine period, the area was a harbour region known as *Kontoskalion,* meaning 'small pier', and remained the principal fishing port of the city for several centuries (Freely 2000). In the mid-18th century, the harbour was partly filled and replaced with piers for boats carrying sand to the fortified city through the gate that gave the locality its modern name, *Kum* (sand) *Kapı* (gate). Like in Gedikpaşa, under the Ottomans the area evolved into an Armenian quarter after Sultan Fatih Mehmet, the conqueror of Istanbul, re-settled Anatolian Armenian populations in the area. Also in 1641, the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul was moved from nearby Samatya, another historically Armenian settlement, to Kumkapı, where it remains active to this day.

Hence over several centuries, Kumkapı remained an important and lively residential district for Armenians and to some extent Greeks.[48] This history is physically evident today from the many churches and schools in the area.

At the lower end of Gedikpaşa Road is the walled compounds of the Greek Orthodox Church named after its patron saint, *Ayia Kiriaki* (first records 1583), which roughly sets the Eastern border of Kumkapı, divided from the next locality, Kadırga, by a large square. Facing the church, behind a little courtyard shaded by vine leaves is a two-story L-shaped building that used to be a school. Like many minority schools, it closed when there were not enough students to keep it running. Today the church foundation accountant, who was born in Kumkapı but moved at a young age to Yeşilköy,[49] has an office in the building. Behind the church is a single-story residence for the church guard. As in most Greek churches across Istanbul, the family tending the church and living in the guards' house in the churchyard are recent Christian migrants from Hatay, a province bordering Syria that remains home to a few thousand Greek Orthodox Christians.[50] The church is open today for tourist visits. On holy days, like its patron saint day in July, Orthodox Christians, who have been divided by geographies but united by the significance of Kumkapı to their past or present dwelling, join in celebration. When I attended the event in 2013, a dozen or so Greek citizens, previous

[48] While the area remained a minority quarter, it was not a static community. For example Basut (2002) examines the impact of 19th century modernization in Kumkapı when well to do minorities started moving to the 'new city' developing around Galata and Pera, being replaced by middle and low-income groups.

[49] For the Greek and Armenian minorities who did not emigrate abroad, industrialization and arrival of internal migrants in the inner city served as a motive to move away from their historic neighbourhoods and into the modern apartments being developed in areas then considered suburbs, including Yeşilköy and Bakırköy.

[50] After World War I until 1939, Hatay remained part of the French Mandate of Syria, and therefore this historic community was excluded from the population exchange with Greece in 1923.

Kumkapı residents, had arrived from Athens especially to attend the event.[51] This ritual event can be considered a form of 'haunting' as Till explains: 'People create homes for their ghosts through telling stories about places and returning to places that haunt them' (2005: 13). This ritual of return on the part of the *Rum*[52] that emigrated to Greece can be interpreted as a place-making act in efforts to contain the past and create a sense of continuity and coherence, despite the radical changes to imagined times and selves. It is also a ritual where contested claims to space and practices within space become visible. During this event, I observed strong social and cultural divisions and hierarchies between the *Rum* of Athens and Istanbul, and recent migrants originating from Hatay. For instance, the former distinguished the latter by categorizing them as *Arab Orthodox,* as they are an Arabic speaking community and few know the Greek language.[53] Even though such social differences are drawn though, it becomes evident that the continuity of dwelling, in this case maintaining a place with great symbolic value for the *Rum* community, also rests on the accommodation of otherness.

Heading straight across from *Ayia Kiryaki* towards to sea, there is a small quiet residential pocket surrounding the *Surp Harutyun* (d. 1855) Armenian Church. Historically, this was the residential area where fishermen and rowing boat transporters lived, which were among the main economic trades in the locality. Today, there is

[51] The church accountant told me that there is an association in Athens called *Kontoskalion*, Kumkapı's Greek name, founded by old residents who also organize the annual tour to take part in the name day.
[52] *Rum* is the group name used historically for Turkish citizens of Greek ethnicity.
[53] One example of this division is around class and gender roles. During the name day of the church several women from Hatay were frantically preparing and serving a large lunch feast for the 'other' guests. After the event, I had the opportunity to chat with one of them and she complained about what she saw as snobbish and indecent manners of the 'Western' Christian women: 'They dress up and use make up too much, like with us it is shameful to wear short skirts. Today there was one when she kneeled down to take communion her breasts showed! I pulled her shirt back so they wouldn't show. Such things do not happen with us.'

sandal boat displayed in the churchyard as a dedication to the local boatmen who helped construct the church. The trade was severely hampered by the construction of Kennedy Road, the coastal highway built by Prime Minister Adnan Menderes in 1958 that destroyed the ancient harbour and Kumkapı's historic relation to the sea. The quiet and calm residential feel of this quarter ends starkly with the famous *meyhane* district of Kumkapı. Derived from Persian words, *mey* (wine) *hane* (house) refers to a type of traditional restaurant in Turkey serving alcoholic beverages. *Meyhane* culture dates back to the Byzantine Empire, and during the Ottoman period thrived in seaside cities receiving merchants and in areas where non-Muslim populations concentrated, as they were not affected by various Sultans' periodic alcohol bans. In Kumkapı, these taverns were closely linked with the nearby fishermen's quarter (Akın 1995). Today, some 20 *meyhane*'s line a small circular plaza with a fountain in its centre and six radiating streets, lined with hundreds of tables and chairs.[54] Only one restaurant remains in Armenian hands (*Kör Agop Restaurant*), while most proprietors today are from Erzincan.[55] And the clientele here are primarily foreign tourists being bussed in from their hotels.

Here in this one corner of Kumkapı is a vivid example of changing landscapes and taskspaces becoming mutually incorporated. A coastal inlet historically gave rise to a form of dwelling where the sea was central to the economy and culture of communal life; then a massive concrete road ruptured this habitual realm, alongside the wider

[54] Istanbul's *Balık Hali (*whole sale fish market hall) was built on the seaside of Kumkapı in 1988, and was closed down in 2015, being moved further West to the outskirts of the city.

[55] Information based on interview with a representative of KUMDER that is the abbreviation for *Kumkapı Turistik Restoranları ve Esnafları Dayanışma Derneği* (Kumkapı Touristic Restaurants and Tradesmen Solidarity Association).

political developments already forcing minorities to emigrate. While the dwelling practices of the past that gave rise to *meyhane'*s no longer exist, the area has re-invented itself with tourism thanks to the large boulevard that permits transferring hoards of tourists in buses. These buses park in a large lot bordering the *Surp Harutyun Church.* Several of the large parking lots in Kumkapı like this one are marks of past ghosts in the present landscape, being minority properties confiscated and destroyed following the Supreme Court ruling of 1974.[56]

On the corner where the *meyhane* district meets *Çifte Gelinler Caddesi* (*Cadde* meaning road), there is a large elegant four-storey white stone building. Its windows are covered with delicately wrought black iron bars that are also fenced in the back. One is likely to see laundry hanging on these fences, or men trying to peer through in an effort to catch some fresh air or a glimpse of street life. The building is Istanbul's detention and deportation centre for foreigners who are without proper documents or have committed a crime, officially called the *Kumkapı Geri Gönderme Merkezi* (Kumkapı Return Centre).[57] The backyard of the detention centre where detained migrants are allowed brief intervals of movement borders with the walls of Kumkapı's oldest church, the *Panayia Elpida Greek Orthodox Church*, whose first records date to the 1400s. The guard of the *Ayia Kiryaki* church holds the keys to the large gate guarding *Elpida Church,* which remains closed almost entirely except for holy days. This one juncture of Kumkapı alone, where two massive buildings, one entirely vacated and the other jam-

[56] The Hrant Dink Foundation has prepared a meticulous study and mapping of confiscated properties formerly belonging to the many Armenian Foundations. This lot is also marked in this study. See *2012 Declaration: The Seized Properties of Armenian Foundations in Istanbul.* Accessible online at http://istanbulermenivakiflari.org (Accessed 06.08.2017)

[57] The detention centre was closed after I completed my field research. Today it is used as a registration centre for Syrian refugees

packed with detainees, presents another stark example of different migration worlds colliding.

Some two blocks westwards from the *meyhane* area is *Sevgi Sokak,* which is where the local Armenian history is still most actively present.[58] At its northern corner is a pinkish coloured large concrete building with a tiled roof and wooden window frames in the same hues of brown. This is the *Bezciyan Armenian Elementary School* (d. 1828), one of the few active minority schools in Turkey.[59] During the day there are minibuses lined in front of the school or the parking lot across from it, another likely mark of a historically contested minority property. Drivers pass time drinking tea at the corner tea shop before driving the children back to their homes in other districts. Crosswise from the school is a majestic and elegant wooden white building, walled with vines and two palm trees at its front, which is the headquarters and residence of the Armenian Patriarchate (d. 1461). The massive complex is guarded 24 hours a day by security personnel sitting in a glass cube at its entrance, and often a police car waiting nearby. Next to the school and facing the Patriarchate are large walls and a massive metal gate shielding *Surp Asdvadzadzin Church*, also first built in 1461. Several people, mainly ethnically-Armenian migrants from Turkey's eastern regions, tend the church on a daily basis. Today this is the most actively used church in Kumkapı. On holy days or special

[58] Though I did not have the opportunity to delve into when or how this street was named as such, *Sevgi Sokak,* which in English means Love Street, is peculiar given the significance of this particular street to ethnic Armenians who were, and to an extent continue to be, the subject of immense hatred by the majority ethnic Turks. As part of the wider assimilation campaign, there was also a practice of 'Turkifying' street names in non-Muslim neighbourhoods, in some cases with highly nationalistic terms.

[59] Like the churches, this school also represents a space being transformed as a result of new migrations. Normally, only ethnic minorities that are Turkish citizens may attend these schools. In 2010, however, a new regulation was passed which now permits children of Armenian immigrants to attend Turkish Armenian schools as 'guest students.'

events such as funerals or weddings, the street is packed with the cars of ethnic-Armenians visiting from across the city. Migrants from Armenia also frequent the church for prayers, and on Thursdays some of the older and impoverished ones wait in the churchyard to collect second-hand clothing and basic food items distributed by the charity office of the church.[60] On Sundays, Ethiopian Christians living in Kumkapı congregate in the small chapel that the church administration allocated to them so they may freely hold their distinct rituals. These are yet other examples of religious taskscape evolving in view of new local needs.

Based on my experiences in the area, *Sevgi Sokak* is the most tranquil street throughout Kumkapı. The number of people walking through or standing around in this street is minimal, except for when schools buses drop off and pick up students, or on special religious occasions when Armenians across Istanbul visit the church. The temporality of *Sevgi Sokak* becomes apparent in the way it relates to the wider surroundings. Its tranquillity, maintained by the gaze of the security guards waiting at the gates of the Patriarchate, is an exception within the intense commotion of the surrounding area. It is a history that is felt and visible through the comparatively more cautionary presences.

On the north-western border of Kumkapı is the *Ayia Todori* Greek Orthodox Church. The entrance gate to the church is located on *Türkeli Caddesi* but is barely visible from

[60] Like with the Greek Church, a hierarchy of geographies are made present here as well: Administrative matters, including the charity office, are mainly managed by 'Istanbul Armenians'. The guards and keepers are 'Eastern' Armenians (or 'Kurdish Armenians' as some also call). As mentioned most of the people seeking aid from the charity office are Armenian migrants, who the Turkish Armenians distinguish as *Hayastanlı*, also referred by some as 'Soviet Armenians' (there were also a few Iraqi Assyrian Christians).

the street, hiding between several retail stores and large flashy shop signs. Several times I found mannequin displays and hanging racks belonging to the next-door store partly blocking the entrance gate. Next to the gate is a small sign saying *Langa Rum Ilköğretim Okulu* (Langa *Rum* Primary School). In 2014 the school had only seven students, most of them the children of the local church guards from Hatay, or their relatives also living locally in apartment buildings that Church foundations were able to hold on to (meaning that they were declared in 1936). *Langa*, a name that goes back to Byzantine times, is the historic name of this area that separated Kumkapı from Yenikapı. This was the point where the Lycus river, the only river flowing through the historical peninsula which has since dried out, flowed into the sea carrying with it rich alluvial earth (Freely 2000: 200). During the Ottoman period, one of the largest vegetable gardens within the walled city was grown here, called the *Langa Bostanı* (Langa Gardens) (Behar 2003). Today this history is maintained only in street names on both sides of the vast Ataturk Boulevard, like *Langa Karakolu Sokak* (Langa Police Station Street) on the East and *Langa Bostanları Sokak* (Langa Gardens Street) on the West, and also gives its name to a local football team (cf. Perouse 2011). Only the oldest residents know and occasionally use this name for describing the area, while in the imaginary of most new residents, including my own when I first entered the field, it is referred to as either Kumkapı or Yenikapı. It is then a history that remains physically present in local signage but its meaning and inhabitants' memory of it is gradually fading with the passage of time.

As evidenced by the aforementioned blocked church gate, this is an area where the impinging force of Laleli is most strongly felt in Kumkapı. *Hayriye Tüccarı Caddesi*

has become the centre for *bebeciler* (children's wholesale clothing stores)[61], its two side streets (*Asya Sokak* and *Asker Sokak)* have become the headquarters for dozens of *kargo* agencies, and there are several large hotels, restaurants and cafeterias in the area facing Yenikapı metro station. In the early evening, traffic on *Hayriye Tüccarı Caddesi* comes to a deadlock with delivery trucks. Late at night and on Sundays when retail shops are closed and car traffic is minimal, the street turns into an informal market where hawkers spread out cloths or make shift counters along the pavements to display clothes, bags, shoes, watches and perfumes for sale.

Despite the lingering pressure from Laleli, the heart of Kumkapı, tucked between two Boulevards, a commercial road and *meyhane* district, remains essentially residential. There are several marks to testify, including the distinct temporalities already alluded to above. On weekends and evenings when there is dead silence on the streets of Laleli and Gedikpaşa, the streets of Kumkapı are alive and loud. There is a pedestrian road cutting through Kumkapı, starting after the *meyhane*'s and ending with the *Ayia Todori Church*. This street (named *Molla Taşı Caddesi* in the eastern part and *Katip Kasım Sokak* in the western part*)* is heavily, but as will be mentioned below distinctly, commercialized. It is busy at all times with people running errands or just taking a stroll. Its side streets, except for *Sevgi Street* mentioned above, are crowded with children playing while grown-ups stand or sit around apartment doorsteps, watching those passing by or catching up on gossip with neighbours. On Sundays especially, many migrants can be found standing in front of the dozens of internet and telephone

[61] During my fieldwork in 2013, several estate agents told me that Syrian entrepreneurs, fleeing the war, were buying stores in this area, which was being reflected in the increasing Arabic signage of some stores.

centres locally referred to as 'call-shops', all staring in different directions with phones in hand while speaking to loved ones in far away geographies. One real estate agent described it to me as: 'This is a street where every language is cried.'

The local economy of Kumkapı is also distinct in that it consists mainly of businesses catering to residents, such as estate agencies, grocery stores, bakeries, butchers, tailors, electricians, hardware stores, kebab joints, hair dressers, retail stores, laundry and dry cleaning shops, second hand furniture shops and 'call-shops'. However, Kumkapı is also a site for contestation between its use as a residential neighbourhood and demand for space from businesses. One example of this is the change in location of the Thursday market. On Thursdays the central part of *Alisan Sokak* (and its parallel *Ismail Sefa Sokak*) comes alive with the weekly *semt pazarı* (neighbourhood market) selling everything from fruits and vegetables, cheese and olives, fresh fish, food, clothing and household textiles like bed sheets and curtains.[62] Old residents of Kumkapı told me that this market has been running for several decades. It used to be located along the central *Molla Taşı Caddesi* but was moved further down because of the rise of businesses on that street. Vendors, who are primarily non-locals and move from one local Istanbul market to the other, loudly compete with one another by yelling their cheap deals in Turkish, shifting sometimes to a few words in Russian or English when they notice foreigners passing by. Most stalls in the market are designated for particular persons. The vendors must pay rent to the stall owners and to the Municipality. There are very few foreigners opening small stalls in the market, generally informally. They are mainly either Armenian women selling products from home like sardines, condensed milk,

[62] For a study on Istanbul's neighbourhood markets see Eder and Öz (2010).

noodles, coffee, Tabasco sauce and cosmetics,[63] and some Senegalese men, selling perfumes and watches, and African decorative ornaments like coconut shell bags and elephant statues. The Thursday market is immensely popular among 'old' and 'new' alike: I met some people who had long since moved far away from Kumkapı but occasionally returned to shop at the market; and several foreigners living locally, especially domestic workers, who took their weekly day off on Thursday instead of Sunday to buy clothing items for friends and family back at home, which they then immediately took to a cargo agency for shipment the same day.

As shown by Blommeart (2014), in contexts of migration driven diversity public signs are important markers of local processes of demographic, social and economic change. For instance, the call-shop signs in Kumkapı listing different international calling rates, written next to different country names and/or pictures of flags, reflect the vast global geography concentrating in the area. Some of the diner and hairdresser signs also portray which regional origins are predominant among foreigners in Kumkapı, such as *Özbek Lokantası* (Uzbek Diner) and *Africa Kuaför* (Africa Hairdresser). Though few, the diverse origins of the native population is also made evident in some of the local signage, such as signboards of hometown associations, like *Sasonlular Kültür ve Yardımlaşma Derneği* (Culture and Solidarity Association for People of Sason), which includes a coffee saloon with large tables where men play card games and rummy cube. The local signage in Kumkapı also points to its distinct taskscape compared to neighbouring localities. As mentioned, throughout the area white paper adverts are

[63] The popular daily Hurriyet, published an article about the market in 2006 , 'In Kumkapı, every Wednesday a little Armenia is being set up' (the market day was changed to Thursday afterwards). Accessed from: <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/Kumkapı-da-her-carsamba-kucuk-bir-ermenistan-kuruluyor-4873037> ()

common, which are posted either on shop windows or a wall that has somehow become popular corner for hanging adverts. Both in Gedikpaşa and Laleli, the term *aranıyor* (seeking) appears in most signs, distinctly preceded by a vocational name referring to the popular trades in these areas, like *sayacı* (upper shoe cutter) in the former and *bayan eleman* (female personnel). In Kumkapı however, most signs are for *kiralık oda* or *kiralık daire* (room to rent - flat to rent), preceded by several adjectives like *yabancıya* (for foreigner), *aileye* (for family), *bayana* (for female). As will be discussed under Chapter 4, this rental signage is one of the most significant markers on the surface reflecting the deep changes in the dwelling landscape and taskscape of Kumkapı as a result of the layered migration histories mentioned at the outset.

2.3. Conclusion

In this chapter I have laid out the historical and geographical context of the thesis. In examining the course of migrations from, to and through Turkey over the past century, I have shown how changing political and economic conjunctures are closely intertwined with the changing nature of migrations, as they shape the push and pull factors, the directions and demographic composition of movement, how migrants are received in their place of destination, and the like. I have also discussed how such changing conditions of migration relate to the dynamics of the city, especially in terms of patterns of settlement, labour markets and their modes of governance. While in the first section I presented this history mostly chronologically, speaking of different forms of migratory movement replacing another, in the second section where I described the material and temporal specificities of the urban landscape of this thesis, I have reflected on how

dwelling as a lens complicates such a linear reading of history. I have shown that migration, whether involving departures or arrivals, physically, temporally and socially marks urban space. As noted by Ingold, landscapes are 'constituted as an enduring record of –and testimony to – the lives and works of past generations who have dwelt within it, and in so doing, have left there something of themselves' (2000: 189). Kumkapı, and its two neighbouring localities Gedikpaşa and Laleli, have seen radical changes in population over recent decades, coupled with changes in functional use. Yet, as it has been discussed, the marks of dwelt life in the past still linger in the present in multiple forms, including buildings, trades, street signs, and the like. While populations may change, arriving under different circumstances and with distinct needs, their dwelling landscapes and taskscapes are built upon these histories. This process of amalgamation, though, is not necessarily smooth, requiring negotiation and compromise. A prevalent example is the minority churches kept active by overseers and used for variable purposes by new coming migrants. These actions involve re-negotiating boundaries, uses, and include new populations present in the area to varying degrees. The forthcoming chapter will reflect again on these different and overlapping historical movements, and the social, spatial and temporal context of diversity they have created in the present, but I will be moving further down in scale, exploring how the traces of historicity are infused within the housing sector.

Looking at three neighbouring localities comparatively has also exposed how and why the city becomes differently re-structured through migrations. All three areas were historically residential. Today, while Gedikpaşa and Laleli have seen radical

transformations in form and function, fully evolving into business districts, Kumkapı retains a residential flare, which is also warranted by population figures of these areas (See Appendix 2). However, as will be shown in forthcoming chapters, the same migratory forces have affected Kumkapı in a distinct way, which surfaces in the diversification of dwelling forms, practices and experiences. While the three areas are distinct in activities and rhythms, they are also interconnected, forming in a sense one big taskscape (residences in Kumkapı, production workshop in Gedikpaşa, sales shops in Laleli). It is both by looking at them separately and as one taskscape, that these distinctions and the connectedness of the neighborhoods becomes clearer. As such no analysis of Kumkapı alone would be sufficient to articulate the particularities of the area.

3. Housing encounters: processual emergence of differences

The signposts advertising the availability of rental property in Kumkapı today are not limited to the windows of estate agents. One often comes across such advertisements as a simple sheet of paper taped to the window of a flat, garage gate, or garden wall. They generally include in black print a three-to-four word description of the type of property – e.g. an *oda* (room) or *daire* (flat) - contact information, and for whom the property is made available, which refers to either one or more of the following five terms: *aile* (family), *bekâr* (bachelor), *bayan* (female), *yerli* (native) and *yabancı* (foreigner). *Zenci* (black person) is another term of significance; though not specified in the signposts it often surfaces when a person of colour makes direct contact with an estate agent or landlord to inquire about a rental advertisement for *yabancı*. This chapter shows that together these six terms point to what Michael Keith describes as 'characters of the modern city' and a 'historically loaded vocabulary' (2005: 30). Today they are widely used in the locality to categorically differentiate between certain 'groups' and particular characteristics ascribed to them. The terms are all marked with ethnic, racial and gendered undertones, and point to different hierarchies of favoured and unfavored differences. Their meanings and implications, however, are not fixed, having evolved with the passage of time and in response to the changing demographic trajectories of new arrivals, while carrying forth the 'lingering "shadows" of previous systems of classification and discourses' (Berg & Sigona 2013: 356; see also Back 2016). By looking at the genealogies of these categorical terms widely used in present day Kumkapı, I build on Keith's argument that forms of difference and intolerance in the

city are always and repeatedly in the making through a process of racialization, iteration and mimesis, which 'in principle has no beginning and no end' (2005: 5).

While pointing at the historicity and processual emergence of these urban characters, the chapter also reflects on how their meanings are formed spatially, and focuses more particularly on the role of dwelling forms and practices. As mentioned in Chapter 1, in understanding 'modes of social differentiation' within diversity studies (Vertovec 2015), there is much research incorporating a spatial lens, focusing on public and communal spaces as sites of encounter, including squares, streets, malls, community gardens, schools, community centers, workplaces, religious spaces and the like (Amin 2002, Wessendorf 2015, Wise & Velayutham 2009). Domestic spaces, however, are often overlooked or relegated to the 'private' sphere and associated with a clear separation and isolation from the outside world as opposed to the compulsory togetherness of public spaces. In this chapter I argue against such dichotomous conceptions regarding the role of 'private' and 'public' spaces in contexts of diversity by showing how the domestic sphere also operates as a 'contact zone' (Pratt 2008) where differences are actively encountered, constituted and negotiated (Cancellieri 2015, Gidley 2013, Humphris 2016, Phillimore 2013). Moreover, I show how domestic spaces influence public perceptions and interactions with differences. In her study of a neighbourhood in the UK characterized by high population turn over and poor rental housing, Kathy Burrell convincingly demonstrates how deeply the 'outside' forces of the 'public', such as wider economic and social tensions on the street, penetrate the so-called 'private' spaces of the home, both in the form of compromised securities and domestic materialities. I this chapter I use a reverse process to examine a similar intertwinement:

the examples presented here attest to how deeply ‘inside’ forces in domestic spaces, such as how domestic spaces are used and the material qualities of spaces, shape representations circulating ‘outside’ on the street regarding social differences. In this way, I explore how dwelling forms and practices are also incorporated with categorical representations.

The local vernacular discussed in this chapter is also important to understanding the political economy of housing and patterns of settlement in the city. Rex and Moore (1967) pioneered the concept of ‘housing class’ to describe groups of people who are characterized by occupation of a particular housing type, arguing that allocation of scarce and desirable housing was an important aspect of class struggle. Further, they identified how access to housing is not a function of socio-economic status alone. Race, they showed, is an imperative variable in allocation of housing, where urban managers and gatekeepers who control access to various tenures, financial assistance and public housing discriminate in creating and operating rules of access to the different modes of housing. When viewed from the scale of Istanbul at large, Kumkapı emerges as a place where housing is made accessible to differences that are otherwise discriminated against in the wider city, including not only the more commonly acknowledged tropes of economic status, race and ethnicity (Özüekren & van Kempen 2003), but also family status and gender. However, this does not suggest that these differences have no bearing in Kumkapı; on the contrary, they are central to understanding local hierarchies of distribution. The various examples presented below are also reflective of the role played by different gatekeepers. The chapter is centred almost entirely on discourses of natives, and more specifically of natives that are in particular positions of power, namely the

emlakçı (real estate agents), *ev sahibi* (landlord) or *muhtar* (neighbourhood authority). I include the *muhtars* here as they often informally use their local networks and offices to work in the real estate business. The chapter points to the powerful role of these subject positions in circulating group stereotypes and dictating opportunities (as in who gets access to what and who lives with whom under what conditions). However, I also highlight some of the ambivalences inherent to these processes of group categorization (Pratt 1997) and question the underlying implications.

3.1. 'It is uncertain who comes and goes': the threatening gaze

Case narrative 1: The data presented here is from an interview with a *muhtar* who is ethnically Turkish and migrated to Istanbul in the early 1970s from Malatya province in the Eastern Anatolia region.

> KB: Can you tell me a bit about the neighbourhood population?
>
> M1: The population here is ever more declining. It's all *yabancı* now, also because of rent increases. They reduce rents by individually renting rooms; *yerli* would not do that. Like before in Süleymaniye there were *bekâr evleri* (bachelor houses). I also lived there when I first came to Istanbul in 1973. Today they are gone; instead people rent flats and share rooms.
>
> KB: What are reasons for tension in the neighbourhood?
>
> M1: The presence of *yabancı* causes problems. Such intimate living of *yabancı* and *aile* is a bit difficult. If you ask why, there is cultural difference. With the *yabancı*, *erkek* (man) and *bayan* they live mixed. In that way we feel a bit uneasy. The *yabancı* don't provide a good *aile* and neighbourliness environment. They have loose morals. Like we will not allow our women to go

alone even over to Sultanahmet.[64] They send them alone all the way here to another country!

KB: It appears most people living here are tenants. Why don't property owners live here anymore?

M1: The eye sees. You can't keep your eyes shut. *Adamlar giriyor, çıkıyor* (men come, go). Their dressing style is different. You have children, wife, and you become disturbed. If your daughter, your son are adults, how will you leave them to the street?

KB: When you first came was there a bad perception about *bekâr evleri* (bachelor homes). It seems today all *bekâr* are perceived as a threat?

M1: Yes there were *bekâr's* before, but not living next to *aile*. All the *bekârevleri* were located in Süleymaniye, Küçükpazar. Ok, there were some *aile* there too, but we did not live together. When we were *bekâr,* there was also no way you could have a *bayan* in the building. Now in one flat there is a man in one room, a *bayan* in another room, they share the same toilet, same door. We did not have such a thing.

Case narrative 2: I was visiting a real estate agent who is ethnically Kurdish and migrated to Istanbul in the early 1990s from Mardin province in the South-Eastern Anatolia region. Three young Turkish-speaking men walk in the office and one of them asks:

Man: Do you have a flat available for rent?

Agent: There is not much available these days.

Man: OK. (The men head back to the door. Then the same guy turns back again and says to the agent) By the way, it is not for *bekâr*, we are looking for *aile.*

Agent: I have one available then. It has three rooms and a view of the sea. Rent is 1500 TL.

Man: Let us think about it. It is a bit expensive for us.

Agent: OK. But it is for *aile* right?

[64] The historic tourist district located walking distance from Kumkapı.

Man: Yes, yes it is.

KB: (After the men have left I ask) Why is the flat not available for *bekâr*?

Agent: The flat is in an *aile apartmani* (family apartment). *Bekâr olunca gireni çıkanı belli olmuyor* (When it is a bachelor it is uncertain who comes and goes).

Aile (family) versus *bekâr* (bachelor) is a binary form of distinction that is central to understanding how migrations have impacted Kumkapı over several decades. Indeed their significance is not limited to the locality; the social and spatial separation of families from bachelors is a widely held value in Turkish society. For instance the term *aile yeri* (family place) is frequently used to denote places, such as apartment buildings, restaurants, and the like, where strange men (e.g. non-kin) alone cannot enter.[65] Yet, as will be shown, these terms have a special and long standing significance within Istanbul's historical peninsula, and in Kumkapı more particularly where the changing demographics of successive migration flows and the emergence of distinct dwelling practices related to these populations have led to their continuous re-signification beyond their generic use.

Although *bekâr* is not a gendered term per se, as reflected in the conversations above, it often denotes men. And it signifies any male regardless of marital status - young, middle aged or old – that live without any of their female family members. This gendered meaning of *bekâr* is an outcome of a very long history of lone men migrating to Istanbul for (temporary) labour purposes. Historian Florian Riedler notes that originally the word *bekâr* referred to temporary labourers meaning 'without a 'proper'

[65] In restaurants it also often implies that alcohol is not sold.

job' (2008: 240), but with time it shifted to mean bachelor.[66] In the Ottoman city, migrant bachelors were seen as unattached and potentially threatening to family values (ibid.). This public image gave rise to a dwelling phenomenon known as *bekâr odaları* (bachelor rooms), whose origins in Istanbul are dated back to the Early Ottoman Period some 500 years ago (Şen 2012, Riedler 2008, Kızılkan 2009). These dwellings were often located near central working districts and had an institutional character, being strictly governed by state law and public morals. A primary rule was that they be located away from *mahalle*'s (neighbourhoods), which in the urban collective conscience were perceived as 'private' spheres for *aile* and bounded communities where everyday relations centred on neighbourliness and solidarity (Şen 2012). According to traditional Turkish norms, the symbolic boundaries of family are sanctified by the notion *namus* (honor) that is embodied in the women of a family. In this view, spatial proximity to lone male strangers is seen as a potential threat to family honour because a mere gaze can be polluting. As an expanded sphere of family, in the Ottoman city *mahalle'*s were also perceived as having an honour needing protection (*mahalle namusu*). Hence the spatial boundaries of the *mahalle* also defined the borders between the life worlds of *aile* and *bekâr*.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Istanbul has maintained its centuries long significance as a destination for male labour migrants during the Republican era. Although no longer institutionalized or under state surveillance, the practice of *bekâr odaları* have continued to meet the dwelling needs of new arrivals in the same areas where they were

[66] Riedler notes that during the Ottoman period, young girls and women also came to Istanbul from the countryside to work as servants and maids, but disappeared into the privacy of households and therefore did not form a separate dwelling sphere in the way male migrations did (2008: 235)

located for centuries. As mentioned in the first case narrative, Süleymaniye was still in the 1970s host to lone migrants (Şen 2012, Kızılkan 2009).[67] Yet Kumkapı, until recent decades, was a *mahalle* in the traditional sense described previously. Hence the arrival of migrant bachelors signifies a turning point which is reflected in a statement commonly made by long term residents of the area: *'burası eskiden hep aile idi, şimdi hep bekâr doldu'* (this used to be a place of families, now it is filled with bachelors). But it was not just the boundaries of the familial *mahalle* that was breached because of migrant arrivals. The comparison that the *muhtar* makes with his experience of living in the *bekâr odaları* of Süleymaniye and present day practices in Kumkapı offers us insight to the more micro scales in which these boundaries are currently being negotiated. While acknowledging that there were also some *aile* living in Süleymaniye, the *bekâr odaları* were entirely separate buildings. In Kumkapı, however, buildings, even flats, have become mixed, a mixture that some residents still try to resist by, for instance, designating a residential building an *aile apartmanı* (family apartment). And importantly, this change is distinctly attributed to recent migrant arrivals, *yabancı* (foreigners) and *bayan* (female), and their particular dwelling strategy of room rentals (see also Chapter 4). These two categories will be discussed further in forthcoming sections, what is to be noted here though is the way that these new arrivals have led to a locally specific re-signification of *bekâr*.

As mentioned above, there is a long history in Turkey of viewing migrant male bachelors as unattached and without values. Families are to be protected from the

[67] The changing ethnic, regional and demographic composition of migration flows to Istanbul is also reflected in Süleymaniye bachelor rooms. Şen 2012 notes for instance that there are Afghan and Bangladeshi bachelors living in the *bekâr odaları.*

intrusive and threatening gaze of male strangers. What surfaces in the case narratives though is that today the concern appears to be less about the gaze of the stranger male and more about families' exposure to lives deemed 'immoral.' As will be detailed further below, over recent decades the feminization of migration flows to the area have led to a surge in intimate engagements between *bekâr* and foreign women, locally referred to as *bayan*. Disapproval of these encounters is reflected in the use of the expression, *gireni çıkanı belli değil* ('it's uncertain who comes and goes' - or expressed in a different version in case narrative 1 as *adamlar giriyor, çıkıyor* 'men come, go'), which I heard repeated countless times by native residents when either justifying why they did not allow *bekâr'*s access to housing or when complaining about them as neighbours. In commenting that 'the eye sees', the *muhtar* evokes that today it is the gaze of *aile* that is under threat, because family members risk being influenced and tempted in such an environment.

3.2. 'They leave when you want': profitable strangers

Case narrative 3: Part of an interview with another *muhtar* who is ethnically Turkish and migrated in the early 1970s from Kastamonu province, located in the Black Sea region.

> KB: How is the perception of *yabancı* in your neighbourhood?
>
> M2: They love them. They are better behaved than the *yerli.* Because *yerli* are *kalabalık aile* (crowded family), *yabancı* take better care (of the properties). It's because *yerli* are crowded that there are problems, and they don't want them in the buildings. They want *yabancı* more instead. Plus they can charge higher rents.

Case narrative 4: From an interview with my landlord in Kumkapı, who migrated in the 1970s from Trabzon province, located in the Black Sea region.

> KB: Are there many *bekâr* left in the neighbourhood?
>
> LL: There are, there still are. There are many asking for rooms, but I don't give to *yerli*. You see a *yabancı* has one advantage. For example they leave when you want. You say this day you leave, they do. You can't remove a *yerli*.

Case narrative 5: From an interview with Ayşe. When we met she had just opened a small real estate agency across from my building.

> KB: Do homeowners not give out rental houses to *yerli* anymore?
>
> AY: Property owners are selfish. Human beings are selfish anyhow. Everyone is giving out their homes for 500 [US] Dollars; they think 'why should I give it out for 500 TL?' When it's like this there is no space for *yerli,* except maybe if they come across a homeowner that is a righteous person.
>
> KB: Are there ones who say they don't want *yabancı?* Like if it is *aile*?
>
> AY: No, they will also take them in. Even the most conservatives, they will say 'let it be an Uzbek, at least they are Muslim', and will give to a *yabancı.* That is why there are few *yerli* left here. And they are mostly property owners like us, people who aren't able to leave behind their house. Should I tell you something odd? Most of the *emlakçı* here are from Mardin[68]. When I first started the business I tried saying like 'I have just started the business, lets pass each other work.' What they said was: 'Don't bring me Kurds, don't bring me *zenci,* don't bring me *bekâr*. I said then, 'brother if you are saying this as a Kurd, then who should I work with'?
>
> KB: Are there any specific problems pertaining to *yabancı?* Like with the *yerli* they say it is difficult moving them out.
>
> AY: With the *yerli* you make a contract. The most they will stay is a year, after a year you will say leave, if they don't you take them to court. Most *yabancı* don't have contracts. None of mine have contracts. They don't ask for it themselves,

[68] A province of Turkey in South East Turkey that is predominantly Kurdish

> and we don't want it either. Because there isn't trust in them, they will say I am going to stay but then leave all of a sudden. Anyways, *yerli* will not come here.
>
> KB: Why don't they want Kurds?
>
> AY: They cause too many problems. They don't pay for water and electricity. They don't leave when you say…

Yerli (native/local) versus *yabancı* (stranger/foreigner) is another binary form frequently surfacing in processes of social and spatial differentiation in Kumkapı. Given the continuous migration driven population changes over recent decades, the answer to who is a *yerli* in Kumkapı today can vary. In more general conversations about origins and identity, the persons that I found most clearly identified with being *yerli*, and more specifically with being *Kumkapılı*[69], were the elderly Greek and Armenian persons I met who have all spent a substantial part of their lives in Kumkapı, two of them since birth. I rarely came across any Kumkapı residents with recent migrant origins who self-identified as being *yerli* or *Kumkapılı*. Rather, province and town of origin remain very significant in marking identities, included for second and third generations. From this angle being a *yerli* is understood as having family roots and/or having spent extended time in locally lived place.

There are also subtleties of the meaning of *yabancı* in the view of the populations inhabiting Kumkapı both past and present, and their relations to the Turkish state. Ethnic Armenians and Greeks have a long history of being considered strangers in their native lands. Over the past century, as an outcome of genocidal practices and decades of assimilationist policies (see Chapter 2) indigenous non-Muslim minorities who are Turkish citizens became re-classified as *yabancı* in state discourses (Güven 2005) and

[69] In Turkish language a place name followed by the suffix –li/-lı/-lu/-lü (chosen according to harmony with the last vowel of the place name) designates a person coming from this place.

everyday interactions with Muslim Turks (Brink-Danan 2010). While not openly designated as *yabancı*, a sense of estrangement is also central to the experience of ethnic-Kurds in Turkey. On one occasion when I visited Hüseyin, a Kurdish man running a laundry and dry-cleaning business, he had a visitor seated in his store who I presumed must be a relative as they had similar features. Hüseyin already knew about my research so when I walked into his store, he pointed at his visitor and said jokingly: 'here you go, he is also *yabancı.* Talk to him.' I asked: 'How is that so, are you not from Turkey?' Recep replied before the man could speak: 'Well we are also considered *yabancı* in this country, aren't we!' A similar sarcastic pun with the word *yabancı* occurred when Maya, a Georgian woman doing domestic work in Turkey for over a decade and staying in a room share in Kumkapı one night a week, told me about her dislike for Kurds. 'They are so ignorant' she said, 'Some can't even speak Turkish. I go to BIM [a local supermarket], one comes up with a package in hand and asks me what is written on it, and I am the *yabancı*? They are from Turkey, yet I am the *yabancı*! Isn't it funny?'

In the examples above different levels of belonging and identification (e.g. with local place and national identity) signify the meanings of both *yerli* and *yabancı*. In present day Kumkapı though, with the growing presence of foreign nationals the meaning of being *yerli* has been territorially stretched from the local to national scale, referring to all those who are indigenous to Turkey. And it has acquired a legal dimension, implying those who are citizens of the country, whereas *yabancı* are all those who are not. The case narratives above point to one of the main reasons why such a distinction based primarily on legal status has become locally important: the economy of housing.

Today in Kumkapı the practice of room rentals is highly popular, wherein either homeowners rent out one or more rooms in their households while still living there, or rent out all the rooms to different individuals. The demand for room rentals is one that comes primarily from Kumkapı's *yabancı* population, who, because of their temporary migration intentions (like the *bekâr* of previous decades and centuries), are seeking affordable, flexible and short-term housing options. With this arrangement, rent is charged per room rather than entire flat, and there is more flexibility regarding tenancy arrangements, including the freedom to vacate with very short notice. Such an arrangement is also preferable to landlords as they can charge higher rents, which is often fixed in US Dollars and ranges between 200-300 US Dollars per room.[70] This leads to a significant disparity between rent paid by *yerli* and *yabancı* populations in Kumkapı. When an elderly ethnically Armenian woman who has been living in the same three bedroom flat for 25 years told me that she was paying 500 TL rent (approx. 300 US Dollars) and I remarked that it was cheap, she responded: 'For a *yerli* it is a lot.' I responded by telling her that I paid 300 TL for a tiny room in shared flat, and described the humid and windowless basement room where a Syrian family of five were paying 450 TL. 'Well that can be,' she said, 'now because there are all these *yabancı* they are giving out dirty, filthy places for lots of money.' The quality of housing for foreigners in Kumkapı is certainly no match to the price paid, but there is constant and growing demand nevertheless due to relatively better accessibility and flexibility of housing in the locality. Flexibility in housing goes both ways. *Yabancı* tenants do not want to commit to long-term contracts and prefer having the freedom to leave whenever

[70] The currency exchange rate during my fieldwork was at 1.8 TL per Dollar throughout most of the time, but started increasing in May 2013 reaching to 2 TL per Dollar in August 2013.

needed in short-notice, or even without any notice as Ayşe notes. The lack of contracts or legal recourse means landlords have the power to remove *yabancı* tenants when they want.

Besides rental costs, from the perspective of landlords and real-estate agents another dividing line between *yerli* and *yabancı* tenants pertains to 'ease of moving out', which is important to landlords due to legal and financial implications. Any troubles with *yerli* tenants is much more likely to end up in court. It is also likely that they will stay longer in Kumkapı than the *yabancı,* which can reduce potential profits. With the rising circulation in tenants, landlords have greater chances of increasing rent with each new arrival. There are also some subtleties to this binary distinction given some of the qualities ascribed to the *yerli* and *yabancı* populations in Kumkapı. In Case 3, the *muhtar* who is a *yerli* from the perspective of local rootedness - i.e., having lived in Kumkapı since the 1970s and served as a neighbourhood authority for some 15 years - distinguishes ethnic Kurds as the new *yerli* of Kumkapı due to their numerical majority as residents and business owners. He also mentions the demographic distinction of their migration by describing them as *kalabalık aile* (crowded family).[71] In the previous section, I described how the category of *bekâr* emerged as an unwanted difference within the housing sphere due to the previous predominance of families in Kumkapı. In this context one would presume that Kurdish families would be more welcomed as tenants. On the contrary, the case narratives above show how 'the Kurds' have been set aside as a different kind of *aile* signified with being problematic or crowded. This sense

[71] As mentioned in Chapter 2, compared to previous decades, Kurds migrated predominantly as families due to their forced displacement. And these were often large families due to distinct demographic traits in their regions of origin. My Kurdish informants who came to Istanbul in the 1990s all noted having between 6 to 12 siblings.

of overbearing crowdedness associated with 'the Kurds' is not simply a reference to large families. *Birken yirmi olmak* (when just one, becoming twenty) is an expression I commonly heard in representations about Kurds. The expression alludes to the extent and strength of kinship and tribal bonds that one can expect to rely on in moments of need, such as eviction.[72] This is quite possibly one of the reasons why landlords, Kurdish or not, prefer to avoid having them as tenants.

While all Kumkapı residents, local and foreigner alike, repeat the idea that *yabancı* are easy to move out, only foreigners openly identify the main reason. Many of the foreigners in Kumkapı are *kaçak* (illegal) (legal status will be discussed in greater detail under chapter 5). Therefore, they are much more hesitant about getting into confrontations with locals or approaching Turkish authorities for help in the event their landlords decide to evict them suddenly. I observed this situation come to surface several times in the building where I was renting. During the six months that I lived in my flat, there were six incidents when tenants were told to vacate their rooms. Three of them were the result of conflicts over bill/rent payments, one due to an Uzbek woman inviting her Kurdish boyfriend to her room over night, one due to a fight between tenants, and another involved the removal of Syrian bachelors from one flat after the Cameroonian women living in the same flat complained that the men were peeping

[72] For example, in a conversation with a Kurdish call shop owner I inquired whether there was a kind of ethnic enclave formation among the foreigner population in Kumkapı, like taking over particular business areas. His response was: 'No, the Kurds would not permit that. For example one will have to weigh the matter, 'is this going to bring us throat to throat with the Kurds?' A *Tekirdağlı*, *Aydınlı, Manisalı, Samsunlu* (names of ethnically Turkish provinces, with suffix –li/-lu signifying persons coming from these provinces) won't bother with you, he will just leave that area. The Kurds won't let it be otherwise. For example, 99% of the businesses here are in the hands of Kurds. So let's say someone comes, a *zenci* (black person) for example, he can't deal with it. You see one Kurd is fighting, and then suddenly 20 people are gathered. Then if the police come on top of it, who has the heavy weight? They will suffer in the end. So such stuff will not be permitted here.'

through the bathroom keyhole while they were showering. Another incident occurred soon after I departed when Binata, introduced in the next chapter, who was living in the basement flat and had started cooking lunches for income, was also asked to move out on the grounds that other tenants were complaining about the smell. Depending on the intensity of conflict, some were told to leave immediately, others were given a week, and the rooms had new tenants already within a couple of days. Room rental business is so popular today in Kumkapı that neither prospective tenants nor landlords struggle finding replacements. The only difference is that on the part of the tenants, a new place often involves paying commissions and deposits again, the latter not always being returned in full, which is another aspect of this housing market's profitability.

3.3. 'They meet all kinds of needs, be it material or emotional': strategic intimacies

Case narrative 6: Interview with Ayşe continued (case 5 above)

> KB: So who do the landlords generally want as tenants?
>
> AY: They all want *bayan*. Some have specific interests for this, and there are women preparing themselves for this situation. So it's a mutual process. Then there is also this, for landlords it is easier to move out women, especially if she doesn't have a strong man behind her. A woman and a man's physical strength is not the same. He can push her out the minute he pulls her from the arm.

Case narrative 7: From an interview with a *muhtar,* who is ethnically Kurdish and migrated to Istanbul in the late 1980s from Batman province in the South Eastern Anatolia region.

KB: How is the perception of *yabancı*?

M3: It is a good one, because they meet all kinds of needs, *maddi olsun, manevi olsun* (be it material or emotional)… Call shops, second hand stores, and all kinds of trade areas have been born thanks to them. Property owners also all want to rent out to *yabancı*. In fact if a *yerli* comes we say we don't have anything.

KB: Why don't they want *yerli?*

M3: If you want to move them out, you can't. If they are old you can't move them out.

KB: What kinds of problems are there between tenants and landlords?

M3: There is problem when they don't pay rent. With *bekâr* men, there is no count of the women they bring in. So the most blind spots in a building, the worst places go to *bekâr'*s. Plus these *bayan* here have no shame, they all find one boyfriend to pay rent, another to pay for bills, clothes and stuff. Like there was a girl in here just before you came. I rented a place to her three months ago. Now she offered to be friends with me, she said 'let's go out tonight and eat or drink something'. Some offer friendship and ask that I don't take a deposit in return. There is no sense of shame. Here you find people have gotten used to, normalized this sort of stuff. But then some buildings will not accept them (*bayan*). So generally landlords prefer *yabancı temiz* (clean) *aile*.

Case narrative 8: Interview with my landlord continued (case 4 above)

KB: So you don't prefer having *bekâr*; either *bayan* or *aile*, is that right?

LL: Yes. You see I have tried it all. Before I didn't take any *bekâr*, only *bayan*. But then they all started bringing over men. I say who is this? 'My boss,' she says. Who is the other? 'We work together', she says. I said, 'look friend, this doesn't work. You do whatever you want outside, I don't care. But when you come home that is a different matter.' They can't stand being without men you see, whether Moldovan, Ukrainian…

KB: Well some are actually married.

LL: Even if they are married the husband is back in the homeland. One said to me 'Do you always eat the same soup? Change is needed once in a while.' That

was my reason for moving out the Russians staying here. They were almost going to make me perverted (he laughs)! There were three sisters staying here, each of them in a separate room. One of them had a daughter, not even 25, maybe 22. A man bought the mother a flat in Moldova. He is like 50 or so, a Turkish man. The mother worked next to him or something like that. He bought a flat and she married her daughter to him. So such things happen here too.

KB: Did you try *bekâr* men in the whole building?

LL: I tried that as well. Then they all brought in women!

KB: So you prefer having it like half *aile* half *bayan*?

LL: Well actually that is how it was. I had put in charge Dursun[73] to take care of rent in two flats. But he got it all mixed and messed it up. For example on the third floor, they are three *bayan***,** the Cameroonians, and next to them is an *aile*, the Kenyan husband and wife. There were two vacant rooms. I asked Menderes to rent them out and he gave them to Syrian *bekâr*'s. Then it got messed. It was out of my control.

Bayan in Turkish language designates a woman when used alone, and is also used as a word of respect when preceding a woman's first name. In the context of Kumkapı, however, its meaning is entirely specific to the locality, referring to women who are *yabancı*, and more particularly those coming from countries of the Former Soviet Union (FSU). As mentioned in Chapter 2, in the 1990s economic and political restructuring in the FSU led to the feminization of international migrations to Turkey, as an increasing number of women from this region arrived in Turkey as traders and labourers. The narratives above allude to the fact that in the Turkish imaginary this population, often referred to as 'Russian' (*Rus*), is associated with tempting sexuality and shameless promiscuity. As Bloch reminds, this public perception of 'Russian' women as a sexualized other is not entirely new, as interactions between the people of present-day

[73] A Turkish man and friend of my landlord, who lived in a room in my flat.

Turkey and the FSU have been on-going for several centuries. During the Ottoman period, Circassian and Ukrainian women were widely favoured in the palace harems and as concubines in private homes. During the Soviet Era, ties with Turkey were relatively cut off. After the 1990s, however, the image of the seductive (and dangerous) 'Russian' woman re-emerged in the Turkish public culture. This is partly to do with their engagement in the entertainment and sex work sectors (Gülçür & Ilkkaracan 2002).[74] Another factor relates to the distinctive intimate relations Turkish men and Russian-speaking women are forging.

Laleli, Kumkapı's adjacent locality, was at the centre of this re-emerging public image. As discussed in Chapter 2, after the break up of the Soviet Union and the opening of the borders, the area transformed into a market for the informal transnational trading practice known as *bavul ticareti* (suitcase trade). This was a gendered market, in that the traders were primarily women and the shop owners were men. In her study of the suitcase trade phenomenon, Deniz Yükseker (2004) argues that these different attributes of the Laleli market – i.e., transnational, unregulated and gendered - created a unique public culture that lies outside the economic and gender norms in the traders' home societies. In Laleli, romantic and sexual intimacy emerged as a strategy for maintaining business and trust relations, often in two forms: 'either repeated trade is embedded in an intimate relationship that facilitates economic trust, or sexual flirtation is mobilized in the course of trade' (Yükseker 2004: 59). Whichever way, these intimate relations feed on and reproduce stories about the masculinity and femininity of the populations involved (ibid. 63)

[74] Notably, Laleli and its neighbouring Aksaray have long been Istanbul's main hubs for prostitution of foreign women (Gülçür & Ilkkaracan 2002).

Such 'strategic intimacies' are not limited to trade relations in Laleli. Alexia Bloch (2011) has shown that female labour migrants in Turkey from the FSU also enter into such relations with Turkish (and Kurdish) men, for different ends like obtaining legal status, securing permanent housing and sending remittances for family back home. However, Bloch cautions against interpreting these relations as being merely strategic and displays that the lines between emotional ties and material security are blurred. Migration literature often overlooks the fact that migrants too seek the need for human connection and intimacy.[75] The women Bloch interviews are labour migrants who remain separated from their families and friends for months or even years to end. 'In this context' Bloch argues, migrant women turn to intimate relationships both 'to facilitate their roles as providers for households back home, but also to fulfil their own needs for meaningful relationships' (2011: 510). She also recognizes more directly that structures of feeling may change over time, where material benefit can turn into love or vice versa. Bloch notes that most of these relationships involve engagements with married Turkish men, which puts the foreign women in a somewhat powerful position: in exchange for being in an illicit relationship they can demand contributions to their material well-being. Hence the women see 'real' marriage as curtailing this form of bargaining power.

[75] Ali Nobil Ahmad's study of Pakistani men migrating to the UK presents a fascinating parallel account to that of Bloch. Ahmad opens his book with a critique of migration researchers and its protagonists (including sending and receiving states and the migrants) alike who represent migrants as 'asexual accumulators of capital, driven by little other than a narrowly defined, rational commitment to the material betterment of their kin and household' (2011: 3). His study explores how motives for migration are interlinked with masculinities, representing a search for fulfilling 'libidinal investments and sublimated desires' (ibid.)

The rental signs for *bayan* in Kumkapı can also be understood in view of such changing structures of intimacy facilitated by transnational mobilities (Constable 2009). I have come across some landlords justifying their preference for *bayan* tenants on the grounds that women are inherently cleaner (e.g. more likely to take good care of property), or as Ayşe alludes, because they are more subservient (e.g. will move out without objection when demanded). While such gendered customary beliefs are important, it is a widely known fact that for the *yerli* male population, the preference for *bayan* as tenants is also embedded in, or does not preclude, the desire to pursue them romantically and sexually (case 6 and 7). In turn, there are women who willingly enter into such relations, many for strategic reasons such as having their housing expenses in Kumkapı paid, or even further for purchasing houses in their home countries. My first introduction to this practice occurred when I called two *bayana kiralık oda* (room for female) adverts I saw posted on a gate. In both cases Turkish-speaking men answered the phone. I asked '*Aile mi?*' (Is it family?). They both said yes, while the first added that he lives with his mother, the other said he was alone and that there was one other *bayan* in the flat. I started feeling suspicious about the advertisements and room deals and shared this thought with, Mehmet, a Kurdish business owner who had become a close respondent. I asked if it was common practice for lone men to share flats with lone foreign women. 'All over the place,' he said and mentioned a man he knows who lives in a three-bedroom flat across the street, keeping one room to self and renting out the other two for 250 [US] Dollars. 'No one lasts longer than two months' he joked, 'because either he hits on them or walks around naked.' Another informant, a Kurdish man from Diyarbakır, frequently boasted about how he lured his female tenants into his bed. In

Chapter 6 I will further discuss how this context of strategic intimacies has given rise to local perceptions about Kumkapı being an exceptional space.

As mentioned in the first section, there are still attempts in Kumkapı to set boundaries between *aile* and *bekâr*. But in view of these intimate engagements what emerges is the ways the meaning of the term *aile* in Kumkapı again varies. My landlord's comments show how there is certain criteria about who is considered married and/or family, or what is considered a legitimate male/female companionship. In my building, all the couples that the landlord categorized as *aile* were either of the same nationality or were both foreigners like the Sri Lankan woman married to a Senegalese man. My landlord strictly did not accept the companionship of a *yabancı* woman and *yerli* man on his premises. This was manifest when an Uzbek woman in my flat was swiftly moved out after my landlord found out that she had a *yerli* companion staying over some nights. She defended herself by explaining to the landlord that they had just gotten married, which in the Kumkapı context often refers to an *imam nikâhı* (religious marriage performed by an imam) that is not legally binding in Turkey. He still insisted she move out. His refusal may signal his, and others', mistrust of the sincerity, intent and longevity of intimate relationships between *yabancı* women and *yerli* men. This is also reflected in another locally used term, *temiz bayan* (clean woman), which refers to moral virtues rather than physical cleanliness. When I was looking for a room to rent, one of my informants told me that he has a three bedroom flat in Kumkapı where his employee is living with his Turkmen girlfriend and said, 'we were thinking of renting one of the rooms to a *temiz bayan* (clean female) like you.' I interpreted that the remark of 'clean' signified having no interest in entering into romantic relations locally, and

therefore not posing a risk of bringing strange men into the shared domestic sphere. In Chapter 6 I will be returning to this notion of cleanliness in more detail.

3.4. 'Their food stinks… they talk loud… they are pious Muslims': ambivalent racisms

Case narrative 9: I was passing by a Kurdish informant's real estate office (case narrative 2 above) and entered into a casual discussion with him and his visitor. I was telling them both about a basement flat I had visited nearby the previous day, where more than 12 men from the Ivory Coast were living in a single room. I was sharing some examples about their difficulties in Kumkapı. On a previous occasion, the real estate agent and I had talked about the discriminations Kurds suffered in the 1990s after arriving in the city and trying to find housing and work. I reminded him of our conversation and commented how there were similarities for the African population today, such as in accessing housing. The neighbour immediately intervened, and the following dialogue took place between the two.

> Neighbour: They are lying. There are four now living in my house. I have seen all kinds of people, never have I seen anyone as dirty as them.
>
> Agent: It's because they have different food cultures and clothes. You might not like it, but it feels good to them.
>
> Neighbour: When I was a *bekâr*, we also slept 20 people in a room. Everyone would make their own food, wash their dishes and make their bed. If one person didn't do his duties we warned him. But these are not so. Even their food stinks.
>
> Agent: Yes they use onion and garlic very heavily, but it might be good for them. There is also that incense they use.

Neighbour: Seriously even their feet stink. It has nothing to do with poverty. Like in my house they got an electricity bill for 750 TL [approximately 400 US Dollars at the time]

Case narrative 10: I am visiting a real estate agent who is ethnically Kurdish and migrated to Istanbul in the late 1980s from Diyarbakir province in the South-Eastern Anatolia region. A Senegalese man walks in and asks in good Turkish:

Senegalese man (SM): *Salam Aleykum* (greeting). Did you find a house?

Agent: No. I haven't.

SM: You told me that day to come tomorrow.

Agent: I said come by once in a while, I didn't say come tomorrow. Really, there isn't anything now but I am saying something will come up. You know, not every house is suitable for *siz*[76] (you in plural, to signify 'your people'). Only basements will do, or a *müstakil* (detached) house. All buildings say we don't want them. *Aileler* (families) are afraid you.

SM: Why are they afraid?

Agent: Because you are barbarians, you talk rude. You cook it smells really awful. Is that right?

SM: Everyone has differences in food. Chinese food, Senegalese food, they are different.

Agent: Yours is nice to you. Tastier. And ours for us.

SM: There are many problems like this. They give us places for rent, we pay money. Our friends come to visit but we can't talk. For four years I am here. There are differences. Three years I rented a house, I had no problems. More or less everyone here is good. But here there are good people and there are bad people.

When another client walks into the office the discussion is interrupted, so I introduce myself to the Senegalese man, tell him that I am a researcher and am curious about his housing experiences. He explains that he is searching for a

[76] While beginning the talk in first person (*sen*), here the agent changed to the use of the plural for you (*siz*), making reference to ascribed group identity as Africans and persons of color.

place for himself, his wife and two young children, both born in Istanbul. I ask why.

'The *ev sahibi* (house owner) stays in another room, he comes by once a week to stay. But he brings other *bayan*. He gives key to a friend, he also brings other *bayan*. I said to him, look here there is *aile*. I dealt with this for a year and a half. But I don't want it anymore. Now my wife is here, I have children here. I go to work, come back late at night. He brings in other men I don't know. If I were me alone, that is ok. But there is *aile,* it is not ok.

Later on after the Senegalese man left, I asked the real estate agent about why in Kumkapı *zenci* are always given *bodrum* (basement) flats?

M: When you say *bodrum* (basement), maybe you are not able to really analyse some things. Now if a person stays in a *bodrum*, he goes down right away, his voice will not go above, he will not encounter people…Otherwise middle floors are always families. If 3-5 people of these kind were to live in the higher floors, who could stand their smell?

K: Is it their smell that is the problem or is it because the plumbing in the basements is not suitable?

M: Well they charge them a little more money. Because if an *aile* stays, they are 2-3 people, but when these people stay, they become 10. So if it is 300 [US] Dollars he gives 500 [US] Dollars. Last year I had this place with a sea view. Next to it a husband and wife, *zenci* but Muslim. They do their *namaz*, they fast, every Friday they make the *mevlüt*, invite their friends. But really they also disturbed. You know the kind of talk, like people living in the jungle. They are free ok I don't find it odd, but not everyone can show such understanding. They speak loud. You enter the first floor, they are on the sixth floor, you can already understand they are *zenci* from all the noise. One should be a bit more flexible. They have such a difference. Also their food stinks. When we cook, even if it is winter you open the windows of your house. Worms, crickets, frogs, snake… they cook such things and use a lot of spices.

Case narrative 11: Interview with Ayşe continued (case 5 and 6 above)

K: You said you rent rooms in your own house here in Kumkapı, where you live with your parents. Who are your tenants?

A: There is a Georgian mother and daughter, and one son. Four Senegalese men live below them. Anyways they don't have much of a women thing.

K: What do you mean?

A: Don't take this as discrimination please, its because Senegalese are Muslim. Well Uzbek's are also Muslims, but they have become degenerate. Their religion is Islam, but their culture is Russian. When a woman is 13-14 sexuality is a need, ok I agree, whether one is male, female, Christian, Muslim. But the point I disagree is this. For example you open a business here, but it has to have a legal framework. If you are going to enter into a sexual relation, this too has a religious framework. The Ozbeks don't have this, but Senegalese do, they see it as *haram* (forbidden by Islam).

Case narrative 12: Interview with my landlord continued (case 4 and 8 above)

K: How about Georgians, Turkmens, people of these regions, what kinds of problems do you encounter with them?

O: It seems like they can't get along much. For example, I gave a room to one woman and said she could give the other rooms in the flat to people she knows, her relatives, so they can get along. But when they start drinking, they don't even know one another. They crashed the glass frame door, imagine, to that extent! After that I told them to leave and gave them a few days. After that then I took in the *zenciler*, the Senegalese. Look the Senegalese have been here five years and not once have I come across them fighting. They are pious Muslims. They come together once a week, read the Quran together, do their *zikir,*[77] eat food together and leave. This is in their culture. But then they have this, like they talk really loud together, they disturb the neighbourhood this way. Especially when it is summer and the windows are open. They chat until late hours in the night. There were a lot of complaints from around the neighbourhood. That also had a role in them leaving. Otherwise in terms of rent, electricity, water, and the like, I had no problems. They never delayed payments.

[77] lslamic mysticism repetition, done silently or aloud, where the word Allah, the ninety-nine names of God, or formulas which praise God are repeated. Also written: zikr, dhikr.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, since the late 1990s Turkey has emerged as a country of destination and transit for an increasing number of migrants and refugees from sub-Saharan Africa. This is a highly diverse population: it involves a great range of countries in Eastern, Western, Southern and Central Africa; motivations for arrival in Turkey vary, including study, trade, careers in football, seeking asylum, transiting to Europe, and the like. Kumkapı is a central hub for many African migrants and refugees arriving in Istanbul and has acquired a well-known reputation to this end in the media.[78] Natives and foreigners alike in Kumkapı who distinguish themselves as 'white' commonly use the expression *zenci* when alluding to these 'African' populations, referring in Turkish language to someone from the black race. It is a historically rooted term with links to the Ottoman slavery system, which is somewhat distinct from the Atlantic version in that slaves were eventually emancipated (Olpak 2013). Ferguson notes that in both British and Ottoman sources the term was used in reference 'to a black skinned sub-Saharan African who was either enslaved or recently emancipated, and generally impoverished and unadapted to Ottoman culture and norms—what might otherwise be referred to as "black, ignorant, and poor."'[79]

[78] 6.10.2012 'Aksarayli Afrikalilar' (Africans of Aksaray) by Merve Sena Kilic. http://yenisafak.com.tr/pazar-haber/aksarayli-afrikalilar-15.10.2012-413655 - 05.07.2016. 'Kumkapı'nın Afrika hastanesi!' (Kumkapı's African hospital!) by Arif Balkan. http://www.milliyet.com.tr/Kumkapı-nin-afrika-hastanesi--gundem-2273305/. When Turkey's then Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan visited Somalia in 2011, the Somali refugee populations of Kumkapı received much media attention. 19.05.2011. 'Kumkapı'daki 'Somali'' ('Somalia' in Kumkapı) by Gul Kireklo. http://www.sabah.com.tr/Yasam/2011/05/19/Kumkapıdan-duz-git-sola-don-somalidesin 21.08.2011. 'Istanbul'daki Mogadishu' (Mogadishu of Istanbul). By Ali Daglar. http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/pazar/18539841.asp

[79] Today the descendants of African slaves that are citizens of Turkey form a minority group in Turkey known as 'Afro-Turks' (Olpak 2013). This group remains virtually invisible in definitions of Turkishness or discussions around racism (Ergin 2016).

These derogatory interpretations of *zenci* have been strengthened during the Republican era due to the particular evolution of racialized thinking in Turkish politics. As Ergin explains (2016), the first decades following the establishment of the Republic stands out as a period of Turkish fascination between whiteness and modernity to the extent that science was being vigorously used to establish the 'whiteness' and European origins of the Turkish race. Building on this history, in the 1980s with liberalization and urbanization picking up pace, the figure of a *beyaz Türk* (white Turk) emerged as a symbol of class divides in Turkey, and ascribed superiority in culture, education and life style as opposed to that of a *siyah Türk* (black Turk) referring to the uneducated and uncultured masses of peasant origins, marked by different forms of otherness 'such as moustache, body odour, and dark complexion' (Ergin 2008: 843). Ferguson's (2014) analysis exposes how Turkey's most powerful contemporary political figure, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, has tactfully employed these racialized representations of class divides in his populist politics by identifying with the average 'black Turk' and establishing 'white Turks' as an arrogant, prejudiced and oppressive elite minority. While claiming 'blackness' however, Ferguson also points to the way that *zenci* has re-surfaced as third racialized category. He refers to a statement made by the then Prime Minister Erdoğan during the Gezi Protests of 2013, when, speaking about the protesters who he framed as upper-middle class Istanbulites, Erdoğan said 'They think we don't know anything about art and music. They think we are *zenci.'* In resorting to the word *zenci*, Ferguson argues that Erdoğan mobilizes and reproduces historically rooted racial stereotypes that align skin colour with being backward. It also inadvertently identifies *zenci* with an

external other that is ‘actually’ black and located elsewhere, usually in Africa or America.

In Kumkapı the term *zenci* is often linked with abhorrent racism. Mere skin color is commonly linked with the idea of filth. Also, stereotypes build on racial images globally circulated through popular culture and media, such as primitivity, poverty and cannibalism in Africa, and drugs, prostitution and hip-hop in America (Ergin 2016, Suter 2013). For instance, Dursun, the Turkish man who lived in my flat and had previously rented out my room to some Senegalese women was describing to me that ‘the bathroom walls became all black when they were living here, it took me days to wash off their filth. My blood never warmed up to Africans, spitting on the stairs and stuff. They are really dirty. They live there ın Africa in tin homes, do their toilet outside and throw dirt on it, here of course it seems like heaven to them.’ Besides such universal and abstract racisms though, it is significant that racial stereotypes in Kumkapı are closely intertwined with differences that are locally encountered within shared spheres of dwelling, which surface as sites of ‘olfactory and gustatory contact’ (Rhys-Taylor 399). Senses of smell and sound are central to constructing the racialized ‘other’. Multicultural living often involves a ‘dis-synchronization of senses feeding disgust, intercultural anxiety and everyday racism’ (Wise 2010). The case narratives above point to powerful examples, where living together in apartment buildings and/or shared flats lead to close encounters with differences in culinary and linguistic cultures. Where these differences do not appeal to the senses, the already existing narrative of the ‘uncivilized’ and ‘filthy’ *zenci* provides the grounds for expressing (and exaggerating,

like in references made to worms and crickets) repulsion.[80] And it surfaces as one rash generalization which all the darker skinned populations of Kumkapı must live by, regardless of the vast diversity of culinary and linguistic cultures that are present.[81]

While there is a strong language of racism in the discourses of 'white' populations in Kumkapı, narratives above also highlight ambivalence: while the agents and landlords portray 'blackness' as an unwanted difference within close quarters, it can also be made relatively favourable when other attributes point to commonalities. As portrayed in the cases, Islam as a shared religion between the *yerli* population and some of the *zenci* populations, the Senegalese in particular, can serve as a proxy that overshadows racial discriminations. Here though the marker is not necessarily about shared religion, but about perceived piety. Uzbeks and Turkmens are among the white *yabancı* of Kumkapı that are also Muslim. But as emphasized in real estate agent Ayşe's comment with regards to gender roles they are perceived by the *yerli* as having become culturally 'Russian', where Russian implies promiscuity. On the other hand, the Senegalese, who are one of the largest African populations living in Kumkapı, are appreciated as devout Muslims, especially in view of their ritual *zhikr* and *mevlüt* gatherings. But even then a contradiction emerges as in the absence of communal space to realize these rituals, they hold these gatherings in their Kumkapı homes, raising issues about noise.

[80] Such sensorial and embodied reactions to the 'black other' are not restricted to the natives of Kumkapı. It is also common among the 'white' foreigners. For instance, on one occasion I was entering a building with a Georgian woman informant who invited me to her home on the second floor, and as soon as we passed the main gate she made a horizontal hand wave gesture in front of her nose and said 'there are *zenciler* (plural of *zenci*) in the basement, it stinks.' On another occasion, while I was chatting with someone at the entrance door of my apartment, one of the Uzbek couples living in my flat passed by. There was cooking smell coming from the basement where the Senegalese were living. The wife made a 'yick' sound as soon as she passed through the door and pressed her nostrils with her fingers while walking up the steps.

[81] The term *zenci* is also often used in references to some of the darker skinned Asian populations in Kumkapı, for instance those coming from Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

This ambivalence of landlords and real estate agent's in Kumkapı is very similar to that which Geraldine Pratt finds in her study of the stereotypes of Filipina and British nannies presented by nanny agents in Canada. Pratt explains that nanny agents systematically create a duality between these two groups wherein European nannies are constructed as well-cultured professionals with high educational credentials and Filipinas as passive, uneducated and uncivilized servants. She also recognizes the complexity wound into these stereotypes, as agents also contradict themselves: for instance, the qualities described above are later linked with counter interpretations, such as the British nannies being pretentious, cold, controlling and flaky, and Filipina nannies being gentle, loving and dedicated; or agents who rank Filipinas as 'just a nanny/house keeper' later recognizing that they actually also have good educations. In bringing such ambivalence into focus, Pratt points to material rationalities underlying systematic stereotypes: 'The agents' forgetfulness about Filipinas' education is of course necessary if the uncivilised stereotype is to function, and it has very serious implications for Filipina women… The reasons for trivialising Filipinas' educational attainments may go no further than providing a comfortable rationale to Canadian households for what otherwise might be conceived as a highly contradictory situation: low-priced, well-educated labour.' In Kumkapı the stereotypes about *zenci* populations also have real material consequences: it determines if, where and for how much housing will be made available. For instance Sekou, who I will introduce in further detail in the next chapter, tells me about his experience of looking for housing in Kumkapı: 'It was very hard in the beginning. We spent over a month to find this place. We went to different real estate agents but when they see you are black they say no, or they ask for

payment in [US] Dollars. What you find has really bad conditions or is too expensive.' The fact that it is primarily black persons inhabiting basement flats throughout Kumkapı is not a coincidence: a generic narrative of filth justifies providing the worst forms of housing.

Examples such as these demonstrate how social differentiation is a negotiable process. Different 'groups' signify both desirable and undesirable attributes, which can lead to a kind of ambivalent stance among those constructing these differences. Housing allocation is therefore a process of calculation between what are seen as different pros and cons. A Nigerian informant similarly tells me: 'I called an ad I saw on the street. I asked "how much"? He said 700 TL. I said, "I will come to have a look." It was an *emlakçı.* When I arrived, he said "ah but you are *zenci.* The landlord doesn't want *zenci."* Then he asked me "are you married? I said "no." Then he asked, "Are you Muslim?" I said, "I am Christian." Then he said, "*yok, git, git"* (nay, go go).' What is also notable is that in this calculation process, real estate agents act as a kind of cultural mediator. For example, in the dialogue between the real estate agent and Senegalese client (case narrative 10), the agent starts the dialogue with a demeaning generalization about *zenci* people, then asks for confirmation of his views. When the Senegalese man responds that 'everyone has differences in food', the agent also recognizes this relativism. Later in his dialogue with me he made another demeaning comment about their 'kind of talk, like people living in the jungle' but added then 'they are free ok I don't find it odd, but not everyone can show such understanding.' Similarly, in the dialogue in case narrative 9 between the real estate agent and his neighbour, a fellow Kurd, in response to the neighbour's strong comments about *zenci* being dirty people,

the agent responded: ‘it’s because they have different food cultures and clothes. You might not like it, but it feels good to them.’ With most agents, as well as landlords, such a stance can be born from practice, as in having more frequent engagements with more different ‘groups’ and therefore getting used to their differences. Besides that though a major factor is that a cultural relativist stance can help justify prioritizing economic interests even when it entails accommodating differences that seem strange and abominable.

3.5. Conclusions

The preceding chapter laid out how migrations to Kumkapı have produced a context of immense diversity, as the locality accommodates people of increasingly more varying national, ethnic, religious and linguistic backgrounds. But not all differences are the same. In this chapter I have explored some of the local vernacular on migrant categorizations in Kumkapı commonly used in housing discourses, as a way of understanding some of the patterns in the ways that migration driven changes and the present diversity of Kumkapı are understood and organized. In analysing what these terms mean, whom they refer to and how residents use them in an everyday sense, I have shown that meanings attributed to differences (to group categories in this case) build on legacies of the past and are not static. Dwelling reminds us that differentiation is always emergent and becoming. And looking at these terms through a dwelling lens allows, as in the words of Keith, ‘seeing diachronic change in the synchronic snapshot’ (2013: 1376). Such an approach complicates the ways in which we speak about urban

diversity as it entails recognizing that the subjects in front of us have been in the making for already a long time and are changing as we speak.

As discussed in Chapter 1, dwelling as a concept emphasizes that both imaginary and physical forms are the product of people's practical engagements within the environment that give rise to them. In looking at the patterns of social differentiation in Kumkapı from a dwelling lens, we can see that group stereotypes are closely intertwined with ideas about how 'private space' is being used and should be used. Various aspects related to dwellings, as in how many people live together, how they are related, who is permitted entry into the dwellings for what reasons, what is cooked, how much rent tenants pay, etc. all these feed into the representations circulating in Kumkapı regarding its diverse residents. Space and materiality, in other words, are central to the process of attributing meanings to categories of social difference.

In this chapter I also develop the idea of examining the sphere of housing as a 'contact zone.' Here I build on Pratt's (2008) definition of the term that emphasizes encounters being often characterized by 'highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination' (2008: 7), this being an aspect that is mostly overlooked in studies exploring contact in immigration societies (Yeoh & Willis 2005, Piekut & Valentine 2017). Landlords and real estate agents in Kumkapı have significant power as they control access to tenure in a market where demand for housing is extremely high. This high demand is fuelled by: its growing reputation across Istanbul, and globally, for that matter, due to the locally embedded diverse transnational networks, as a place offering central, affordable, flexible and short-term housing to migrants who for socio-cultural and economic reasons often struggle to access housing elsewhere, especially upon first

arrival. Hence, the discourses that residents' use locally has a significant role in creating rules of access to housing and determining how space is allocated across differences. And it is a powerful role that also materializes in various forms of inequality, such as charging high rents for dire housing, cheating on bills, not returning deposits, forced evictions, sexual harassment of tenants, and the like. The categories discussed represent a kind of 'host perspective' in that they are founded upon Turkish terms and certainly it cannot be assumed that everyone living in the neighbourhood attributes the same meanings to these categories. But they are significant in that they are the building blocks of discriminatory practices in the locality. Newcomers who are unfamiliar with the exact terms and their layered meanings acquire such an understanding through the process of trying to carve a space to dwell in Kumkapı.

While housing encounters are defined by grave inequalities shaped primarily around these six group typologies though, the examples have pointed to an interactive and evolving dimension. The longer migrants live in Kumkapı, the more aware they become of other co-existing patterns and discourses of social differentiation, and use these creatively to improve well-being and opportunities, as in the examples of a *zenci* person emphasizing that he is Muslim and/or an *aile,* or a *bayan* emphasizing that she is *temiz.* Landlords and real estate agents then display ambivalences in their discourses, wherein they re-create group stereotypes at the same time as mediating differences. This last point hints at one of the core arguments of this thesis, which is that living with differences entails a balancing act, of weighing pros and cons between socio-cultural differences, economic and other interests. Having explored it here in relation to housing accessibility, in the next chapter I will reflect on how it emerges in the ways that

individual in Kumkapı make their dwelling spaces and domestic materialities meaningful.

4. Dwelling diversities: balancing choices and constraints

In Kumkapı today there are significant variations in the housing stock available in terms of architecture and quality across and within buildings. In some parts of the locality traditional Turkish houses dominate. These are two to four-storey single, twin or row houses directly entered from the street, with narrow facades and a rectangular plan, generally opening onto a garden in the back, and made of stone, brick or timber. Most of these houses include a supported one or two-storey bay extension called a *cumba,* and a balcony above it. While these houses were originally built as single-family households, today many have been internally re-adapted, often in a makeshift manner, to accommodate separate housing units. The remaining buildings are concrete apartment buildings, which range between four to six storeys and accommodate one to four flats on each level. The size and type of flats greatly vary, from the more standard three bedroom flats with a separate living room, kitchen and one or more bathrooms, to studio rooms with inbuilt kitchens and bathrooms. What is notable in Kumkapı is the widespread and often makeshift conversion of basements and rooftops for shelter.[82]

The physical diversity of buildings is further accentuated through differences in tenure. In Kumkapı some properties are owner occupied, but the majority are privately rented and subletting flats/rooms is a common practice. Some religious foundations also own residential properties in the area, which are rented out as social housing for community

[82] Birgül's (2013) study examining the physical landscape in a selected central area of Kumkapı is reflective of the areas material and architectural diversity. Of the 721 buildings she analyzed, 2% were built between the 15-18th centuries, 12% in 19th century, 31% in first half of 20th century and 55% in the second half. In terms of materials used, 51% were categorized as *kagir yapı* (structures built from stone, brick or timber plus brick), 1% timber, 46% cement and 2% steel structures. Building heights are also compared as 1-2 storeys (23%), 3-4 storeys (57%) and 5 or more storeys (20%).

members in need. It is possible to distinguish different forms of occupancy according to the relationship between residents, as in whether they are family, friends or strangers. Moreover, in some housing units there is a fluctuation in residents. The fluctuation may depend on rentiers' routines as in when a room or bed is used by different people in weekly or daily shifts. Alternately, the fluctuation can be random, as in when a spare room is used for lodging itinerant traders or as a rest stop for newly arrived migrants before they undertake the next leg of their journey. Depending on occupancy type, length of residence and background, i.e. if one is a foreigner, there are significant variations in rental costs. [83]

In this chapter I reflect on how this diversity in dwelling forms and practices in Kumkapı is intertwined with migration processes. A substantial part of the chapter consists of the biographical accounts of various Kumkapı residents, centred on a description of their dwelling trajectories. 'Housing careers' is a methodology widely used in housing studies, centred on tracing the different accommodation(s) where individuals or households live over time. It is used to examine and compare concentration and segregation patterns and housing conditions of diverse populations (Özüekren & van Kempen 2003). It is also useful for documenting the shifting experiences and meanings attributed to accommodations over time and space (Blunt & Dowling 2006). Building on this methodology of 'housing careers', under each biographical account I trace reasons and experiences for entering and leaving different

[83] During my fieldwork in 2013 the monthly price of rent paid by foreigners for a single room in shared housing ranged between 200 to 400 TL (roughly 100-200 Dollars at the time). Kumkapı natives, on the other hand, i.e. those who are Turkish nationals, paid between 400-500 TL for one bed and two bedroom flats.

dwellings in Kumkapı, and note the comparisons made between dwellings, including in some cases with those located beyond Kumkapı.

While borrowing this approach from housing studies, I intentionally use the term dwelling instead of house. In his global comparison of different types and forms of shelter across the world, in what he terms as 'vernacular architecture,' anthropologist Paul Oliver contends: 'all houses are dwellings; but all dwellings are not houses. To dwell is to make one's abode: to live in, or at, or on or about a place. For many people this implies a permanent structure, for some it means temporary accommodation, while for others it is simply where they live, even if there is little evidence of a building' (2003: 15). Similarly, housing scholars Coolen and Meesters (2011: 2) point out that while the term house is commonly used to describe the physical structures people inhabit, it is closely associated with the Western type single-family house. They also propose dwelling as a more encompassing term for describing all physical structures and occupancy types people use to live in. Given the Kumkapı context described above, this chapter builds on the same rationale and aims to examine the different factors bearing on the multiplicity of dwelling forms, practices and experiences.

I also deliberately use dwelling instead of home as an analytical lens for understanding how people attach certain meanings and emotions to their lodgings in Kumkapı. Within the Anglo-American imaginary, in particular, house is used to describe the physical structure for living but home has often been used to describe the positive feelings and relations of family, safety, comfort, stability, rootedness and belonging experienced within this space. Today, however, this conflation of house and home is being critiqued on multiple points, and it is widely accepted that home is a highly complex and multi-

faceted concept that may refer to many meanings, places and forms (Blunt & Dowling 2006, Easthope 2004, Mallett 2004). The domestic space of the house does not necessarily breed cosy feelings of home as experiences within are bound up with differences in gender, age, class, race, sexuality and disability (Blunt & Dowling 2006: 89-139). Moreover, a sense of home does not necessarily have to be set in one static place but can be found in movement, activity and social networks located in multiple spaces and scales (Ahmed et al. 1999, Al-Ali & Koser 2002). As noted by Blunt and Dowling, 'home is a material dwelling and it is also an affective space, shaped by emotions and feelings of belonging' (2006: 22). As such, a 'home lens' today often implies focusing on meanings pertaining to comfort, belonging and identity, where and how they are generated, which may or may not be located in the physical dwelling.

My aim in this chapter, however, is to focus on the physical dwellings with less emphasis on whether interlocutors see them as 'homely' or 'unhomely' (Blunt & Dowling 2006: 26). I will explore the different kinds of relations people form with their dwellings without assessing whether it is linked to a sense of identity and belonging. I, therefore, apply a dwelling lens, which as discussed, implies examining the continuous interaction between bodies, things and their environment across time. While in the previous chapter I examined how social differences dictate housing conditions and locations, in this chapter I focus on the role of temporalities. In applying a dwelling lens to understanding the housing careers of my respondents I examine how perceptions of time, in this case temporariness and permanence, inform housing choices and constraints, including also domestic materialities in my analysis. By looking at different

dwellings inhabited comparatively, I also reflect on the process of balancing between these choices and constraints.

4.1. Dwelling biographies

Lusin[84]

Lusin, an ethnic Armenian, was born in the late 1920s in the midst of Turkey's turbulent transition from Empire to Republic. She was born in Sivas, one of the six[85] Armenian populated provinces of the Ottoman Empire prior to the Armenian genocide. Both her parents, who were young children at the time of the genocide, had managed to escape the expulsions but were deeply touched in other ways after witnessing the abduction of family members and forced expropriation of family properties.[86] When Lusin was five, the family moved to Gedikpaşa, but her father passed away within a year, because 'his spirit made him sick' Lusin explains.

In the late 1950s, marriage brought Lusin downhill to Kumkapı, to the family house of her husband, which was a two-storey wooden house some 200 years old at that time. Lusin's narratives about her life in this house are laden with tales about servitude.

[84] Language of communication: Turkish

[85] The other five were Van, Erzurum, Bitlis, Diyarbekir, Mamuretulaziz. Together, these were known as the Six Vilayets (provinces). https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six_vilayets

[86] During and after the genocide an estimated 300.000 Armenians were adopted by Turks and Kurds or married into Muslim populations, some being done in good faith for protection, but most occurring through force (Ekmekçioğlu 2013). Lusin's mother was abducted as a young child. Several years later, her brother succeeded in tracing her when an Armenian woman, who washed laundry in the house of a Turkish family, said that one of the girls in the house really looked like his younger sister. After a long legal battle the brother succeeded regaining custody of Lusin's mother. On her father's side, Lusin had two aunts who were also abducted as young women and forced into marriage with two Turkish farmers. Their father died shortly after this incident. The aunts had to convert to Islam; they and their children remain Muslim to this day.

Anamı ağlattı, 'made my mother cry', was an expression she used in describing the decade she spent being bossed around by her mother-in-law as the expression implies giving someone great trouble. As the only bride in the house, Lusin was responsible for all the household chores from cleaning to cooking. Her brother-in-law, who got engaged three times but broke off each engagement, also lived in this house. 'They meddled in my every business,' she said about the two and recounted several incidents, such as when a neighbour offered to dye her hair, and the brother-in-law objected. 'I wanted to say, 'what is it you? Are you my husband?' but I couldn't,' she lamented, 'it wasn't my rightful place to say.'

In the 1990s, after all her in-laws passed away, Lusin suggested several times to her husband that they move to Kurtuluş, another historically Armenian neighbourhood of Istanbul where her brother's family lived. 'My husband wouldn't leave!' she said in a disgruntled tone, and continued:

> This was the place he was used to. He would say 'I was born here. I will die here. My mother, my father died here.' Also, he had his shop near the Grand Bazaar. It was close, so he would walk there and back. Otherwise, my brother had found us a place in Kurtuluş[87] back then but he wouldn't go. Also, I had a little sister who lives in Holland, she begged us to come. 'I can't bother with learning Dutch at this age' my husband would say. What can you do? Maybe if I had children I wouldn't have stayed here.'

Some years later, her husband's health situation began deteriorating following a stroke which brought on another decade of heavy burden for Lusin. 'For ten years again I suffered. Back then his sister, his nephews, they would visit a lot. But all the weight was on me; his food, his medicine and such… I had a few pennies and spent it all. Ah (she

[87] Kurtuluş is another Istanbul neighborhood, which historically was an Armenian quarter.

sighs), I suffered many things. When Lusin's husband died, she was left alone in the large wooden house. Still she could not find a peace of mind: 'I always worried that the house would collapse on me in my sleep. It was so old. If a mouse were to walk upstairs, I would wake up and my heart would tremble thinking what if someone has entered the house.' After a year and a half, she considered moving to Kurtuluş again. But her younger brother had passed away since, and the houses she found in Kurtuluş were beyond her means. Then one day when looking out of her window Lusin noticed that a one-bedroom flat in the concrete apartment building opposite her house had been vacated: 'it was newly painted, sunny and nice. Why go far away, I thought, this is nice'. Soon after she moved across the street to the apartment which become her second dwelling in Kumkapı for the next 12 years. Her rent was 65 TL when she first moved in, and in 2012, she was paying 450 TL for this one bedroom flat, which has a large living room, one side facing the busy pedestrian street, the other facing a large empty parking lot that allows in much sunlight. A wood stove stood at the entrance of the rectangular living room, where two long couches lined the left wall of the room and a mahogany dining table stood against the right wall along with chairs and console table, adorned with silver picture frames carrying photos of Lusin's siblings, nieces and nephews, and an old television.

When I met Lusin she almost never left her flat. Some seven years ago she was hit by a car nearby her apartment and still suffered from leg pain. Sometimes she would go down to the grocery store located next to an empty plot of land, which is where her previous house used to stand before the Municipality tore it down. But most of the time if she needed something she just called the store from the small balcony extending from

her apartment kitchen. Lusin did not feel safe in Kumkapı. Two years before I met her, she woke up one night in terror as a thief ripped off a small gold chain from her wrist, which was her last remaining valuable. 'Since the thief broke in I don't open my door to anyone. I had several sliding locks made,' she explained and added:

> You know, this used to be a great place. Everyone was Armenian, Greek and Turkish. There were only *aile* (families). There were no shops or anything. Everyone would sit at their doorsteps, drink tea and chat with neighbours. But now it is worse than shit. Sometimes around evening times, I look out of my window because I get bored all day in the house. What else can I do? I see all these *yabancılar* (foreigners), *zenciler* (black people) coming and going. My mind doesn't take it, who are all these people? Already the place is filled with *Kürtler* (Kurds)!

While Lusin had gotten used to taking care of herself for all these years, old age was taking its toll. She had lost most of her eyesight in her left eye, and with her crippled leg she was always fearful she might lose her balance while moving. On one occasion when, in her usual hospitality, she insisted on making me Turkish coffee on the little picnic canister that she used as a stove, she pointed at some coffee cups on a high shelve and asked that I bring them down: 'I haven't used those in a while. I used to go up on the chair, but I am afraid now that I will fall. I broke so many nice glasses trying to reach them, 50-year-old glasses. Everything I have in this house is old. Look, my husband bought me this fridge. It is 40 years old. Now I am also old.'

While without an income, Lusin was not completely isolated. She received a small sum of money from the Patriarchate's church every two to three months. On another visit - she insisted on feeding me stuffed peppers and rice pudding she had prepared the previous day- I asked if they could not place her in a retirement home for the

Armenians. 'The church tells me 'we will take you whenever you want.' But I don't want that. Let me be honest, if they take you, they put you in the crowd. I told my husband's nephew, I don't have the energy anymore. He told me to be a little more patient. Because he needs to pay some money for me to get my own room.' I commented that it would be good for her, so she would at least not be alone and would not have to cook for herself, she replied, 'I know. But look here, I was craving rice pudding, and I made it. But there it is not like that. The food has no salt. I know it because my husband stayed there at the hospital for five days.' A few months after I finished fieldwork around Christmas time in 2013, Lusin's two nephews came to her house one day without advanced notice, they packed a few of her belongings and took her to the retirement home. For Lusin, more than half a century spent on the same street in Kumkapı had come to an abrupt end.

Ayşe[88]

Ayşe, the real estate agent also introduced in the previous chapter, is a 32-year-old ethnically Turkish female and the only child of migrant parents from a village of Gümüşhane, a province in the Black Sea region. Well before she was born, in the 1960s, her father who was still a teenager at the time, migrated alone to Istanbul for labour purposes. He arrived to Aksaray, the area north of Kumkapı and West of Laleli, where he found work in wood and coal distribution depostories. Some years later he married Ayşe's mother, who he met during one of his return visits to his village in Gümüşhane. 'After that, he was 6 months here and 6 months in the village' Ayşe explains, 'I was born in the 11th year of their marriage. They weren't able to bear

[88] Language of communication: Turkish

children before.' After Ayşe's birth in 1981, her father began another circuit of labour migration, this time to Saudi Arabia. He worked there for a year and a half while her mother stayed in the village. After his return, they remained in the village for a few years. Then in 1988, they decided to move to Istanbul permanently. Ayşe's uncle and his family were living in Kumkapı, in a three-story traditional mud-brick house that they rented from an Armenian family. Ayşe notes: 'Before my father left for Saudi Arabia my parents were also renting a room in this house when they were in Istanbul, so we came back to the same house again.' In the early 1990s, the Armenian landlord offered to sell the house to the two brothers. They agreed and still own the house to this day.

In 2011, however, Ayşe's uncle decided to move away from Kumkapı, after buying another property in Esenyurt, a district located on the periphery of Istanbul's European side.[89] When her uncle and his family moved out, Ayşe's father followed the growing local trend and started renting out the vacant rooms to foreigners, while the family continued to reside in their top floor flat. Ayşe explains:

> First we rented out all to Uzbek's. Now we have one tenant from Georgia. She stays with another woman friend, and her two sons, they are 17-18. They are all working in different restaurants. Below them are some Senegalese men, they are quiet and calm. Then below them, facing the garden are the Afghans. I didn't know any of the tenants until 2012 anyhow. I didn't really see them or speak to them. From 2000 to 2011 I was working all the time, from early morning to late evenings. I was a secretary at a real-estate agency in Laleli. That was my life then. Only there was our first tenant, an Uzbek. I knew her. Otherwise my father dealt with the tenants.

[89] Istanbul is divided between what is called the European and Asian sides, as the city is set on these two continents separated the Bosporus strait connecting the Marmara and Black Sea.

Through her hard work at the real-estate agency, Ayşe had succeeded in saving enough money to buy a flat in Esenyurt, the same district her uncle lives in, in a housing complex built by the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality. After she quit her job in 2012, she decided to move to Esenyurt, wanting to get away from Kumkapı and try running her own real estate business there. The move was short lived. She returned to her parents' home after a few months, as her business in Esenyurt was not picking up and the Uzbek tenant that she knew proposed they open a pension together in Kumkapı to host Uzbek traders. Their deal was, Ayşe explained, 'money from me, management from her. Now, if I went to Uzbekistan I would want to stay at a place opened by a Turk. So I thought let them contribute this way.' The venture proved short-lived though as Ayşe explains: 'I was paying all the money and doing all the work.' She persevered and when we met in 2014, Ayşe was running a small realtor's office in partnership with a local religious headman.

I ask Ayşe if her family had made any changes to the house in the 20 years since they bought it, 'no' she answers, 'we didn't do any refurbishments, let alone in our flat. Some 5-10 years ago my father and uncle had some enthusiasm, like let's enlarge the house a bit towards the garden, put a balcony above it, etc… But the worse it got outside (referring to the neighbourhood), the more their eagerness waned.' I ask her then about Kumkapı's status as a protected and urban transformation zone and whether it has the potential to become like neighbouring Sultanahmet where historic houses like theirs have been converted into boutique hotels serving tourists. 'That is what they (the Municipality) said initially. There is such talk going around for 10 years' Ayşe explains, 'but I don't think it will happen. If a house with a *cumba* is turned into a hotel, who will

come here anyway? This place is nested with Laleli. The customers who come here are traders. So they will not go stay in such an old house however much refurbishment you do. It will be too expensive for them, and if you don't make it expensive it won't save the hotel owner.'

But a prospect of hope remains. Ayşe's house in Kumkapı is a short walk away from the Marmaray subway station connecting Istanbul's Asian and European continents, which was in its completion stages in the summer of 2013. 'The advantage here is this. After Marmaray opens they are saying that they will remove the road, make a square and have a green space. I don't know how true it is. Or even if it is true, when it will happen, who will see it happen, I don't know.' I commented that Marmaray would probably impact property prices in the area. Ayşe responded: 'We have also been turned around by this thought. We were always planning to sell the house and said let's wait for the Marmaray to finish and sell afterwards. But now there is a dispute between my uncle's kids. Why do I have to be a guard to their property? Let's just sell and leave! I am 32 now. My own house is waiting empty for five years. I don't feel like renting it out to strangers either.' Ayşe then tells me about the peace she feels in her house in Esenyurt, 'I don't even have to go down to the park or sit on a bench, just opening my window and smelling the fresh air is enough. I am comfortable there. It has security and an elevator. It has natural gas. There are no power cuts…' I am puzzled why the family conflict is a barrier to them moving away, given that they own another house already that remains vacant and ask her if it is her parents that want to stay in Kumkapı:

> A: No, they don't want to stay either. Only they are thinking like 'we have dealt with the problems and suffering of this house, we want it to go for what it is

worth.' So when we sell it we can find something somewhere else. My father is not working anymore. My work here is also uncertain.

K: But couldn't you live in your Esenyurt flat together while waiting to sell?

A: Here then my father's reservations come in. The interior of our house is all wood; the exterior is made of mud-brick. My father says they (the tenants) could burn it by accident. Also women tenants bring men, male tenants bring in women. My father always watches over them. That's why he is unable to just leave… This is my father's first property. I mean it is the first property he has earned through his labour, different from what was passed down from my grandfather in the village. That is why I can empathize with him not wanting to sell. But he is now 62; this is in my sub-conscience. Why should he have to deal with tenants? And it is really difficult dealing with foreigners, they lie, don't pay rent, try avoiding paying bills… He shouldn't have to deal with this. He can buy a new flat, and even if there were a fire there how badly can cement burn?'

Sevda and Irfan[90]

Irfan, in his early 50s, and Sevda, in her mid-30s, are both ethnic Kurds born in Turkey's North Eastern province of Ardahan that borders Georgia. Irfan, his parents and siblings migrated to Istanbul in the mid-1980s for economic purposes, settling in what was then a *gecekondu* area in today's Sancaktepe district, located on Istanbul's periphery on the Asian side. Soon after his arrival, Irfan found work through some relatives at a bakery in Kumkapı and moved into a bachelor room nearby. After nearly ten years of arduous work, Sevda, his distant relative, came to Istanbul as his bride when she was in her late teens. They were given a flat in the family apartment in Sancaktepe. For close to eight years they lived in this house, while Irfan made the long commute back and forth to his bakery job in Kumkapı. In the meantime, Irfan, in partnership with some relatives, tried starting a business importing dried nuts and fruits,

[90] Language of communication Turkish

but it was unsuccessful, and they went bankrupt. Around that time, an acquaintance that was running an off-license shop in Kumkapı asked Irfan to take over. The shop was located near the Armenian Patriarchate and across from the under passage facing the Kumkapı wholesale fish market. 'Fishermen like to drink you know, they were the main customers' Irfan explains. Having gone bankrupt, Irfan did not want to risk losing his job at the bakery in case the store did not work and asked Sevda if she would handle it. She had some experience from running the family grocery store in Sancaktepe and agreed. After taking over, they gradually turned the store into a grocery store to appeal to local residents while still selling tobacco and alcohol. Eventually, Irfan left his bakery job and together with Sevda, and sometimes his brother, they work in shifts running the store which is open close to 18 hours a day, seven days a week.

With both Irfan and Sevda working in Kumkapı and having two young kids, it did not make sense to live in Sancaktepe anymore. They found a two bedroom flat for rent just a bloc away from their store, in an apartment building facing the train tracks and the Marmara Sea. After entering a large foyer, Sevda and Irfan's bedroom is located there next to the living room at the front of the house. To the back of the house, there is a bedroom shared by their two sons next to the kitchen with its large windows looking out on to the facade of an old dilapidated stone building that looks uninhabited. 'I am told it was owned by a priest' Sevda explains, 'and behind it is the residence of the Armenian patriarchate.' When we met in 2013, they had been living in this flat for some 8 years. Initially they entered as tenants, paying 500 TL. Their landlord increased their rent by 15% each year, so after some 5 years, their rent was close to 1000 TL. Irfan explains: 'We didn't want to pay so much rent. Plus we had managed to close our debt and sold

the house in Sancaktepe, so we started looking into buying a place. Our landlord knew about this and made a good offer, so we bought it and stayed.'

On my first visit to their house, Sevda was alone home making breakfast for the kids, as Irfan was busy tending the store. She was telling me about how difficult it was for her to get used to Kumkapı, 'I am not sure I am used to it even now. It is really a very difficult place.' I asked her then to tell me about their house in Sancaktepe:

> It was much larger. The entire building belonged to the family. We had a garden. But I should tell you something. My character is difficult. I mean I wasn't so happy there either. Maybe it was because Irfan was not around in the house much. He would leave early in the morning then get back close to midnight. It was meaningless. But when I first moved there I had the house thing in me, you know like my house should look such a way, it should be clean, etc.… My sister-in-law would come by and see me wiping the walls and say, 'are you crazy?' I wasn't working then, the children were young… So if I said I was good there, that would be a lie. But I don't want to be here. If I knew that I could be happy, Irfan will do more refurbishments here. We bought the house only a couple of years ago, and we haven't really touched it since then. When we first moved in as tenants I made the landlord re-paint the flat and install natural gas. Then when we bought the flat, the doors were old so I changed them. The walls were serrated; I had them plastered. And I re-did the floors. But I left the kitchen and bathroom as it is. I refused to touch them. I said to myself, this is enough. I will not re-do them even if we have the money. Because if I do, that means we are stuck here.

Whether speaking to them together or separately, Sevda and Irfan always emphasized that their sole effort behind all their hard work, which is what tied them to Kumkapı, was to educate their children. Irfan graduated from a public high school in Ardahan. Sevda dropped out before graduating which was one of her biggest regrets in life. When I met them, their sons (15 and 11) were studying in a private school in another district

some 20 minutes drive away. When Sevda was not working in the store, she was busy chauffeuring her sons to and from school and on weekends to private tutors. The children did not have any friends in Kumkapı and socialized mainly with cousins during family visits. Irfan and Sevda did not want their sons to interact with other children in the neighbourhood. 'It's like a *ev ceza evi* (house prison)'[91] Irfan said in describing his children's relationship to their house. He told me then why he and Sevda do not permit them to socialize in the area, giving the example of his downstairs neighbour, a family from another Eastern Kurdish province called Mus, whose sons, Irfan said, hang out with people in the local drug business. 'If it weren't for the education of my children I would definitely not stay here. I am in the position to say that. If I could come up with another business plan in my head, if I had some capital, I would not have to prioritize their education expenses so much. Because then I would know that in any event, I will earn back what I have invested. My one son is in his second year of high school, the younger one in middle school. Now all our efforts are towards getting the younger one into a good high school. Then we will relax a little more, because he will be in a different environment.'

On one occasion while visiting Irfan in their store, I asked him whether there is any place where he feels a sense of belonging or settlement. 'I feel myself mobile' Irfan replied, 'The place I miss the most is my *memleket* (homeland) where I was born, Ardahan. But there is a saying '*doğduğun değil doyduğun yer'* (not where you are born, where you are full). I feel that difference really, because the conditions of today really don't allow this. The place where you are made full becomes permanent.'

[91] *Ceza evi* in Turkish means prison, derived from *ceza* (punishment) *ev* (house). Here Irfan specifies that it is an *ev ceza evi,* meaning that it is like a house prison.

Dilara and Kemran[92]

Dilara and Kemran, a married couple from Turkmenistan both in their early 30s, were my next-door neighbours in the flat where I rented a room in Kumkapı. After they got married in 2005, they followed cultural customs and Dilara moved into the four-bedroom home of Kemran's parents, where his two brothers and their wives also lived. Soon after, Dilara got pregnant. But Kemran was not able to see the birth of their son. He came to Turkey in 2006, as the first member of his nuclear family to migrate. The reasons were part economic, part other, Dilara explained: 'After our wedding he got into some debt, also he got into a big fight and there was the danger that he might go into prison.' Then Kemran talked about his arrival in Turkey: 'The first place I came was Kumkapı. We were given the contact of a Turkmen agent here who arranges work. For a couple of days I stayed in a room near the train station, we were like 17-18 people in the room. Then I was mobile for a long time. They took us to places like Antalya and Adana for construction work.' Dilara interrupts in a mocking tone: 'He was working, fine, but was also eating up all the money on bets and alcohol! So I decided to come after him.' In 2010 she left their son with her parents and joined him in Istanbul. They have not seen their son since then. 'He sees Kemran as a *yabancı* (used here as stranger)' Dilara said, 'He calls me *hala* (auntie). We ask him 'will you live with us when we return?' he says, 'no I will stay with my granny.''

After Dilara came to Istanbul, she quickly found a job as a live-in domestic worker in the home of a Turkish family living in the suburbs, where she earned 600 US Dollars a month. She worked there for a year, while Kemran continued working in construction

[92] Language of communication: Turkish

sites in Istanbul. First, they rented a room in a two room flat in Kumkapı near the *meyhane* district, where Dilara stayed only one night a week on her day off. After one year she quit her job, no longer wanting to be a live-in domestic worker, and found a day job instead. In the meantime, Kemran and Dilara moved to Esenyurt for a little over a month. Dilara explains: 'For just 250 TL we found a flat with two bedrooms and a living room, a balcony and the like. But there was no work. That is why we didn't stay. That is why people come here to Kumkapı, and that is why rents are more expensive. You have to travel an hour, pay for transportation costs and so on.' Kemran adds: 'Here you will not get hungry because there is always work. Go to someone's restaurant and wash dishes for two hours, they will give you 20-30 TL.' So they decided to return to Kumkapı.

Dilara and Kemran were among the oldest tenants in our building, having moved in January 2012. They found the place by responding to a sign posted on the apartment building door. Soon after they moved in, our landlord arranged a new job for Kemran in the textile workshop on the ground floor where he earned 900 TL a month. Their room was the largest in our flat, for which they paid 350 TL. They had a king size bed sitting on a large metal bed frame in one corner of the room. Next to it was a small fridge that also functioned as a television stand and in the center of the room was a small coffee table. 'We bought everything downstairs from Yusuf,' Dilara says, referring to the man running a second-hand furniture store on the ground floor of the next apartment building, and specifies: 'Only the bed is completely new, we thought 'lets at least not sleep in someone else's bed.'' A couple of weeks after this conversation, they invested in another new item mounting a heavy cream-colored curtain with gold and black

colored leaf patterns on the ceiling to divide the room into a 'bedroom' and 'living room'. Kemran's younger brother was coming to Istanbul and was going to live with them for a while until he found work. 'We can't pay 600 TL for two rooms,' Dilara said, 'We didn't come here to eat up money!'

Dilara and Kemran recognized that their living conditions in Kumkapı, both material and social, are far from ideal, but saw this as a necessary situation for achieving a bigger ideal. During one conversation Kemran told me 'in our country it is shameful to be living in rented accommodation. A married man should own a home.' On another day, when I entered the flat Kemran was mopping the floors, while another Uzbek neighbour whose wife was a live-in domestic worker in the suburbs of Istanbul and stayed in the flat one night a week, was standing at the sink washing dishes. In seeing this, I used the Turkish expression said to someone carrying out a job (*Kolay Gelsin*, which literally translates as 'may it be easy'). Kemran smiled and responded: 'In our country, men don't do cleaning. But what can we do? In a foreign country we must do it.' Then again on another day, I came into their room while Dilara was busy trying to slice large carrots on the coffee table with a tiny blunt knife. When I commented that it did not seem best suited for this job, she smiled, replying: 'You know we have a saying in our country, a house with a sharp knife means a house with a sharp, strong man.'[93] Kemran reacted immediately: 'This is not our house! We came here to work, not to live. We came here to build a life for our children so they don't have to suffer this way. If I am going to buy a good new knife I will buy it for our own house.'

[93] On another visit I brought up this dialogue again and Kemran clarified that the expression was more like, 'in a house where the knife is not sharp, a man will not be heard' and added that in Uzbekistan men usually don't allow their wives to work.

Indeed, with their savings in Turkey, they had succeeded in buying a plot of land in their home city in Turkmenistan and building a large house with a garden and terrace. Had they stayed in Turkmenistan, it would have taken them decades to achieve this, Kemran said, 'my child would have grown up, gotten married, and I would still be trying to get myself together (financially). Let me also say, our people look at your pocket, your clothes, car… If it is nice, they look at you differently.' Having finalized the construction of their new house, Dilara and Kemran plan to stay in Turkey for another year until they have met their other goals, which includes fully furnishing their home, buying a car and putting aside some savings to invest in a business.

In July 2013, Dilara and Kemran's tenancy in our building came to an abrupt end following a dispute with our landlord over the payment of bills. He ordered them to move out and gave them two days to find a new place. Dilara believed he was simply looking for an excuse to evict them so he could rent their room out at a higher cost. They found a room for rent two streets away in a three-bedroom flat owned by a Kurdish man from Diyarbakir who said he lived in the flat with his Uzbek fiancée. It quickly turned out to be an unpleasant home for them. 'He was drinking everyday, talking inappropriately all the time next to us' Kemran explains, 'He said he had just one girlfriend, but he turned the house into a brothel, bringing in a new *yabancı bayan* (foreigner woman) every day. We had paid 70 TL deposit, he didn't give it back to us but whatever, we just wanted to get out.'

Exhausted from both experiences, Dilara and Kemran decided it was time for a little more comfort, even if it cost more. They briefly considered moving to another district, like Zeytinburnu, which has a large Central Asian community, but Dilara explains:

'Zeytinburnu is like a village, everyone knows each other and looks at you because you are *yabancı.* We are *rahat* (comfortable) here. Anyhow, everyone is *yabancı.* No one looks at you.' So they decided again to stay in Kumkapı. They found a three bedroom flat that was spacious and fully furnished, made a down payment to rent the whole flat and spread the word through their social networks that they were renting out rooms. Soon after they gave one room to a young Azeri man and the other one to an Uyghur woman and her two teenage kids. When I visited them for the first time in their new home in October 2013, Dilara and Kemran seemed very content about the cosy arrangement of their new house even though it was coming at an extra cost. There were two large closets at the apartment entrance for coats and shoes, and a large dining table and sofa in the hallway of the house. In Dilara and Kemran's room, the landlord had left two beige sofas, a big glass closet where Dilara had made a display of personal care products (cologne, shampoo, perfume, nail polish and the sort), a computer desk and two carpets. 'The only thing we are missing is a washing machine,' Dilara said, 'but anyways I do our washing at the house where I am working.'

Binata and Cheikh[94]

Binata and Cheikh, a Senegalese husband and wife also in their early 30s, lived in the basement of my apartment building and shared very similar backgrounds to Dilara and Kemran. Cheikh came first to Istanbul in 2010 to find work. Then Binata followed a year later, leaving behind their 2-year-old son with her mother. The dream of owning a house in Senegal was one reason she chose to leave. Binata explains: 'There was no work in Senegal. I was making batik with my mother. We had a small shop but business

[94] Language of communication mostly in English, though Binata also spoke basic Turkish and sometimes switched languages.

was bad. Also I was not happy with my living situation. In Senegal the custom is that you live with the family of your husband. This is custom but I don't like it. I would like to have a separate house. If you have your own house you can live separate.' Another trigger was concerns about maintaining her marriage: 'One friend, an Italian girl who was buying my batik and selling in Italy, she said to me, 'why you are here in Senegal and your husband is in Turkey? Many Senegalese boys, they say they don't have wives in Senegal then marry other Italian girls or Senegalese girls.' She said, 'you should go'. I didn't want him look at other women so I came.'

Cheikh was living in Kumkapı in a two-room flat shared among several Senegalese men. When Binata arrived they searched immediately for a private room and through a local real estate agent found the basement room in our apartment for 250 TL. Like my flat, the basement had also been refurbished to fit five separate rooms, between 6–10 square meters in size, but was arranged slightly differently. There were two rooms facing the back of the building and three on the side. When I first visited the flat in May 2013, two Senegalese women were staying in the street corner room, three Syrian men in the middle room, three Senegalese men in the room next to Binata and Cheikh's corner room, and a Senegalese woman living alone in the room next to theirs. A fridge and broken washing machine lined the narrow corridor ending with the bathroom, which was facing the street. The kitchen was located in the space under the apartment staircase and consisted of a bare aluminium metal sink base standing on four steel legs, two portable gas canisters on the floor, a coffee table for stacking food items, a corner shelf for stacking pots and pans, and a stool for sitting while cooking. Neither the kitchen nor the bathroom had any window openings.

Binata and Cheikh's room tightly fit a double bed, a red velvet couch, a wardrobe, bedside cabinet, coffee table and television, which was open throughout the day often playing Euronews in French. Above the television stood a framed picture of their baby son and a poster of Mecca was taped on the wall. When I asked about where the items in their room came from, Binata said that except for the television, which they received from a friend who left, they purchased all items also from Yusuf' store upstairs, adding that 'everyone here buys second hand. Why should you buy new? It is too expensive.' Their room had a small window close to the ceiling that opens onto the large parking lot on the side of the building, but she says she often keeps it closed because of local children throwing rubbish in for fun.

Binata, Cheikh and the other Senegalese in the flat had all become close friends. The women cooked and washed together, preparing large meals served to everyone in a single big metal tray placed at the centre of a cloth spread on the floor in one of the two largest rooms. 'We are like brothers and sisters' Binata commented, 'I don't know how I would be here without them.' Still, Binata struggled with living in the basement: 'I have been here in this house close to 2 years now. I only know this house in Istanbul. I want a different house, not like here in the basement. But for a new house you have to pay deposit of one month's rent. It is too much. And even here the landlord now wants 300 TL. This month [April 2013] we get 319 TL for electricity bill for the flat. Only at night we burn the heaters. Water is like 100 TL. I don't know why it is too expensive.'

Cheikh was commuting to Güngören, a far away district in Istanbul's industrial zone, where an ex-flatmate found him a job in a textile workshop. He worked 12 hours a day,

6 days a week, earning 800 TL a month. I asked why they don't move to Güngören to save from both costs and exhaustion of transportation, she answered:

> All the time I tell him we should look for a place there. He says, 'Here I have many Senegalese people. If you want to call Senegal, it is cheaper. But if you are in Güngören, how will you make it?' But I think this is not the problem. If you have good place to live, it is better for your health. But here look, there are Syrian boys in this house, they drink, they make high music, there is too much noise. They don't disturb us, but they are too loud. All the people here are going to work at 8. I tell them, please slowly. But they don't do anything.

Ever since her arrival, Binata was struggling to find a stable job. From Senegal she had brought African craft works, which she tried selling on the streets and at stands in art fairs. But she was growing tired of having to run away with heavy suitcases when seeing the Municipal Police. She also tried factory work, but in her first experience the boss paid only half her salary after one months work and in the second the boss attempted to sexually harass her at the end of her first week. Then like many Senegalese, she tried selling watches on the street but unluckily had her items confiscated several times by the Municipal police. In November 2013, Binata tried developing an informal restaurant business in the flat. By that time the other Senegalese women had left and were all replaced by men, and they had already made a deal with Binata to pay her for cooking their lunch. She found some other interested Senegalese clients working in nearby workshops, who all paid 5 TL for a meal. But this time there were complaints in the building about the strong cooking smell coming from the basement, so much so that the landlord asked them to move out. They didn't object because now Binata had a strong motive to look for a better place. She had

unintentionally gotten pregnant. While Binata always wanted to have more children, it was certainly not the plan for it to happen in Turkey.

When the landlord asked them to move out, Binata and Cheikh found a top floor flat with four rooms and already had several other Senegalese friends who agreed to move into the other rooms. All together they were nine people paying 700 US Dollars in rent. Binata and Cheikh's share was around 200 US Dollars (around 400 TL). Though Binata was happy to have left the basement and to be living only with Senegalese, the extra costs worried her: 'Life is getting too expensive. Last month we had to pay 800 TL for electricity! My flatmate says that there was a Kurdish family from Mardin living here before us and they were using *kaçak elektrik* (illegal electricity). I think we are now paying for them! My mind is not relaxed here.' In all the times I visited her, Binata was tormented, as it seemed that their migration goals were not paying off and there was a lot of pressure coming from family in Senegal:

> They think we are rich because we came to Europe, they think Turkey is Europe. They think we have money and good life because we don't tell them the reality, how we live. Cheikh's father has four wives and 32 children. But now most have left. He has many brothers in Spain, Italy, and France. Most have also taken their wife and children. And they have built their separate houses in Senegal where they stay when they visit. When they come, they bring many things; they have money and give to people. People look, they see they have house, they have car. The reality in Senegal, there is competition between brothers, because of competition between mothers. Me, I don't have anything. What do I do here I ask myself. All day, Cheikh's mom calls and says 'you are not good children, you don't do anything, your brother did that and that, you don't do anything.' If I go back to Senegal, what will I do there? There is no work. But here we are just spending money for rent and life… I would like to go back to Senegal but I don't want to live again with Cheikh's family. I want our own independent

> house. We could buy one for 5000 Euros, but in Turkey it is impossible to save such money.

Sekou and friends[95]

Sekou fled Guinea just before his 17th birthday in the spring of 2011. Several members of his family, including his father, had been imprisoned and tortured for ethnic and political reasons making him a possible target. An uncle helped Sekou to organize his trip to Istanbul and told him to find the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office in Istanbul. As Sekou was a minor when he approached the UNHCR, they sent him directly to a state shelter for unaccompanied minor refugees in Kadıköy, a district of Istanbul on the Asian side. It was a rough transition for him:

> I was so shy in the beginning. When you are kicked out of your country it is different. It wasn't easy, it is not the way I was living with my family. The camp was very restricted. I wasn't ok in my head there. But it was an experience. I learned to adapt to different environments, also started learning Turkish there. I was really hopeless at first. Having to adapt to different people, culture, geography, and the like. Even the dressing was so different, and the food, I couldn't eat anything, it looked very different even if sometimes it tasted the same.

Soon after his arrival at the shelter, Sekou became close friends with two other boys also from Guinea who fled their country for similar reasons. After some time together in the shelter, the three boys decided they wanted to find work rather than sit around idly. 'Staying alone waiting with folded hands was not something easy. I saw it as a waste of time. My philosophy was that I wanted to feel proud and independent. So I thought it is better if I have at least any work I will learn something.' The shelter staff approved their

[95] Language of communication English

request saying that they were showing a good example for the other children and advised them to go to Kumkapı, the place where they said Sekou and friends could find 'their people' (e.g. other Africans). They followed their advice, went to Kumkapı and met some Senegalese on the street who directed them uphill to Gedikpaşa, where each found informal work in a workshop producing bags, working 12 hours a day, six days a week for around 200 US Dollars a month. It was a long and tiring commute and a quarter of their income went to transport and food. So after a couple of months, they decided it was better to find a room in Kumkapı. Since they were all either approaching or had already turned 18, the shelter manager allowed them to leave.

Their first dwelling in Kumkapı was a large room shared with a Senegalese man they had met through another acquaintance. They were paying 350 TL in total, plus bills. Sekou described this first housing experience: 'It was expensive but we thought it is better than coming and going from the shelter. All our money was going already to rent and food. And our food then was just chicken in Kumkapı. Chicken, chicken all the time, over at that corner shop. We bought a big mattress for the three of us to share. In the beginning, we stayed nicely. The three of us were working each in a factory. The Senegalese guy was selling watches.' But after some time they started having problems with the landlord. 'He was no good' Sekou saıd, 'He didn't want us to have any visitors. Our visitors could not use the bathroom or water. There was a Turkish guy who worked with the landlord and was living in the other room across from us. He reported anything to the landlord.' Sekou also suspected that they were being cheated on the bills: 'We were getting huge bills in electricity and water. One day we got a 350 TL bill for electricity for just one month. We had one little electric heater. But we used it only at

night and not the entire time, just to heat the room. The guy didn't show us the bill.' Sekou confronted the landlord about this. The man reacted violently, cursing and threatening to use force, and told them to vacate the flat. They were not too upset about this as they were also having problems with the Senegalese guy, who they suspected was homosexual. 'So there was an internal and external problem pushing us to leave' Sekou said, 'luckily, we all found another house the same day.'

When I visited Sekou in their new house in June 2012, they had moved in only recently. After entering the front door, there was a small bathroom immediately to the right and a small aluminium kitchen counter adjacent to it with sink and cooker. The off-white colour cupboards below and above the sink and surrounding walls were heavily marked with grease and prints. Facing the door were two rooms, one with a framed double bed, the other with a king size mattress and a small wardrobe. The room to the right opened to a large balcony, which is where they had put a fridge, television, several chairs, and suitcases, shoes and hanging clothes stacked in the back corner. They had put up dark pink curtains to both have some privacy from the buildings they were facing and block out the scorching sunlight. A real estate agent owned the flat, hence when they moved in he did not ask for a commission and they paid 500 TL as deposit and 600 TL for rent. Their bills were on average around 185 TL: 'Rent is expensive but the landlord is good, not like the one before. Only one time he came to check in whether we are involved in drugs or sort because there were some Nigerians in the flat before that were involved in such. We have a good relationship. He calls me his son, sometimes I call him my brother.'

When Sekou and his two mates moved into the new flat, two other West African friends they met during their time in Kumkapı also joined them. 'In the beginning we were five people sharing the room. But the numbers would change. People who have newly arrived or got stuck would stay with us for some time. At a given time we lived here eight people. It was winter, very cold. We had to accept them if they have problem with landlord and no place to stay. The landlord did not care. He said if we want we can stay 100! That is why maybe we are paying through this way' Sekou said, pointing at the bills in his hands. He suspected again that they were a bit too high but they chose to ignore it this time, as it was worth the freedom of having guests and being able to socialize. I asked Sekou then whether he considered moving away from Kumkapı:

> When you are familiar with a place or some people, it will change the decision to go. Because it is not something easy when you have to start everything from zero, make new friends. Maybe it's because of that. Apart from that somehow there are also some things that are cheaper here, like food. If you compare to other places, you can find some places that are very reasonable. But for the house it is very expensive. They consider this area as a business center. There are workshops. Foreigners are many, doing business here. That is why everything is very pricy, that is why they like it here. There are people now going to Cerrahpaşa, to Çapa, to some other places. It's because those going there are those who are selling watches, they are independent. They realize that it is cheaper there than here. They can save more money, be more safe there than here. As for us, we have many friends here. But its not because… It's kind of compulsory to stay. Even if we wanted to leave here to find another place, everything is very expensive. We wanted a three-bedroom apartment to be more comfortable. But it's very expensive, like 1500 TL. We want a place a bit away from Kumkapı to avoid all the noise and for security concerns. If we get the chance to find something we can afford, we would consider moving.

Some months after this talk, Sekou and his flatmates did find such a chance and moved into a new flat in nearby Cerrahpaşa: 'Our landlord increased rent to 700 TL. You know we were not happy about the neighbourhood. Also we were starting to have problems with some of the neighbours who complained that we were being too loud because we were sitting and talking in the balcony most of the time you know. We wanted a bigger place to socialize more comfortably and started feeling the need for more privacy too, some of us who are working longer hours wanted to rest, while others wanted to watch TV.' In their new flat that has two large bedrooms and a living room they are paying 1000 TL, 'but it is worth it' Sekou remarked.

4.2. Temporariness, materiality and ambivalence

The different housing careers above point to a vast array of sentiments and meanings ascribed to dwelling spaces, including, but not limited to, patriarchy, insecurity, solidarity, anonymity and mere functionality. Differences such as gender, class, race, age, disability and sexuality emerge as variables determining these diverse meanings like in the narratives about gendered dwelling expectations after marriage, home ownership as a form of upward mobility, changing dwelling needs and expectations according to life stage (in youth, after becoming a parent, in old age, etc.), or when one becomes crippled and dependant, and different sexual preferences creating tension when sharing a room, etc. These social dimensions are ones that the literature on home has already discussed at great lengths.[96] To add to existent literature, this ethnography

[96] For a review of the literature examining how these social differences shape the construction of house as home, see Blunt & Dowling 2006, chapter 3.

will explore two other aspects that strongly surfaced in the narratives and that are reflective of the dwelling perspective this thesis purports. The first is linked to the temporal nature of dwelling. In Chapter 2 I discussed temporalities of dwelling in relation to how temporal rhythms (i.e. work hours, seasons and religious holy days) and spatial patterns (i.e. forms, function and use) become incorporated. While the same lens could also be applied here at a more micro scale to analyse the differences across dwellings, I shift the focus instead to another dimension of temporality concerning the perception of time, in this case temporariness, and how this informs relations with material space. Secondly, I analyse the ways respondents' dwelling processes are shaped by acts of balancing ambivalent needs, expectations, ideals and desires.

In the different cases presented in this chapter, we have seen people who are, to borrow Catherine Brun's article title, 'Dwelling in the Temporary' (2016). Brun studies the situation of Georgian Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's) who she describes as caught in a position of 'double temporariness', first due to their pending temporary legal status since 1990, and second for their precarious housing status often involving moving from one private sector rented accommodation to another. For reasons relating to the legal context of migration to Turkey, discussed in detail in Chapter 2, this condition of 'double temporariness' is also pertinent to many of the foreigners living in Kumkapı, like Dilara and Kemran or Binata and Cheikh who are undocumented migrants and therefore always face the risk of deportation, as well as Sekou and friends whose status as asylum seeker allows them only temporary residence in Turkey.[97] Besides their legal statuses, their dwelling opportunities and conditions are also characterized by

[97] Because if they are recognized as refugees they will be resettled to a third country, if not, then they must leave the country or become undocumented.

significant uncertainties, including the threat of being evicted upon the slightest dispute with landlords. In Kumkapı though, a sense of temporariness is not limited to relatively recently arrived foreign migrants as Lusin, Ayşe and her parents, and Sevda and Irfan's biographies demonstrated. In her study of East European migrants' temporary accommodation strategies and experiences in London, Parutis (2011: 266) rightly critiques tendencies in research on migrant housing to distinguish between 'recent' versus 'settled' migrants, pointing out that there is no clear cut definition of how much time a recent migrant needs to spend in an immigration country to be called settled. She argues that it is better to define the distinction by intentions for settlement and/or return, rather than length of residence. The examples here show that such an analysis can also be extended to the so-called native populations. While Lusin, Ayşe and her parents, or Sevda and Irfan could all be conceived as being 'settled' due to their citizenship status, length of residence and/or home ownership, they harbour strong thoughts and desires that show their presence in Kumkapı as transient.[98] Overall across the six cases, perceptions of temporariness are interlinked with future aspirations and waiting, such as being settled in a retirement home, selling one's house at a top market price, accumulating enough capital to buy a house or ensure children graduate from good schools, and becoming a recognized refugee and securing third country resettlement.

[98] As will be discussed in Chapter 6, among most residents of Kumkapı there is a strong sense of transience associated with the place. There are of course exceptions, of people who work hard to create a home in such an environment. Though few, I also met some *yerli* informants who heavily invested in material comforts, from basic household items to fancy furniture, particularly in the living rooms for hosting guests. But this was a rarity in most cases, and with the rising demand for room rentals (see also Chapter 5), more home owners are realizing the value of their properties and deciding to create homes elsewhere.

Temporariness and domestic materialities

In the different narratives discussed, a sense of temporariness conditions how these individuals relate to their dwellings. This conditioning is strongly reflected in their domestic materialities, such as selecting used or inherited household items, and/or decisions about doing home refurbishments. Temporary migrants in Kumkapı like Dilara and Kemran, Binata and Cheikh and Sekou mostly only buy second hand and basic furniture for their rented dwellings. In the narratives of Ayşe and Sevda and Irfan, temporariness is evoked in their purposeful negligence of making any new refurbishments in their homes. Lusin's case is more subtle, though equally poignant. Approaching her 90s, she was very conscious that she might die soon. Hence the domestic materialities that mattered to her were the ones allowing her to function alone in the house. Over recent years she had already given away many of her favourite clothes, shoes, tablecloths, embroideries, and the like to her nieces, and even gave me a few pieces saying, 'soon I will be gone, they shouldn't go to trash.' She was taken to the retirement home with just one small suitcase packed with some daily clothes. When I visited her there, she said she did not know what happened to the rest of her belongings in the house.

There are a vast number of studies exploring the role of materialities in the home-making practices of migrant communities. Visual artifacts like photographs and paintings, and ordinary objects with some form of symbolic value like a cooking pot, dress, book, radio or DVD collection can serve as mnemonic devices creating a sense of imaginary belonging (Miller 1998, Tolia Kelly 2004, Turan 2010, Walsh 2006). These objects do not necessarily have to be carried from or represent a pre-migratory context;

objects obtained in the country of immigration can become registered as embodiments of collective experiences in the diaspora (Savaş 2010) or reflect hybrid identities (Salih 2002). It has been argued that individuals also nurture a sense of home through the ways that functional materialities like furniture are organized in space and put to use (Levin 2014, Ghosh 2014, Long 2013, Burell 2014). The examples presented here, however, point to a contrasting approach: one in which the comforts of materiality and creating a sense of home are not sought or prioritized due to temporariness.[99]

In the literature, there are different interpretations about how domestic materialities are experienced and made meaningful when dwelling in the temporary. Brun finds that the Georgian IDP's she interviewed owned few of their household items and were reluctant to invest money or energy in their rented dwellings besides the bare necessities. She argues that this creates a sense of helplessness: 'The low material standards of the dwellings form a reminder of people's status. Lack of control is felt both in relation to the immediate physical space and in relation to the politics of mobility towards IDPs' (ibid: 434). In exploring the temporary accommodation strategies of Eastern European migrants in London, Parutis (2011) also finds that her informants avoid investing in unnecessary material goods which they will not be able to take back home and are unwilling to develop attachments to the material culture of rented dwellings. But she defines this more as an active choice which she attributes to her respondents' age group: 'Most interviewees in the study are young and single and therefore comfort and material

[99] This is not to suggest that materially induced feelings of 'homeliness' were entirely suppressed. Even though minimally, some of the dwellings studied did include personal memorabilia like photos of far away family. Televisions and computers also appeared significant in mediating a sense of home, such as through satellite channels, Youtube music videos or Skype calls. But what stood out more strongly in the narratives about the present moment was a purposive disinterest/disinvestment in materialities, and this is an aspect that the literature on migration and home rarely touches upon.

culture of home is not among their current priorities. Young migrants' needs regarding accommodation in the immigration country include flexibility and relatively low costs' (ibid: 278). Boccagni (2013) compares Ecuadorian migrants' material decoration of their houses in Ecuador and Italy. He argues that the former, 'there', is seen as a measure of success and source of belonging, and therefore decorated to give this message, while the latter, 'here', is seen as a functional requirement, a space of protection, security and autonomy, with minimal adornments being made to recover a sense of 'home.' He notes: 'Finding accommodation 'here' is basically, especially at the beginning, a matter of saving and accepting conditions well below the mainstream standard. This often results in poor and/or overcrowded lodging, possibly marked by some 'ethnic overprice'' (2013: 6).

In the six cases presented here, we can see all these aspects surfacing to different degrees. All the respondents share a common approach and strategy to those mentioned in Parutis and Boccagni's studies: they view their dwellings in Kumkapı as merely functional and making them more 'homely' is the least of their priorities. Either they cannot or actively choose not to foster a feeling of homeliness in Kumkapı because they know, or want to hold onto the idea, that it is only temporary. While the approach and strategy are the same, leading to similar materialities, how it makes these individuals feel is different, as the choices they make do not necessarily lead to the desired outcomes. For instance, Dilara and Kemran view their second-hand items in a way that reminds them of their achievements; like the blunt knife 'here' can be a reminder of the sharp knife waiting 'there.' But for Binata and Cheikh, whose employment conditions in Turkey are not as favorable due to racial discrimination (see Chapter 5), their

domestic materilalites can foster experiences more similar to those of the Georgian IDP's about feeling helpless and stuck.

The cases highlight that temporariness is not solely a migration matter. Different social, temporal and material phenomenon can join to create similar experiences. For Ayşe, the sensation 'here' of being surrounded by wood and mud brick, warming up from the heat of a stove, a house accessed through a door on the street and windows facing the street is a reminder of the contrasting materialities waiting, indefinitely, for her 'there,' which is concrete, central gas heating, a house door accessed through security and riding in an elevator, and the windows of a high-rise apartment opening out to the sky. Lusin's case is similar to that of Binata and Cheikh. Her furniture, all left from her husband and his family and nearly half a century old, are a reminder of her class status and her solitude (a widower without children), of being 'permanently' stuck in Kumkapı while always wanting to move to elsewhere and watching everyone else leave.

Dwelling dilemmas

Besides the role of temporariness, another shared theme across the narratives is of dwelling as a process of negotiating ambivalent needs, expectations, ideals and desires. Many different dilemmas surface in the narratives. Lusin, for example, eludes to servitude yet safety in her husband's house (while he was alive) and of autonomy yet insecurity in her second one (after his death). There was also a dilemma related to scales of familiarity. In her lifetime in Kumkapı, Lusin has seen the departure of all family and friends as neighbours and witnessed the radical changes in population and social life in the locality, which have made the place as a neighbourhood increasingly unfamiliar for her. Yet her dwelling place, including the decades-old furniture, remains fixed and

familiar, which gave her great comfort. It was this known comfort, and sense of autonomy that Lusin feared losing by moving into a retirement home. A similar dilemma emerges in Sekou's narrative where as a young refugee who had to flee his countries and leave behind his family, being 'familiar with a place or some people' was something he valued greatly. As Sekou expressed 'it is not something easy when you have to start everything from zero, make new friends.' The longer Sekou and his friends stayed in Istanbul, the more they were becoming knowledgeable about better, cheaper and safer living options elsewhere in the city, but letting go of yet another context where they had succeeded in fostering familiarity made it difficult to leave.

Sevda's narrative speaks powerfully of the dilemmas that families face in trying to maintain unity in a world where as Irfan said 'it is not the place you are born, but the place you are made full' that determines dwelling realities. Sevda speaks of a seeming inability to attain happiness neither in their first home in Sancaktepe nor in their second one in Kumkapı. The former one was for her a 'home' (Blunt & Dowling 2006: 26) in appearance, feeling and commitment, but one in which her husband was barely present. The family became united in their flat in Kumkapı but is an 'unhomely home' (ibid.) because of her dislike for the neighbours and the neighbourhood generally. Both Dilara and Binata shared similar concerns about having no control over their husbands' lives abroad, which was a risk for their own future and that of their children. Hence rather than sitting and waiting idly for their husbands' return, they made the tough choice of leaving behind young children with grandparents, sacrificing one form of family unity for another.

In discussing living in shared housing in Kumkapı respondents highlighted different dilemmas. For Dilara and Kemran, Binata and Cheikh and Sekou and his friends, entering shared housing in Kumkapı in houses that were poor in quality was portrayed as a necessity, as they could not afford and/or access anything else. Regardless of its physical discomforts, sharing housing with people that have similar national, regional, cultural and linguistic backgrounds was something that provided them with a sense of ease, familiarity and solidarity against the estrangement felt in the wider city or previous dwelling arrangements, such as the youth shelter. These aspects resonate with Parutis's (2011) findings from her study of shared housing in London, where it has emerged as an increasingly more 'normal' phenomenon due to extremely high property costs. While recognizing some of the disadvantages of shared housing such as overcrowding and lack of privacy, Parutis demonstrates that migrants also associate shared housing with different advantages, including saving on housing costs and providing a social environment, which for newcomers can be more important than lack of privacy. In the initial phases after arrival in particular, the presence of other co-nationals as flatmates can help new comers adapt by constructing a sense of 'home' through linguistic and cultural affinity, hence minimizing stress related to migration. And even though multiple occupancy private rented accommodation is often the only housing option available to new migrants, Paruits analyzes how they develop numerous strategies that help them achieve agency, including the practice of becoming a primary tenant of a flat and sub-letting rooms once they have accumulated some income and learned how to work the housing system. This both allows saving on accommodation costs and having more control over the social space of the house by determining co-

tenants. In the cases mentioned in this chapter, Dilara and Kemran and Binata and Cheikh pursued similar strategies to gain some privacy and exercise their agency in their final dwelling arrangements.

Shared housing can also serve as a constant reminder of one's precariousness. Binata and Cheikh and Sekou and his friends were witnesses to the successes and failures of their other flatmates and measured their own position against this. In the case of Sekou's household: one received refugee status following his first asylum interview and was resettled in the USA half a year later, another was recognized as a refugee but the decision to resettle him was pending indefinitely for reasons he was not informed of, while another friend's asylum claim was rejected after several interviews and appeals, and he undertook different attempts to cross to Europe illegally, leading to periods of detention. Binata also saw a flatmate disappear for a period, to learn later that he tried making it to Europe, whereas the four other Senegalese women living in her flat when she first moved in, who then became close friends, all decided to return to Senegal one after the other. Seeing these departures made Binata feel more and more paralyzed. Just a couple months after moving into their final dwelling, Dilara and Kemran were caught up in the midst of a major dispute. The young Azeri man living in one room claimed that his new Samsung phone had disappeared from his bedside while he was asleep, and he was shouting at everyone in the house in anger. The Uyghur woman living with her two teenage children in the other room called over her Kurdish boyfriend who threatened to call his police friend, a threat not taken lightly by Dilara and Kemran as they were residing in Turkey undocumented for over two years. For Ayşe's father, renting out the vacant rooms in their building to foreigners offered substantial income,

but it was both a reminder of their building's frailty, which could collapse with the slightest fire, and of the proximity of unwanted 'otherness' (i.e. tenants bringing over lovers), which requires a continuous watchful eye. This and other examples show that uncertainty is a core part of dwelling.

Shared housing also represents a problem where individuals are unable to follow cultural ideals. Dilara and Kemran allude to several gendered cultural norms in Turkmenistan regarding proper forms of housing, or what can be described as the 'ideal home' (Mallett 2004: 67; Blunt & Dowling 2006: 110), including material qualities (i.e. a sharp knife), allocation of domestic duties (i.e. that men should not clean) and home ownership (i.e. that a married man should either own his house or continue living in the house of parents until he can afford to buy one). Their living arrangement in Kumkapı represents a far cry from all these ideals in every respect. Ironically though, these are sacrifices they have made to achieve such ideals back in Turkmenistan. This presents a good example of how the ambivalences of dwelling are normalized. Like the Ecuadorian migrants in Italy, presented by Boccagni (2013), Dilara and Kemran drew a distinction between dwellings in two migration worlds. Their Kumkapı dwelling was only meaningful in terms of the most basic functions it served, such as providing shelter, proximity to one's work, and the opportunity to save income. Their functional approach to their Kumkapı dwelling contrasted with the sentiments they associated with their house in Turkmenistan, which was material proof of their economic success abroad. This difference was again reflected in their domestic materialities: second items were being used in their 'temporary' shelter in Kumkapı while brand new items and

furniture remained untouched and waited idly in their 'permanent' home in Turkmenistan.

Balancing between 'here' and 'there', 'now' and 'then'

Another dilemma, which brings together both temporariness and ambivalence, regards weighing what is more valuable, present time 'here' or prospective time 'there'? In the last example above, it is set as the latter, in that Dilara and Kemran postponed any notion of domestic comforts for their future home in Turkmenistan. But after two difficult experiences with landlords, and since they had already succeeded in making good investments back home, they decided that is was reasonable for them to invest more in their present by moving into a spacious, nicely furnished home where they would also determine co-tenants. In the case of Ayşe's parents, it was also about the future. They were patiently waiting for an opportune moment to sell their house. Ayşe was empathetic with this decision, as she too purchased a home with her hard-earned savings, hence could understand the kind of attachment that it gives rise to. But it also put her in a dilemma regarding her future as the house she bought in Esenyurt was already 'here', ready and waiting.

Regardless of the dwelling decisions respondents made and the justifications they developed to make sense of these experiences, the present was already changing. As highlighted in the narratives, respondents were impacted by both inconspicuous changes of everyday life, like ageing bodies and changing neighbourhoods,[100] as well as life-altering events like becoming crippled, experiencing a certain trauma like a burglary,

[100] For foreigners in Kumkapı being evicted is so common that this too could be included as an ordinary change.

getting pregnant or having one's asylum application rejected or postponed indefinitely. As Parutis states: 'Migrants housing (like migration itself) is a process that changes over time depending on future plans, migration motivations and economic factors. Once personal circumstances or plans change (e.g. relationships, the birth of children) migrants review their living arrangements' (2011: 273; see also van der Horst 2010). Hence, regardless of whether one sees their time in a space as permanent or temporary, this might gradually or suddenly change, leading to readjustments in dwelling expectations, such as Dilara and Kemran and Sekou and his friends who sought more space, comfort, freedom and privacy in their final dwellings. In her study of the Palestinian diaspora in England, Joanna Long compares two women's houses and the spaces within them, exploring how they 'attempt to integrate their 'thoughts, memories and dreams' (Bachelard 1964, 6), with varying degrees of struggle and success' (2013: 342). She concludes her analysis with this statement: 'The diasporic stories told here suggest that the process of dwelling involves both homely and unhomely feelings, and that the work of dwelling is oriented towards resolving this tension' (ibid.). The examples and discussion above on dwelling in ambivalence can also partly be seen as emerging from this co-existence of homely and unhomely feelings. What this chapter has further demonstrated though is that the process of dwelling also involves feelings, thoughts and desires about temporariness and permanence, where the tension between them evolves as a result of the passage of time. Dwelling as such, inheres in the act of continuously trying to balance the experience of being 'here' in the present and thinking about how one wants to be 'there' in the future.

4.3. Conclusion

Looking at the different forms of migrant housing taking shape in Shanghai, Michael Keith notes that these variations 'take us back to thinking about dwelling, freedom and culture as simultaneously about objects and material cultures, the liquid forms of the city and the bricks and mortar alongside one another, not divided into separate disciplines of urban culture and housing studies' (2011: 404). While offering a wider call for studies of the urban and housing to cross disciplinary boundaries, Keith highlights the ways dwelling takes everyday practical form and the multiplicities that co-shape and influence how we explore cities, neighborhoods and experiences of dwelling. In a bid to engage with Keith's call for overcoming constructed disciplinary boundaries, this chapter presented the housing biographies of several people residing in Kumkapı to explore the ways migration and diversification transforms urban space, by giving way to new forms and practices of urban dwelling.

Through six detailed biographies of people differentiated along various lines, I have shown that social diversities as such are closely intertwined with housing outcomes and experiences. While trying to find and make a home in the city, urban dwellers are often confronted with various constraints, including political regulations of housing, the financial resources they have at hand at the time, absence or presence of social networks that facilitate access, racial boundaries, as well as language restrictions. The six biographies illustrated the ways ethnicity, race, gender, age, citizenship status among others influence dwelling choices as well as dictate the possibilities at times. However, to merely approach these as constraints would, as the biographies showed, limit our

conception of dwelling spaces. This chapter explores the ways interlocutors made choices, depending on particular positions, as in where to prioritize the use of their income, the kinds of comforts they seek in life, what plans they make for the future, among other considerations. By presenting interlocutors' housing biographies, I have discussed their former and current housing arrangements to explore how the changing dynamics are reflected in their housing choices as well as the ways they negotiate the constraints they face in accessing housing over time.

In this chapter I have focused particularly on how temporariness shapes the different constraints and choices individuals face in accessing housing in Kumkapı. In the cases presented, everyone shared a sense of temporariness albeit for different reasons. Temporariness was dictated, in some cases, by one's migration status, and in most cases it was a reflection of 'ambiguities about present state, wanting to return home or move elsewhere' (Griffiths et al. 2013: 17). While temporariness emerges in interlocutors' discussions about staying, leaving, and decisions to change house, temporariness also appeared in the materiality of individuals' rooms and houses. Beyond different types of domestic materiality, interlocutors' choices to reproduce practices of shared housing despite discussing it negatively, at times, provided key insights into understanding how perceptions of time shape dwelling forms.

Temporality emerges to counter notions that choices and constraints are static. Engaging with this theme allowed for an examination of how choices and restrictions alter over time and circumstance. As the housing biographies showed, time can bring new constraints, such as the death of a family member, eviction, the decision to go back home, among other choices. Through its focus on the effects and manifestations of

temporariness, this chapter has explored the very tension that changes in circumstance or the overall conditions of the neighborhood bring about. Examining these tensions demonstrates how dwelling is characterized by attempts to resolve tensions between ambivalent needs, desires, between what feels homely and unhomely, between temporariness and permanence. Studying the ways people try to resolve these tensions is key to conceptualizing experiences of dwelling in the neighborhood, and the ways people encounter and interact with differences (which will be explored further below in Chapters 5 and 6).

5. The formal/informal continuum: calculating risks and benefits

Kumkapı is a place where informalities are multiple and bountiful. Most trades operating locally, including both the diverse range of street-level businesses and the rental housing market, entail some or all levels of informality, such as providing unlicensed services, not recording transactions, employing unregistered staff, constructing housing without permission or in violation of building codes, and renting property without contracts. The place also accommodates a dense and diverse population of informal people, namely irregular migrants who are, at some level or entirely, positioned in breach of the law with respect to border entry, residence and employment permissions. These two dimensions are often treated separately in the urban and migration studies literature and are presented in vastly different terms. For instance, regarding urban economic production and distribution, there have long been celebratory accounts of the counter-hegemonic potential of informality as a means for those otherwise marginalized by global liberalism to access to labour, capital and cheap merchandise (Hart 1973, De Soto 1989, Matthews et al. 2012). Whereas regarding irregular migration, many accounts point to the ways that the status of being 'illegal'[101] is constructed and used by states for driving capitalism as it leads to the creation of a cheap, flexible, exploitable and dispensable workforce (Calavita 2005, McNevin 2001,

[101] In the chapter, I use the terms irregular migrant and 'illegal' migrant interchangeably. In the latter, I purposefully use quotation marks to emphasize the problematic construction of individuals as 'illegal' in response to the simple incapacity of state actors to deal with the current social reality, as well as to expose the structures of vulnerability engrained by such constructs (Bibler Coutin 2005, Peutz & De Genova 2011).

De Genova 2002, Willen 2007).[102] Informality in Kumkapı can be viewed from both angles: on the one hand it fosters a context of inclusive opportunities, feeding a lively and cosmopolitan entrepreneurial atmosphere that thrives on migration and diversity; on the other hand it is radically exclusionary, creating an environment of grave uncertainty, precarity and vulnerability, where some of the worst forms of exploitation (i.e. unpaid labour and sexual harassment) are normalized.

This chapter draws these two strands of literature in urban and migration studies together in an original fashion proposing an alternative approach, one that encapsulates both of these opposing depictions by shifting the focus from outcomes to processes. Whereas the former accounts tend to homogenize informalities as bounded and static, I emphasize here the varying degrees, malleability and dynamism of informal practices. An enterprise, a house, a labor activity, a person are rarely entirely informal. As indicated above, they generally combine some aspects that are formal and others that are informal. In other words, rather than being one or the other they entail different elements dispersed somewhere along what can be described as a 'formal/informal continuum' (Anderson & Ruhs 2010, Eder & Çarkoğlu 2006). These positions are contextually sensitive, serving as risk or benefit at different times and places (McFarlane & Waibel 2012, Parla 2011). For instance changes in government policy

[102] Studies in Turkey exploring the intersections of urban migration and informality also reflect this duality. The *gecekondu* phenomenon in Turkey (see Chapter 2) has been widely studied as a space offering an informal mode of accessing urban housing and employment markets through social networks (Erder 1997, Işık and Pınarcıoğlu 2001). A similar lens has been applied in relation to international migrants and refugees who are shown as relying entirely on co-ethnic social networks in Turkey for sustaining livelihoods, creating what Danış et.al (2009) have referred to as 'de-facto integration.' Then there are many studies pointing to the scale of irregular migrant labor in Turkey within different sectors and their dire working conditions aggravated by lack of legal status (Dedeoğlu 2011, Parla 2011, Şenses 2015, Toksöz & Ulutaş 2012; Ünal 2011).

like stricter controls of business licenses in a certain area or an amnesty for 'illegal' migrants can lead to a sudden repositioning along the continuum. In this chapter, I explore how such contextual and temporal dimensions impact formal and informal conditions, termed henceforth as in/formalities, first with respect to economic activities, and second in view of the legal statuses of foreigner migrants.

Throughout the chapter, I explore how positions along the formal/informal continuum are made and re-adjusted through processes of valuation and negotiation. In Ananya Roy's highly influential work on informality, she writes that informality does not 'lie beyond planning; rather it is planning that inscribes the informal by designating some activities as authorized and others as unauthorized (2009: 10). Rather than perceiving informality as a lack of regulation, failure of planning or representing an absence of state actors, Roy (2009b: 82) argues for conceiving informality as a 'calculated deregulation.' A deregulation that 'involves purposive action and planning, and one where the seeming withdrawal of regulatory power creates a logic of resource allocation, accumulation, and authority' (ibid.). Roy's conceptualization has been highly significant for approaching informalities as not solely the terrain of the impoverished and physically peripheral. On the contrary elite segments of the population utilize informalities by manipulating legal ambiguities for social and economic gain. While the powerful may set the structures that constrain marginalized populations through calculated deregulation, it is important to recognize also that such processes of valuation and planning go both ways. Marginalized populations also practice agency in trying to negotiate their positions along the formal/informal continuum by weighing costs and benefits. And this does not necessarily have to be in

one direction or the other, as it depends on an evaluation of all variables (i.e. resources, goals, experience, risks) transpiring at a particular moment and place. My focus in this chapter is in examining this processual nature of in/formalities.

5.1. In/formal economies

While Kumkapı remains a residential space, as alluded to in Chapter 2, it has a distinct and vibrant local economy. It presents a powerful example of how migration and diversity can drive economic growth (Blommeart 2014, Reuschke et al. 2013, Hiebert et al. 2014). Because of the continuous influx of migrants, Kumkapı is host to a highly transient population. There is a high turn-over in new arrivals which has resulted in the proliferation of businesses that profit from such temporariness, including real estate agencies, second hand furniture stores, Laundromats and 'call-shops.' [103] The demographic and socio-cultural diversity of Kumkapı has also given rise to different economic opportunities. There are dozens of restaurants, taverns and hairdressers that cater to the particular tastes of distinct national and ethnic groups. As the population of Kumkapı diversifies, the range of products and services available to consumers also expands, incorporating the 'stylistic and culinary tastes of clientele' (Hiebert et al. 2014: 17). These are not necessarily spaces visible from the street as some operate from the kitchen or a room in an otherwise residential house. Kumkapı's streets are also host to many different economic actors, from mobile street vendors to sex workers, drug dealers and human smugglers. As mentioned in Chapter 2, different businesses linked

[103] As the biographical examples in Chapter 4 reflected, when people see their presence in the locality as being only temporary, they avoid making investments in furniture, which would include washing machines for laundry or computer/telephones for communication.

with the transnational trading economy of Gedikpaşa and Laleli have slowly extended into Kumkapı, including the manufacture workshops, wholesale clothing stores, *kargo*, hotels and pensions. Overall, the diverse and dynamic profile of the local population in Kumkapı has fostered a local economy that is open to differences and flexible to change. This openness entails a sense and skill in understanding and accommodating the evolving demands of a rapidly changing and diversifying local population and their different cultural repertoires. During the 15 months of field research, I witnessed how rapidly businesses changed, depending on what is popular at the time and individuals' entrepreneurial skills. The transformation ranged from minor details like incorporating multi-lingual signs on a store window, to a complete change of products overnight, such as a call shop being turned into a garment store, while the owner remained the same.

Informal modes of doing business are the norm in Kumkapı,[104] though there are different degrees of informality at play in the local economy. In their comparative study measuring the prevalence of informalities among samples of different economic actors in Istanbul based on several criteria,[105] Eder and Çarkoğlu (2006) find that each group is placed somewhere along a continuum. They demonstrate that workers at weekly

[104] This can be said for the wider area in general. In Gedikpaşa the vast majority of manufacture workshops are small in scale, do piecework and are unlicensed, and employment is also largely informal. Likewise, since its evolution in the 1990s the Laleli market has been synonymous with informal practices at the wholesales level locally, and during the process of international shipping to and wholesale/retail sale in destination country, through mechanisms developed to avoid paperwork, official controls and full taxation such as making payments in cash and bribing authorities. For more detail on the economies and informalities of these two localities see Appendix 5.

[105] Main criteria: 1) Whether the person benefits from some sort of social security insurance (public or private) 2) How well individuals record transactions, collect receipts/invoices 3) Whether or not the individuals pay their taxes fully 4) How they meet health costs (cash or through some form of social security) 5) Whether they have bank accounts 6) Whether they have credit cards. Additional variables: 1) The length of credit the traders have when buying goods from producers and wholesalers 2) The use of cash in buying goods from producers and wholesalers 3) Whether traders' transactions with customers are based on cash 4) Provision of receipts in commercial transactions in buying goods for shops.

markets and street vendors appear significantly more informal, while shopkeepers and the general household remain relatively more formal. While a detailed, systematic and comparative assessment of Kumkapı's varying economic activities is beyond the scope of this study, I draw from Eder and Çarkoğlu's approach when examining the different examples presented in the chapter. My emphasis is less on the extent and type of informalities and more about showing how positions along the formal-informal continuum are temporally and contextually shifting.

Adapting to trends

Ibrahim is an ethnic-Kurd from the province of Batman. He migrated to Istanbul in the early 2000s as a young man to become economically independent from his family. An acquaintance helped him find an administrative job at a private health centre where he worked for about a year, but Ibrahim wanted to manage his own business. He had many relatives running different businesses in Kumkapı, so he was aware of the local potential and decided to try out the call-shop business. I first met Ibrahim randomly. His storefront was covered with the names of some of the major cell-phone operators in Turkey, a large paper sign with different country flags, followed by country names and calling rates, and a window display of second-hand cell-phones. There were also some small signs printed in Arabic, which caught my attention as I walked past. I entered the store to inquire about them, and from that moment onwards Ibrahim became one of my closest informants in Kumkapı. When we first met, Ibrahim was dividing his time between the call shop and a real estate office located nearby on Ataturk Boulevard, which he ran with some relatives. They had rented several properties in the larger Fatih district area, which they were renting out to tourists for short rentals, charging between

100-150 US Dollars a day. They saw the arrangement as more lucrative and less risky compared to monthly rentals to migrants. Ibrahim explained to me once that it was quite easy to find customers, 'we just approach Arabic speaking people who look like tourists around the Aksaray and Yenikapı stations.' The Arabic signs posted on the window of his call-shop were referring to these short-term rentals.

Some months after we met, Ibrahim built a small partition to one side of the store to create space for a small clothing display. When I asked him why he decided on this change, he replied: 'You can't just have one job here! Look it is already mid-day and I have only sold five telephone credits. Now with the smart phones and WhatsApp there is less demand for Internet calling. And I can't survive on just repairing phones. Plus I have many customers who are traders coming to Istanbul for buying clothes. Here you can't just survive on one business. There needs to be variety. That is why here you will see shops serving many functions,' he said and pointed to a call-shop across the street where I could see a display of earrings and sunglasses behind the door. Ibrahim was always thinking about new ideas to diversify his business. Being successful in Kumkapı depended on this; 'the market here is about supply and demand kind of work. Wherever there is demand, you must follow in that direction' he explained. Ibrahim's store connected to an upstairs room, which he used as a depot and a place for a sleep over when needed. At one point, he mentioned that he was thinking of turning it into a hair dresser saloon, but gave up after considering potential prospects: 'I will have to invest in refurbishing the space, buying chairs, hair wash basins, and the sort. But what if a hairdresser rents it for six months then says I am leaving? I will be stuck with all the equipment.'

Mutualisms

Suzanne Hall describes such hybrid interiors as Ibrahim's by the term 'mutualisms' that point at 'a reciprocally beneficial co-existence between different entities' (2012: 32). In her study of store layouts and uses in a 'super-diverse' high street in London, Hall notes that there are different types of mutualisms, like when a single proprietor sells multiple products, or sublets smaller spaces in the store, either to kin or co-ethnics, or to a variety of tenants from a wider spectrum depending on demand. In Kumkapı, one also sees such mutualisms take an invisible form, becoming known either through word of mouth or a paper sheet posted somewhere in the premises. For example I met a *muhtar* working in real estate, a real estate agent doing headhunting and a call shop owner offering all kinds of assistance entailing computer literacy and knowledge of banking/bureaucratic systems, such as writing formal petitions, making appointments with authorities, paying bills (electricity, water, gas, cell phone credits, etc.) and banking services, like domestic transfers. Several migrants told me that they use local *kargo* businesses to transfer money to their home countries or to buy cheap airline tickets. In the latter case, the tickets are usually conditioned on the passenger taking some shipments with them to the destination country as luggage, and sometimes on them agreeing to bring back goods that are costlier in Turkey, especially tobacco and alcohol. In most cases, the workplace has a licence for the primary service offered, whereas these secondary services are almost always unregistered.

Whether or not the businesses become formalized depends on if the business succeeds. Ibrahim had acquired the necessary tax registration signs and business licences for both his call shop and his real estate agency. However, his garment corner was an informal

setup. Also, in the process of meeting Arab clients through his real estate business, Ibrahim had become aware of their demand for car transfers to the airport and tourist sites in and around Istanbul and also started providing such touristic services informally. Ibrahim chose to discontinue the garment business. 'Business was actually going well' he explained, 'We had a rack standing outside the door with items costing 5 to 10 TL a piece. We made around 200 TL a day, not a lot but still it was steady. It stood out there for about a year. But then one day the Municipal Police came and they took it all away.' Ibrahim decided not to pursue formalizing the garment business, as the income was not that substantial. But as his Arab clientele started increasing, he decided to apply for a tourism permit from TÜRSAB, the Turkish institution authorized to accredit tourism agencies, despite the high investment it required. He explained: 'The certificate costs over 30,000 TL. But I learned from a relative that one of the high-ranking persons in TURSAB is a co-villager, so I went to speak with him. We made a deal that I will pay a portion upfront and the rest in instalments.' These examples are reflective of the way informal mutualisms allowed Ibrahim the opportunity to test his chances in the local market. He only decided to go through the hassles of formalizing his tourism business after getting a sense of its potential. However, his reason for wanting to formalize his tourism work was not because of state actor pressure, but local competition, as he explained in the following: 'The municipality only come around to check licenses if there has been a complaint. And it is local competitors who usually make such complaints. So if work is going well, then eventually you will have to get all the necessary licences.'

Mutualisms can also take the form of business partnerships. Ibrahim, for example, runs

his call-shop together with his Senegalese business partner Malik. He explains his reasons for hiring him:

> He was working at the call-shop across the street from me. As we were neighbours, I got to know him more closely over time and felt sympathetic towards him. He mentioned he was having some problems with his boss. I was working alone and invited him to join me. He thought about it for a month and then agreed. If you ask why people here hire foreigners it is simple: An Armenian draws Armenians, an Arab draws Arabs, an African, Africans… That is how it goes. Malik is a trustworthy and sound person. His community respects him. They will do business in a place where he stands.

This was indeed the case. When I visited their store, often there were other Senegalese talking with Malik or just sitting around passing the time. 'Our call-shop is more like an office for him actually,' Ibrahim once noted jokingly, mentioning that Malik supports many Senegalese traders with their businesses in Turkey, and then added, 'but if many people even come to just visit him, it still means prospective clients for our store.' Ibrahim and Malik eagerly shared new business ideas with each other, like one day Ibrahim mentioned they were looking into importing fish from Senegal. I asked whether it was fish intended to meet the culinary demands of the local West African population, 'No, we are thinking bigger' Ibrahim said, 'we will import grouper fish, which as you know has become really expensive here. Malik says they hunt them in the tons in Senegal.' But the idea depended on securing legal residence for Malik in Turkey so he could freely travel back and forth to Senegal. As will be mentioned in more detail in the next section, Malik had remained 'illegal' in Istanbul for close to 10 years. When the government announced a regularization campaign in 2012, Malik received a residence permit. Being confident of Malik's loyalty, Ibrahim immediately made an application

for his work permit. The result was not successful, Ibrahim explained, 'because it was an individual application, we never heard back from them. You see, there are brokers for this kind of business, most of them lawyers. But they ask for like 1500 US Dollars. I sent my accountant to Ankara to inquire about the permit but it was no use. We gave up. We didn't insist.' Instead, Ibrahim thought of another way to formalize Mustafa's presence in the call-shop:

> While his residence permit was still valid I officially made him my business partner. This way if the authorities come to the shop one day and see him working there, they won't be able to say 'you are employing without insurance.' There is no criterion for a business partner having insurance. So that is how we have kind of formalized his situation. People try different ways. Like across from me at another call-shop the storeowner, a Kurdish man, had a Turkmen girl working for him. They were also more like partners. Her mother was Armenian, father Turkmen, so she drew a lot of customers. But she had no papers. They then got married, that is how they solved the *kaçak* (illegal) problem.

People as infrastructure

As reflected in these last two examples, the diverse populations present in Kumkapı have formed what AbdouMaliq Simone (2004) terms 'people as infrastructure.' Material infrastructures such as highways, pipes, wires and cables often facilitate human potential and productivity. Simone extends the notion to marginalized people's collaborative economic activities in inner-city areas, characterized by dense, diverse and transnational populations and weak regulatory interventions. These activities, he argues, are tentative and precarious, but facilitate a degree of economic innovation, opportunity and security. In exploring cases from Johannesburg, Simone writes:

> While residents of different backgrounds try to keep out of one another's way, they do form emergent interdependencies ranging from crude patron-client relations to formally constituted pan-African entrepreneurial collaborations. The sheer proximity of Africans from diverse ethnic and national backgrounds leads many residents to explore tentative cooperation based on trust. Such relationships are risky in a climate of insecurity and incessant trickery, but also enable participants to exploit, in highly profitable ways, the common assumption that trust is not really possible. Given the various skills and networks that different immigrant groups bring to the table, the potential profits in combining trades, markets, and networks far exceed those from commercial activities compartmentalized within narrow ethnic and national groupings (2004: 418)

In a migration driven economy such as Kumkapı the infrastructure that Simone describes is hierarchical and cyclical, benefitting first and foremost the host community who are the ones that own local businesses and the homes being rented out, and profit the most from the surge in demand from incoming new arrivals. Undoubtedly, these new arrivals also become a source of profit by serving as a flexible, cheap and often better-qualified labor source for local markets. For instance, Ibrahim mostly hired foreigners as technical staff doing phone repairs in the back of his shop. When I first met him, his technicians were an Iranian refugee and an Uzbek university student. At another point in time, he hired two Syrian refugees, both university educated and one of them fluent in English and German. He explained: 'You can't find a Turk for this kind of work. Or rather, if he knows this work, then anyhow he will open his own store or ask for a lot of money. Therefore you seek out foreigners.' In his study of a Dutch 'super-diverse' neighbourhood Blommeart similarly argues that new migrants have led to an upward economic mobility for the previous generation of settled immigrants, the Turks. But he notes that these economic relations are also symbiotic, creating an

'ambiance of what we could qualify as conviviality or moderate solidarity: scratch my back and I'll scratch yours' (2014: 438). Hence while the infrastructure favors hosts over newcomers, and citizens over foreigners, in essence, it is bound by a capitalist logic that 'reinforces the ethos of self-reliant, enterprising individual' (Glick-Schiller & Çağlar 2011: 16). For this reason, it also fosters many opportunities for the newcomer foreigners who are entrepreneurial, especially those leaning into areas that give them a competitive edge due to privileged access to information and networks.[106]

One such person I encountered was Leyla, who moved from Armenia to Istanbul in 1999 at the age of 18. Like most of her fellow nationals, her arrival point was Kumkapı. Throughout the years she tried many different kinds of work, including: domestic work, selling perfume as a mobile trader, suitcase trading in leather products and opening a stand in the local Thursday market for selling products from Armenia. The latter business went well and eventually gave her the idea of opening a grocery store, which she did around 2007. Her store was tucked behind the back of an apartment building, and it was very popular, selling food, medicine, cosmetics, tobacco and alcohol smuggled in from a variety of countries. She used the store as an office where she met suitcase traders needing assistance with their shopping in Laleli. I asked her about her

[106] In Kumkapı, one such field is the *kargo* business, which is 'the nerve centre' (Şaul 2014: 189) of the small-scale and informal transnational trading practices. It has emerged as a kind of 'ethnic economy' (Kloosterman et al. 1999) as it provides multiple employment opportunities to members of the same ethnic community, as company staff, local guide and translator, and the like. However, it also requires a form of partnership with natives. In examining the *kargo* business among West Africans in Istanbul, Şaul notes: 'Although informal activities are a daily reality of the transnational trade sector, the Turkish authorities are rather strict in controlling the registration and transport taxes of cargo shops… To own such a business, they need to possess an export license, which in turn requires a work permit. One way of achieving this is establishing a partnership with a Turkish national. The Turkish person is sometimes not an active associate but simply a front for the migrant' (2014: 189-191).

clientele and she answered, ‘People of all nations come, Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Turkish… Every country has its own taste. I bring products accordingly, jams, pickles and the like. Everyone knows us. I even have clients coming from the Russian and Ukrainian consulates. And it’s not just Armenians and Georgians. I have also African customers. They love that fish’ Leyla said, pointing to a cart of dried mackerel stacked in a corner of the shop that she brought from Russia while gesturing that it stinks.

Due to her heavy weight and some health problems, when Leyla was in the store she mostly remained seated on the corner sofa. A large black leather coated notebook always stood on the table in front of her, which was where she kept all accounts, while all the cash she received went directly into a large purse tucked between her and the wall. From her corner, she directed her two younger siblings, nephew and niece on what to do. They had all came to Turkey after Leyla. ‘I have fed many in my family, in my community’ she once said. On Thursdays, during the local market, I would often run into one of them sitting behind a stand in front of the store, which included a varied selection of items from the store, alongside a large tray of freshly baked cakes. Besides the wide range of products she had for sale, Leyla’s store was a base for many other inquiries: ‘some come ask for help with their visa, some have a problem with a Kurd and come ask for help’ Leyla mentioned. On one occasion when I was leaving her store a Turkish man walked in asking if she could bring a certain medicine. Many also came by the store to simply pass time and chat. During one visit, I found Leyla’s shop bustling. While Leyla was unwrapping a bottle of perfume given to her as a gift by a Turkish acquaintance returning from Paris, two Turkmen women with shiny gold-plated

front teeth were asking her some questions about the cosmetics. I took a seat opposite a Turkish man giving a shoulder massage to his Russian wife who was complaining about having a headache from the mess and crowd of the Thursday market. Leyla's nephew and younger sister were coming in and out of the store to deliver payments and replace stocks. A well-groomed older man wearing a chequered suit and flat cap came in and sat down next to me. I later learned, he was a retired member of the Eminönü district's Municipal Police who knows Leyla from the days that she worked there as a street trader.

When Leyla first opened her store she had already acquired Turkish citizenship, which she obtained through an arranged marriage, and inquired into ways of making it official: 'I really wanted to do this work properly, like open a nice supermarket. I also had the money to make such an investment but it didn't work out. I went to Ankara, spoke to many people, I even went to the Ministry of Agriculture, but they said to me I would have to pay 5000 TL per product. I have more than 100 products! I couldn't afford that.' Doing her business informally did not bother her though: 'Thankfully the *asayiş* (public order officers), the police they know us. They don't even ask for *rüşvet* (bribes). I give one when I feel like it. They see we are doing *temiz iş* (clean work).' However, one day when I was heading to the entrance of the store, a Kurdish man selling curtains at the Thursday market who had first introduced me the Leyla told me that her store had been shut down by the municipal police. 'Some envious people made a complaint' he explained, but mentioned that she had already relocated to another building nearby.

5.2. In/formal people

A second dimension of the informality in Kumkapı relates to the legal status of the majority of foreigners residing in the area who are irregular migrants. As discussed in Chapter 2, Turkey maintains conservative policies on foreigners' settlement and work; hence those with legal permission to both stay and work in Turkey constitute what have been described as a 'tiny minority' (Toksöz &Ulutaş 2012: 86; Şaul 2014: 170) and a 'special group' (Erder & Kaska 2012: 123). But for the vast majority of foreigners wishing to settle and work in Turkey over an extended period of time, some form or degree of irregularity in relation to law is common. This ranges from those who are in breach of the law in all respects including illegal entry, lack of residence and work permits, to those who are legally present in the country (e.g. on tourist visas or tourist residence permits) but are working informally. Hence as in the previous section on informal economies, here too it is possible to conceive of the legal statuses of migrants forming a continuum. In this section, I will examine how positions along this continuum are socially and temporally determined.

There are many risks and vulnerabilities entailed by living with irregular status in Turkey, which have already been widely documented in the literature. In Kumkapı as elsewhere, irregular migrants share many stories about the exploitative situations they have encountered as a result of their legal status. These emerge most prominently in conversations about work conditions, such as low, arbitrary and irregular payment and job insecurity. This situation is especially common in the hundreds of workshops in Gedikpaşa and Beyazıt where many migrants, new arrivals, in particular, find work. In

the sphere of housing, irregular migrants have little protection when facing eviction with little or no notice, or when they find out they are being cheated on rent, bills or deposit (on this see also Chapter 3, section 3.2). Employers or house owners exploiting irregular migrants may make monetary or non-monetary gains. In all sectors where migrant women find work, sexual harassment is widespread. Women working in workshops in Gedikpaşa, in particular, lamented how, within a few days of starting work, their bosses approached them asking for sexual favours. Sexual harassment or the desire to avoid it affects female migrants' employment choices as we saw with Binata in the previous chapter who decided to become a street vendor instead of workshop laborer. These experiences are not restricted to work environments. As discussed in the Chapter 3, landlords use access to housing as a mechanism to elicit sexual favours from migrant women. Most migrants who experience not being paid, being cheated and harassed soon learn that moving on is the best strategy, as jobs and houses are plenty in Kumkapı. Different respondents explained that approaching the authorities for protection is not an option because being 'illegal' is seen to block any claims to protection and justice. There is also a common suspicion that the public authorities are eager to benefit from migrants' legal uncertainty, either in the form of bribes or other favours (i.e. sexual ones). These conditions have created new opportunities for criminals who for instance pretend to be police to take such bribes.[107] There is also a widespread perception among migrants in Kumkapı that the involvement of the

[107] Sekou told me about such an incident when he and a friend were walking in the neighbourhood at night time, and two men approached them: 'They threatened us with a knife asking for money, saying they are police. I said 'if you were police you will not behave this way.' Then the real police actually came and they ran away. This sort of thing happens a lot here, people pretending to be police and asking for your money.' The media has also reported on many such incidents taking place in the area: Kenarlı, Çağatay. 2013. 'Sahte polisin oyunu uzun sürmedi.' *Hürriyet,* April 2. 'Sahte polislik yaparken yakalandılar.' *Hürriyet,* July 26. Kıdık, Sefa. 2011. 'Sahte polislere suçüstü.' *Hürriyet,* May 9.

authorities in these exploitative mechanisms runs much deeper than simply asking migrants for bribes. They are seen as accomplices to the local system in its different forms, from owning businesses/properties profiting from foreigners, to direct collaborations with drug dealers or smugglers.[108]

Social stratifications

Yet these experiences are not the same for all as irregular migrants are not a homogenous body in social terms. Hence before moving onto the discussion about how irregular migrants negotiate their positions along the formal-informal continuum it is necessary to highlight how they are differentiated, legally and through everyday informal practice, according to ethnicity, gender and race. As mentioned in Chapter 2, foreigners who have Turkish ethnic origins are positioned favourably within legal frameworks in terms of residency and citizenship rights. Recent research has shown that in Turkey's liberal age, such ethnic privilege does not anymore translate into the easy acquisition of legal status and co-ethnic migrants have also started falling into 'illegal' status (Parla 2011, Ünal 2011). But even if one is 'illegal', it is found that shared ethnicity can translate into better treatment by authorities and freedom from any form of hassle for being undocumented (ibid., see also Toksöz & Ulutaş 2012: 103).[109]

[108] One informant also told me a story about police collaborating with some home owners renting out properties to undocumented migrants, wherein the properties became sites of fake raids and the home owner pretended to mediate the situation in return for bribes from the migrants, which was then later shared between home owner and police.

[109] It is important to mention that 'co-ethnic' groups that receive favourable treatment with respect to immigration are neither a homogenous group and such favouritism also has its temporalities. For example Danış and Parla's (2009) comparison of ethnically Turkish Bulgarian and Iraqi migrants reflects how certain geographical origins (having European versus Middle Eastern origins) can lead to more or less favouritism. Whereas Kaşlı and Parla (2009) show how the privileged treatment of ethnically Turkish Bulgarians are continuously subject to change, depending often on foreign policy interest, such as using residence amnesties to encourage migrants to vote in Bulgarian elections.

Besides such legally based ethnic privilege, the sphere where the social stratification of irregular migrants surfaces most strongly is in the labour market. Overall, even though rates of unemployment and under employment remain high in Turkey, demand for migrant workers is still high. The demands is particularly high in labour intensive jobs in the domestic work, textile and clothing industry, construction, tourism, agriculture, entertainment and sex industry, wherein employers prefer hiring migrants for being cheaper, better disciplined and educated and posing fewer problems, like not requesting social benefits (Toksöz et al. 2012, Toksöz & Ulutaş 2012, Erder & Kaşka 2012). In certain sectors though, migrants are preferred for the additional skills they bring, like language and socio-cultural capital which is useful in the tourism and clothing industry, or for doing jobs not preferred by nationals for cultural or other reasons, as in entertainment and sex work or working as live-in domestics. Irregular migrants' experiences of 'illegality' vary depending on what sector they work in (Ahmad 2011). Moreover, migrants' participation in these labour markets is not uniform but structured by social differences. Toksöz and Ulutaş note that in most sectors there is an overarching preference to employ 'those close to "us"' (2012: 103) in ethnic and religious terms. For instance, Muslim migrants who can speak, or more easily learn Turkish, such as migrants from Central Asian countries are preferred in domestic work, textile manufacture and construction (see also Akpınar 2010, Dedeoğlu 2011). In certain sectors though, 'otherness' is prioritized. For instance, in garment sales[110] and the entertainment sector, there is favourable demand for migrant women from Eastern

[110] In many stores in Laleli sales women are also asked to do in-store modelling for clients. Linked with this, it is common to see job signs such as '36-38 bayan satış elemanı araniyor' (seeking female sales assistant size 36-38). See Chapter 2.

Europe (i.e. Moldova, Ukraine, Russia) for their 'whiteness', language skills and attractive looks.

'Blackness' on the other hand, is a major impediment to accessing the previously mentioned sectors. Even if Muslim, skin colour poses a barrier for sub-Saharan African migrants searching for labour opportunities in Turkey, or when accessible it can imply worst forms of treatment (Toksöz & Ulutaş 2012: 106). The soccer industry is a rare exception, which draws many male Africans to Turkey, even though few succeed maintaining a career in this sector (Büdel: 2014). While in Turkey female migrants have in general more extensive job opportunities in different sectors compared to men, access is highly racialized. Binata, introduced in Chapter 4, commented, 'Nobody has papers here, yes, but with Africans I think the colour is a problem. You know here many people don't take Africans girls. They take Syrians and Russians, and they also don't have papers. When you see sign *eleman lazım* (personnel needed) and you ask they say we need Russian girl.' In Binata's example, it is probable that the preference for Russians is to do with the fact that in Laleli Russian speakers remain the largest clientele. Nevertheless, racial discrimination in access to work is also widespread. A French NGO worker once tried to help Binata find a job as a French-speaking nanny, but said families did not want to hire an African. This perhaps explains why self-employment (i.e. street vending, interpretation/guidance for traders, catering) is widely sought after among sub-Saharan African migrants in Turkey, especially among the West African populations that are numerically predominant and have established extensive networks with fellow nationals (Şaul 2014, Schapendonk 2013).

Taxonomies of 'illegality'

In the following I will discuss how irregular migrants negotiate their legal statuses vis-à-vis the state, where the aforementioned practices of social stratification play an important role, alongside other variables that are profoundly temporal in nature. In reflecting on these negotiations I will also point out to the way in which there are different 'taxonomies of illegality' (Anderson & Ruhs 2010: 176), in the sense that it is not a simple binary of being 'legal' versus 'illegal.' I build on the examples of two policy changes that occurred around the time of my fieldwork.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Turkey has had a lax visa regime in place since the early 1980s when it started to liberalize its economy. For example, visa waivers ranging from one month to three months have been implemented towards FSU countries, whose nationals have long been among the top migrant groups in Turkey finding informal employment. These migrants mainly resorted to visa renewals as a primary legalization strategy, by exiting and re-entering the country prior to visa expiry. In October 2011, a National Assembly decision (2011/2306) was passed, making a significant amendment to the Law on the Residence and Travel of Foreigners in Turkey (no. 5683), which came into effect in February 2012. A new clause was added that aimed to prevent this practice and regulate the informal labour of foreigners. This clause states that the maximum period a foreigner who legally entered the country can stay in Turkey without a residence permit is three months within a six month period, hence blocking visa-renewal as a strategy for legalization.[111] The second case examined here came six

[111] While trying to prevent legalization through visa renewal, some seemingly facilitative steps were also taken. For example the residence permit fees were reduced significantly. Around the same time, the Ministry of Labour also declared that in relation to the employment of domestic workers, the required

months later, on 28 May 2012, when the Ministry of Interior issued a circular titled 'The Circular on Foreigners Violating Visa/Residence' (document number 108807), which is the first ever residence amnesty granted to non-co-ethnic and 'illegal' migrants in Turkey.[112] Accordingly, foreign nationals who had entered the country legally but ended up overstaying their visa period were given a chance to apply, up until August 2012, for a one-time six-month residence permit. The condition was that they pay for both the permit fees and the penalty fee accrued for the time spent in the country without authorization. At the end of the permit, such persons would have to leave the country to re-issue their visas, but would not be subjected to the temporary re-entry ban normally imposed in cases of unauthorized residency. The amnesty was complementary to the first policy change, as it aimed at encouraging the regularization of irregular migrants who had no recourse to legalize their presence otherwise.[113]

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salary had been reduced from 1.5 to 1 times the minimum wage. Also a new user-friendly website was developed by the Ministry to make the work permit procedure much more accessible.

[112] Previously several such amnesties were granted to Bulgarians of Turkish ethnicity (See Kaşlı and Parla 2009).

[113] In general work permits for foreigners in Turkey are highly restricted, being based on the condition that foreign labourers should not be in open competition with Turkish workers. Therefore work permits are granted either, and mostly, to highly skilled professionals. In 2003, however, the new law on work permits for foreigners in Turkey declared domestic work as an employment field accessible to foreigners, and the two policy changes mentioned above are closely intertwined with specific efforts in Turkey to facilitate and regulate work permits for foreign domestic caretakers for purposes of coping with the state's on-going care-deficit. Despite the facilitative steps though it is still well known that large numbers of foreigners employed in these sectors remain without permits (Erder & Kaşka 2012, Toksöz, Erdoğdu & Kaşka 2012, Toksöz & Ulutaş 2012). Toksöz and Ulutaş note that in Istanbul, a total of 10.592 foreigners received residence permits after the amnesty. The gender difference is significant in pointing to this ulterior motive linked with formalizing domestic workers (3.725 men and 6.897 women). However, Eder (2015: 143) notes that when the residence amnesty was introduced in 2012, the number of domestic work permits increased by 68%, however the total number of applicants was actually not that impressive compared to the actual size of this market.

Semi-compliance

The responses to these policy changes varied among Kumkapı's foreign population. Maya, who is from Georgia, where she trained as a pharmacist, had been in Turkey close to 10 years working as a domestic worker. As a Georgian, Maya could enter Turkey visa-free for up to 90 days, and she had resorted to visa-renewals to legalize her stay in the past. 'I never became *kaçak* because I was going back and forth all the time' she explains, 'sometimes I would go home, but most of the time I would just take a bus either to the Bulgarian or Greek border, cross over and come back in the same day and get a new visa-free period.' When the visa regulation changed in February 2012, she immediately applied for a residence permit: 'To get a residence permit you have to show that you have 3000 Dollars, but that is no problem. You go to a money exchange office here, pay 30 TL and they make a receipt that shows it like you have exchanged that amount of money. Now I have a residence permit for six months, I stay visa-free for three months, and then I must apply for a permit again. Most Georgians can get residence permits but no one really has work permits.' Maya was in an advantageous situation as a domestic worker to obtain a work permit; moreover, she had been working for the same family for several years and had gained their trust.[114] In the end, they decided not to apply for the permit as the bureaucracy was complicated, work permit and social security premium costs -which were mostly going to come out of Maya's salary- were very high, and she was unsure whether she would be able to receive retirement benefits once she returned to Georgia. In addition, Maya had recently

[114] Under Turkish regulations, an employer must make applications for a foreigner's work permit. In domestic work in particular where the employee lives with the family, having built some form of trust relation before making a formal application appears important (Akalın 2015).

married and was thinking of returning to Georgia soon. While having a tourist residence permit, she decided to continue working unauthorized, or what Ruhs and Anderson (2009) call a 'semi-compliant' status. The former, they argue, is seen as a preferable form of 'illegality' by migrants, employers and authorities, as it serves a kind of equilibrium allowing 'migrants and employers to develop strategies for 'managing' (il)legality, e.g. to reduce the threats of removal (for migrants) and financial sanctions (for both employers and migrants), while at the same time maximizing economic benefits from employment' (ibid. PG). The disparity between the number of residence and work permits granted to foreigners in Turkey can be read as a reflection of the state's informal recognition of semi-compliance as a preferred status of irregular migration.[115] It is a state of recognition that comes naturally given that 40% of Turkey's labor force (who are citizens) does informal work (Erder and Kaşka 2012: 115).

Non-compliance

Aziz and Yıldız, a married couple from Uzbekistan who were neighbours in my flat, had been living in Turkey for five years. Soon after their arrival in Istanbul Aziz and Yıldız found work in the port-city of Antalya in Southern Turkey with no border crossing nearby. This complicated matters for them because unlike Georgia, for Uzbek nationals the visa free period in Turkey is only one-month. Aziz explains: 'At the beginning I flew to Moscow twice, we paid 100 Dollars for two tickets. It was relatively cheap. You know the *kargo* places can give you cheap tickets. But then I thought this is a lot of money if we have to fly every month. I have two kids, I need to build a house

[115] Out of 217.206 residence permits issued in Turkey as of 2011, only 10.6% were issued for work purposes. Of these, migrants working in the private sector are the main recipients, followed by academic staff and school teachers (Toksöz, Erdoğdu & Kaşka 2012: 78-80).

and I am working so hard. On top of it, our employers were not happy when we said we had to leave for a couple of days. One place fired us because we left and came back. So I said to myself 'give it up, whatever is in our destiny just let it be. If they are going to send us back, we will go back, no problem'.' Unlike Maya, Aziz and Yıldız could not sustain their legal status through visa-renewals. When the amnesty was introduced in May 2012, they decided it was not either worth paying the hefty penalty fees they had accrued from five years of undocumented residence. They were planning to return home soon having already succeeded in making substantial investments in Uzbekistan.

Maya, Aziz and Yıldız's experiences reflect the interplay between different temporalities, geographies and material costs that emerge when analysing migrants' positioning along the il/legal continuum. Migrants must factor in these variables when trying to decide whether or not and to what degree to legalize their status. The extent of visa periods and the length of travel distances impact both how often and how long one will have to take off from work to renew visas. Migrants must weigh these different potential costs, i.e. of travel for residence permits, fines for over-staying visas, etc., against how much more time one is planning to remain in the country. Time is never static and can bring about surprises and unexpected developments, such as the two policy changes, which entailed both new constraints and opportunities. Ruhs and Anderson (2010) point to three types of objectives migrants commonly share, which is (i) security of residence in the host country; (ii) economic improvement, and (iii) social integration, and argue that while they are all inter-related, 'policies can create inverse relationships ('trade-offs') between these objectives.' In the previous cases, we see that efforts to maximize economic benefit are the primary concern, to the extent that even

when opportunities for legal residence became possible through the amnesty, the costs, especially given temporariness, surfaced as a barrier.

Time can also lead to an accumulation of knowledge and experience, which are also factored into decision-making processes. Aziz and Yıldız had a strong sense that it is easy to get away with being an irregular migrant in Turkey. Yıldız recounted the following two encounters they had with authorities when they were caught without documents:

> We were caught on the bus from Antalya to Istanbul. I was crying so much. Aziz said to me, 'Don't cry, worst case we will be going home to our son.' My passport had also expired. I turned to the police who was an older man and said to him, 'look, you really look like my father. It's been a long time that I haven't seen him. Look, whatever happens, you are a Muslim and so am I. One day we are both going to die. I will ask God to merit you. Please let us just earn *süt parası* (milk money) for our child. We really like Turkey, and we are here because of that.' He called the other police and said 'give back their passports.' The guy said 'But sir?' and he said 'Do as I said.' He was like 55. I was so happy I gave him a hug and said 'I will pray to God for your goodness.' Then the same happened here once. We were returning from work [in Istanbul] and a car stopped. The guys told us to get in. Aziz jumped in right away. I was so scared. One said, 'We will send you back to your country.' Aziz said, 'Brother, actually we don't have any money and weren't able to go back.' They kept driving around but they didn't take us to the Kumkapı station. It is so full there anyways, what would they do with us? Plus we are *aile* (family). Then he said, 'why don't you give me a little something.' Then Aziz gave like 20 Dollars and the officer said 'Give me your blessings Aziz.' Aziz said 'you have all my blessings. We are working and feeding our child by being here, so are you.' Then they let us out and Aziz said to me 'I wouldn't have even paid 20 [US] Dollars if you weren't there. I just did it so you wouldn't faint.'

Moral economies and deservingness

These experiences acquired over five years have taught Aziz and Yıldız that being illegal is accepted, particularly if one meets (and emphasises) certain criteria, which can be conceived as the culturally defined bases of compliance. As Sarah Willen aptly notes in her study of public debates on irregular migrants in Israel, 'vernacular discursive frames that emerge from, and reflect, a common 'local moral economy'' structure them, and this involves 'historically and culturally particular constellations of value and affect, memory and expectation' (2015: 72). In Aziz and Yıldız's narratives, there are traces of such a local moral economy dictating the boundaries between deserving and undeserving illegal migrants. In both encounters Aziz and Yıldız make references to shared religion and their status as *aile* to appeal to the empathy and humanity of the officers.[116] They are emphasizing their situation as a married couple making a great sacrifice for the wellbeing of their family. At the same time, their comments imply references to being honest and humble workers trying to secure the bare minimum for their child, like when using the Turkish expressions *süt parası* (milk money), which as will be seen below can also be expressed as *ekmek parası* (bread money), and *çocuğumuzu doyurmak* (feeding our child). These experiences seem to have given Aziz

[116] Other informants also shared similar anecdotes pointing to religion and family status. A female Turkmen respondent told me about an encounter her Uzbek husband had: 'He is a pious man, does his *namaz* (the Islamic prayer) every day and always carries a little prayer book with him. One day two police on the way here stopped him. They searched him and when the police found the little book he said right away 'take it, take it. I haven't seen anyone like you before. You are a good person' he said and let him go.' A Georgian couple had brought their child with them to Turkey. When we met, the wife was not working at the time and stayed home with the child. She told me that if she had to leave the house during the day she purposefully took her child with her in case authorities stopped her, saying to me, 'they let you go if you have a child.'

and Yıldız the confidence that with good morals, it is unlikely that they will run into problems with authorities.

In a later conversation, I asked Aziz whether he knew if there were any police raids on shops and workshops in the area for hiring undocumented workers and he responded that this would only happen if a complaint has been made against this workplace. He then made a very bold statement: 'When you read the law it says don't touch a foreigner, let them work.' I objected him and explained that it was actually to the contrary, and that the law restricts foreigners from working in Turkey. Aziz insisted:

> I read it in the newspaper. It says don't touch the foreigner, let them work, let them make their bread money. But it also says if he or she does something wrong, I will not forgive. Not at all. They will take the person, deport him and say 'you cannot come back.' But it says let loose those who are honest. Seriously, I have been caught by the police many times. They ask me where are you coming from. I say from work. They ask me what do you do. I say I work for a paver. They say goodbye. What will they do? I am doing nothing wrong like I said.

Similarly, at one time when I was at Ibrahim's call-shop having a discussion with a Turkish man who runs an agency for domestic workers I asked him whether there were any efforts to control informal labour of foreigners in Turkey and he commented: 'The state knows. They know everything; who is illegal, how is Kumkapı… What they care is that people don't do prostitution, theft, drug trading. They take those people. Otherwise they don't say anything to those working with their *namus* (honor).' Here again the emphasis is placed on honest work, which highlights another classification criteria: irregular migrants doing ordinary informal work versus those involved in criminal activities.

Nicholas de Genova (2002) has coined the term 'deportability' for showing how the ever-present possibility of removal from a nation-state serves to govern 'illegal' migrants. Many of the exploitative situations mentioned at the outset of this section can be linked to this condition of deportability. Migrants, who are cheated, harassed and/or abused, refrain from claiming basic rights, fearing that it might lead to their deportation. But a nuance surfaces in the Turkish case in that this fear of deportation is contextual and temporal. Regardless of legal precautions, as in high fines, authorities rarely enforce sanctions for violating residence and work permits, unless they are related to criminal activities, including sex work, or a formal complaint has been issued against a workplace (Akpınar 2010, Dedeoğlu 2011, Erder and Kaşka 2012, Ünal 2011, Toksöz, Erdoğdu & Kaşka 2012). Rather, letting 'illegal' migrants go unnoticed, often in return for bribes, is common (ibid.). While a newcomer irregular migrant is more likely to fear deportation, which becomes embodied through anxiety and vigilance, particularly when in public spaces (Willen 2007), it often subsides with the passage of time and seeing how the distinction above between non-compliant versus criminal migrant plays out in determining who gets deported. Toksöz and Ulutaş also point to this perception that migrants acquire with time, noting that 'whether due to neglect, indifference, lack of resources, or some other more proactive reason, such as employer or export sector interests, the disposition is largely borne out by observation' (2012: 163).

Furthermore, among most residents in Kumkapı, national and foreign alike, there is widespread recognition that even if a migrant is caught by authorities and detained for unauthorized entry, residence and/or work, being let go eventually is highly plausible as deportation is a last resort for state actors due to high costs. My Senegalese neighbour

Binata tells me about how her husband was detained two years ago for overstaying his visa after being caught while selling watches in another district in Istanbul. He was released after 15 days in detention. Another Senegalese man sharing their flat was arrested after attempting to fly from Istanbul to France using fake documents. He, too, was released after a month detention. I once asked Binata if it is a problem for foreigners to live in Kumkapı without documents. 'The police don't do anything' she replied. 'They know here have many illegal people. I say to my friends all the time, if the police want to deport all African people, it is not a problem. All they need to do is to close Kumkapı. If they close Kumkapı, they will have all Africans.' Such confidence regarding deportation being a last resort surfaced again quite ironically when I was walking past the Kumkapı Foreigner's Removal Centre with a Nigerian respondent. As we were walking past, I was telling him how I found it interesting that this center is located right around the corner of Istanbul's main hub for undocumented migrants. I asked him then if he knew of any Nigerians held there, but he thought I was talking about some other place. When I pointed to the station, he said: 'oh that is where they release people. People who are arrested elsewhere are brought here then released from there.' Deportation is a very costly procedure for the state and can be complicated by migrants' tactics to avoid deportation, such as claiming to be a national of a country, which has no embassy in Turkey. Ibrahim told me that it can cost several thousand Euros to deport migrants, especially if they come from afar countries, then added: 'Of course before releasing them they do such a thing. First, they torment them. After all, you are in a prison. They say either call your home, your acquaintances and quickly arrange for a ticket, or you will stay here.' Ibrahim highlighted that while state actors

rarely implement deportation orders, they use administrative detention as a deterrence mechanism to force migrants to reconsider their practices of irregular entry and residence.

Like Yıldız and Ali, there were several others I met from Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Georgia, Armenia who were 'illegal' in the full sense but did not see a point in paying fees for the amnesty in 2012, since they had managed to get away without legal status for some time. In contrast, I met many African migrants who eagerly applied for the amnesty and got a six-month residence permit. Some paid exorbitant penalty fees, like Malik, Ibrahim's Senegalese business partner, who had remained undocumented in Turkey for close to 10 years along with his wife, who had stayed undocumented for three years. Malik said he had to pay close to 7000 TL (around 2000 Euros) for both of them just for the permit costs, and then pay 1000 Euros for travel costs to Senegal. In the end, the process turned out to be a disappointment for all, as none of my African respondents who got permits succeeded in renewing them.[117] The realization also that a residence permit would not facilitate working permissions was a great disappointment. I spoke to Malik about what his expectations had been. 'People want a residence permit because they want to do trade, and to be able to travel back and forth. People thought that the residence permit would be renewable and that it would give the right to work' Malik said, pulling out his expired residence permit. He opened the first page with his photo and personal information on the left page. There was a bright red stamp that immediately catches the eye on the right page, stating: 'This permit does not give you

[117] At the time of the research there was a two-tiered residence permit system distinguishing between A and B countries, whereby B could not renew their residence permits. Currently, this distinction has been scraped.

the right to work in Turkey.' The desire to have the freedom to travel back and forth, especially to do trade, and the disappointment felt upon seeing the red stamp was one I heard from different African migrants including Binata, a Nigerian man managing a cargo shop and a Sudanese man working as a translator for an NGO. Malik continued: 'Otherwise why would people be ok with paying so much money? When we applied, they said you have to go back to your country before it expires. So we went and came back. But when we came back and applied to renew our permits we were told we should have applied for our residence permit extension back there. Come on, which consulate would give an African a residence permit! People will think twice if such an amnesty is made again.'

5.3. Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the processual nature of in/formalities by illustrating the ways interlocutors moved between statuses and various economic endeavors as a response to the changing situations they faced. As was demonstrated in the discussion in the previous chapter on dwelling choices, many interlocutors approach economic and status related choices in ways that show that these decisions were 'structured at the interface of shifting state policies and individual's choices and opportunities' (Anderson and Ruhs 2010: 177). By exploring the ways individuals navigate their position along the formal/informal continuum, the chapter has problematized binary approaches to discussing formality/informality. In the process, the chapter has demonstrated the ways constraints and decisions co-shape relations with state actors and landlords, and realities. The chapter has analyzed how individuals weighed the costs and benefits of

'legality' in view of the resources available to them over time in an attempt to understand, 'to what extent, when and how illegality may become a strategic choice' (Ruhs and Anderson 2010: 196). This process of deliberation influenced not only interlocutors' lives and relations, but also the ways that Kumkapı is formed as a space for diverse migrant dwelling(s). Indeed, as discussed, much of Kumkapı's reputation as a space is built around the ambiguous legal status of many of its inhabitants and their business activities. However, rather than assume this ambiguity, this chapter sought to untangle the choices, circumstances and shifts that produce it. McFarlane (2011:657) argues that 'the learning of dwelling is structured by stark geographies of inequality'. As the various cases demonstrate, individuals coming into the area learn how to dwell through these possibilities and constraints. In Kumkapı, this 'geography' is delineated through the options available based on nationality, race, ethnicity, social and economic capital. At the same time, dwelling in Kumkapı brings to the fore the ways lives and existences are eked out within the boundaries and constraints in place.

6. Ambivalent convivialities: tensions of discourse and practice

As described in preceding chapters, Kumkapı is a place of extraordinary diversity in social, material and temporal terms. In this chapter, I will examine how this diversity impacts the ways people conceive Kumkapı as a place and their practices of dwelling together. I explore these questions through the concept of conviviality, which has come into frequent use globally. Much of this literature focuses on people's abilities and competence to forge positive relations across differences, and emerged in efforts to counter popular media and political representations of ethnic, racial and religious mixture in urban space as always necessarily leading to animosity, exclusion, conflict or social breakdown. Paul Gilroy was among the first scholars to expand on the notion of conviviality to describe 'the processes of cohabitation and interaction that have made multiculture an ordinary feature of social life in Britain's urban areas and in postcolonial cities elsewhere' (2004: xi). Today, it is widely used as a tool to understand how people of increasingly more varied backgrounds share spaces and create constructive and everyday 'modes of togetherness' (Nowicka & Vertovec 2014: 341) without falling into too much conflict, such as through gestures of care and recognition (Wise 2005), by acting with civility (Wessendorf 2015, Lee 2006), practicing multi-lingual repertoires and showing respect to neighbours (Heil 2014).

While there have been some tendencies in the conviviality literature to portray pictures of 'happy togetherness' and overlook persisting structures of racism and inequality (Wise and Nogle 2016), Gilroy originally emphasized that the concept is 'not about

absence of racism or triumph of tolerance' (2004: xi). Rather, he recognizes their tendency to co-exist, and that 'conviviality is always proximate to its negation' (Back & Sinha 2016: 522). Much research has been focused on this ambivalence at the heart of dwelling in multicultural contexts, in what Les Back (1996) had previously termed the 'metropolitan paradox.' In spaces where highly varied populations rub shoulders, particularly those defined by socio-economic deprivation, inclusion and exclusion, cohesion and division, conviviality and conflict, 'cosmopolitan hope and racist intolerance' (Keith 2005: 165) are often intertwined. In their study of a diverse and deprived inner-city area of Birmingham, Karner and Parker (2011) examine local social relations in the economic, religious and political spheres and exhibit that each sphere has contradictory tendencies towards fragmentation and ethnically based exclusion on the one hand, inter-ethnic/inter-faith solidarities, alliances and trust on the other. They argue that such local realities are defined by a series of 'co-existing and intersecting ambivalences [that] defy clear-cut taxonomies of localities, communities (or even individuals) as either cohesive/integrated or not' (Karner and Parker 2011: 366). Heil (2014), and Wise and Velayutham (2014) demonstrate that conflict can give way to convivial modes of dwelling as neighbours, through efforts to overcome tensions, learn to interact and negotiate. Overall, conviviality is seen as a concept that is able to capture such ambivalence because of its emphasis on the capacities, efforts and achievements of ordinary people to manage differences and tensions, 'not because racism is over' but to show 'how they can melt away in the everyday' even in the face on going and powerful racisms (Wise & Noble 2016: 424).

This ambivalence towards difference and diversification is one that several scholars working on migrant neighbourhoods in urban South Africa have more explicitly emphasized. Simone (2011) speaks about the 'in-betweenness' of such urban spaces characterized simultaneously by regularity and provisionality, whose vitality depend upon the 'productive conjunction of heterogeneous backgrounds, aspirations and practices', but are also places 'so vulnerable to distortions brought about by skewed economies.' Building on Turner's concept of liminality (1967), Kihato (2014) similarly uses the notion of 'liminal space' to emphasize the transience, uncertainty and contradiction inherent in Johannesburg's Hillbrow neighbourhood where opportunities in the city are expanded and limited at the same time. This contradictory aspect between remarkable modes of accommodation and radical exclusion co-existing in space is one that Landau presents as unstable yet fertile grounds. Amidst the heightened context of crime and violence in Johannesburg, Vigneswaran (2014) argues that the search for protection and the emergence of a policing culture, entails bringing socially and economically differentiated populations into everyday interaction. He shows that convivial exchanges are interwoven with relations characterized by the threat of violence and/or criminal victimization.

While examining ambivalences, in this chapter I highlight two aspects. The first is that there are different degrees of difficulty and ease involved in developing convivial practices, determined by a wide range of conditioning and enabling circumstances. Morawska (2014) presents an extensive and intricate mapping of numerous macro, micro and individual factors that co-shape conviviality into different arrangements and intensities, while Wise and Velayuthan (2014) focus on three particular aspects: spatial

qualities, the presence of people doing connecting and bridging work, and the formation of intercultural habits. Diverging from this literature, rather than external structural and spatial factors and personal attributes, I will focus on individuals' social positioning including age, ethnicity, race, gender, family status, local employment situation and the like. Connected to this, I highlight that respondents are not unanimously and equally open to all differences, feeling closer to some and more distant to others. Secondly, conviviality is conditioned by temporality. While there is much research examining how different spatial orders (i.e. in their physical qualities, functions and governance) influence abilities to forge positive relations (Amin 2002, Wessendorf 2015, Wise & Velayutham 2009, Vertovec 2015), the temporal dimensions are much less explored. In their introduction to a recent special issue on conviviality, Wise and Noble (2016) have emphasized this temporal dimension in arguing that conviviality is carried through 'rhythms and routines of sustained engagement' (2016: 426), and most articles that are part of this special issue follow their approach in examining how certain convivial practices have become locally habituated through time. Here, however, rather than rhythms I examine temporality in the forms of past-present relations, as in Chapter 2, and perceptions of temporariness, as in Chapter 4.

In bringing these two aspects together, I contend with Morawska's (2013) proposition that it is better to conceive conviviality not as a present or absent quality, but rather a continuum of views and practices, and a process of becoming rather than a fixed entity. These, she argues, can range from 'side-by-side coexistence without much or with no mutual engagements to intense interactions bringing joy and reciprocal enrichment to the involved parties at the maximum level' (2014: 359). As such, I will point to the

varying degrees of conviviality practiced in Kumkapı with an eye to their interrelational and temporal determinants. The discussion presented here builds on the different ways that Kumkapı as a place is narrated. As will be demonstrated, Kumkapı is generally perceived in negative terms at the discursive level and all residents see the present diversity of the locality as challenging in many respects. I focus on four main patterns emerging in narratives about Kumkapı as a place, examined under four headings: loss of neighbourliness, transit zone, place not appropriate for family, and filthy/bad place. I demonstrate that each discursive representation highlights particular difficulties of living together, especially in a context like Kumkapı. However, I argue that these bleak narratives co-exist alongside subtle forms of convivial living that surface in everyday practices.

6.1.'There used to be neighbourliness': aging and change

Among Kumkapı dwellers that have been living and/or working in the area for several decades, it is common to hear the statement *Eskiden komşuluk vardı* (there used to be neighbourliness), followed by nostalgic narratives about a rosy past when neighbourly relations were active, strong and respectful. Like Lusin introduced in Chapter 2, Meryem is also an ethnic-Armenian and among the oldest residents of Kumkapı. She was over 80 years old when we met, a widow of nearly 20 years without any children. She was born and raised in a house located in the area that is now the *meyhane* district (see also Chapter 2). After getting married, she moved in with her husband into an apartment building near by where she has lived for more than half a century. The following conversation we had is emblematic of the kinds of narratives locally repeated

by old time dwellers concerning the negative changes in the locality due to recent migrations and loss of neighbourliness:

> M: This used to be a beautiful place. All neighbours would come together; we would spread carpets along door fronts, eat freshly made pastries, drink tea and coffee, and chat until the morning hours. No one meddled, I mean there were no men, it was just *aile*. There were no shops like now, just houses. There was just one barbershop. He was the only man. But he was old. He would close early and leave. We would sit all night, women to women. No one would pass by you without greeting. And no one would leer at you. But today no one knows his or her neighbours anymore. All people keep to themselves. Houses are used like hotels. This was a beautiful place. It was like a little Paris,[118] now its Texas! I used to have many good friends here, Armenian, Greek, and Turkish. Now no one is left. No *komşuluk,* no one to say *merhaba* (hello) to. The one next-door is an *Ermenistanlı* (from Armenia). The one across is *Doğulu.* Anyways, everywhere is filled with *Ermenistanlı.*
>
> K: Do you not get along?
>
> M: No, I will not even say *merhaba* to them. I don't like them. They are not people to be liked! "May your roots dry out!" I say to them. "But you are also Armenian" they say to me. "No, I am not one of you" I say, "I was born here and this is how I was raised. You were brought up there like this, *açık saçık* (indecent), *terbsiyesiz* (without good manners)... They are *pis insanlar* (filthy people). This is not what we learned here. We have *terbiye* (good manners). We have respect for the older. That is how we were brought up, closed. What is that, all their parts standing in the open! Disgraceful. Is this how you were there? Is this how the Russians took you around? Half her back is in the open! This is Kumkapı, not an Island! Ok, have your back open but in its proper place. All these men are sitting at the coffee shop and they pass by them like this. We were not brought up this way here. Everyone was

[118] In her study of present day Kuzguncuk, a neighborhood historically identified with Jewish minority presence, Mills finds the same expression, that of it being a 'little Paris' (2008: 387), being used by contemporary ethnically Turkish residents when referring to the past of the neighborhood.

> respectful towards one another, because everyone was from Istanbul. Not *Doğulu* or *Ermenistanli.* Well then the Kurds are actually respectful, but we can't get along, that is separate.
>
> K: Why can't you get along?
>
> M: Its not that we don't get along but I will not adapt to them, I can't.
>
> K: What do you mean by respect?
>
> M: Respect for the older. For example, the boys from Batman and Bitlis across from me, they will greet me on the street saying hello Aunt Meryem and come over to kiss my hand. They were the first to take me to the hospital. But they moved. He had a young wife and said one cannot live in this place because it is not appropriate for family.

Meryem's remarks reflect a strong yearning for classical forms of local solidarity and place bound community, which is not surprising given her age. As Wise also demonstrates, migration driven local changes are often more disconcerting for older populations, "whose lives are frequently defined by their immobility, isolation and sense of having little value in the world" (2005: 182). Meryem depicts a past time when the *mahalle* was a highly localized world and neighbourliness was central to dwelling. Residents were more or less permanent, meaning that everyone knew of one another to some extent. Neighbourliness entailed certain understandings about civility and good manners, such as sharing greetings when passing by, keeping common spaces clean, knowing ones neighbours and being friendly towards them. Moreover, for the women in particular it involved a certain form of intimate sociability, such as coming together to socialize in each other's homes and along each other's doorsteps, which functioned like semi-private spaces in a world where the *mahalle* was considered one big *aile* (cf. Behar 2003). As such, it was a space in which gender roles were to be respected: men

should not leer at women passing the time on the streets, and women should dress and behave properly not to attract their attention. Her remarks also point to several overlapping factors that are attributed to a loss of neighbourliness. The rise of shops and businesses in the area meant that the semi-private, hence intimate world of streets became more public. Meryem alludes to the transience of the current residential population, which makes it difficult or even not worth trying to know or build friendly relations with one's neighbours. I will return to several of these points below, as they refer to the other place-narratives that circulate.

Meryem's narrative also portrays a past where conviviality existed between "Armenians, Greeks and Turks" regardless of ethnic, religious and regional differences through a shared understanding of neighbourliness, and a present where it remains absent due to the presumed characteristics of the new arrivals that makes such a mode of sociality difficult. I found that it is a common narrative among other older residents in Kumkapı, including ethnic-Turks, where old refers to the length of their residence and age.[119] As Mills (2010) argues, this is a selective remembrance where respondents remain silent about the discourses, policies and events that led to the estrangement of non-Muslim populations from their Turkish neighbours. This history only came up if I directly asked about it, and for people like Meryem and Lusin, it brought up bitter memories, which they did not like discussing at length. Certainly, this past has not been forgotten,[120] but what is significant about this form of remembrance is its disclosure of

[119] This narrative of peaceful co-existence between "Armenians, Greeks and Turks", and its supposed obstruction because of recent migrants, was also mentioned by ethnically-Turkish residents of Kumkapı who had migrant origins but have been living/working in the area for many decades.

[120] For instance, in telling me about witnessing the horrific attacks on minority properties in Kumkapı during the Istanbul pogrom on 5-6 September 1955 (see Chapter 2), Meryem abruptly ended the

what are seen by the older generation as the required tools for achieving conviviality in the present, which is one of neighbourliness, respect and decency.

For Meryem, these are the guiding prerequisites that inform possibilities of living together in the present. In Meryem's narrative, she begins with strongly negative views about her new neighbours, namely the *Ermenistanlı* and *Doğulu*, stating the she cannot get along with them, but then shifts to a recognition of their differences in terms of neighbouring qualities. Notably, even though they might be presumed ethnic kin, Meryem draws the strongest boundaries against the *Ermenistanlı.* She situates their differences in terms of morality and what she conceives as 'proper' gendered behaviour. For Meryem, the void between her moral ethics and those of the *Ermenistanlı* is so large that she refuses to practice even the most minimal form of conviviality, exchanging greetings by saying *merhaba.*[121] In the narrative above Meryem does not openly specify why she distances herself from the *Doğulu*. In other conversations though, she made comments that are common in local discourses, alluding to stereotypes about Kurdish people being uneducated, 'backward minded' or violent people. Yet she recognizes that they qualify one of her key criteria of neighbourliness, which is respect for the elderly. And one of the examples to this she gives is that they greet her on the street, stressing again the significance of greeting as a form of recognition. While she said she 'cannot get along' with them in the sense she sees there to be cultural barriers preventing her to form intimate relations with neighbours as in the past, such as exchanging house visits, she appreciated their respectful mannerism. Meryem also makes note of a particular

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conversation stating, 'We (referring to Armenians of Turkey) have suffered a lot. I will never forget. I will never forgive. But what can you do. What happened has happened. You need to look ahead of you.'

[121] Taşçı's (2011) research is also filled with such examples of class and culture based boundaries that Armenian migrants confront in encounters with the ethnic-Armenians of Turkey.

incident when her Kurdish neighbours proved incredibly caring, by accompanying her to the hospital after a motorcycle hit her near by.

While Meryem often complained about the loss of neighbourliness in Kumkapı, she did actually make efforts to maintain old habits. As soon as the weather warmed up a little in the late Spring, Meryem began her almost daily summer ritual of heading down in the late afternoon to the front door of the apartment building where she would sit for several hours under the shade of a mulberry tree. Other female friends living locally for some 30-40 years, one Armenian, one *Rum* and one Kurdish Assyrian, would also often join Meryem. Two Kurdish men, one working at a barber shop across and one a realtor next door, would also come by to greet them, offering them tea and sometimes joining in the conversations. Here they would pass the time drinking tea, chatting about their days, sharing news, or complaining about their ailments. The dramatic changes in the locality were also a topic they frequently discussed, often coming up after brief silent moments of gazing those many strangers passing by the street.

As I have demonstrated, for older populations dwelling in Kumkapı, the notion of neighbourliness still remains an important component of how they make sense of local changes and possibilities for relating across differences. While they lament the loss of a particular intimate mode of neighbourliness though, they also recognize the different forms and degrees it can take and measure their proximity and distance to newcomers in the area along such criteria.

6.2. 'Here it continually fills and empties': transience and pragmatism

In making the statement that 'houses are used like hotels', Meryem refers to the changing temporal quality of residential dwelling in Kumkapı. In general, *yerli* and *yabancı* alike, most residents speak about Kumkapı as being a place of transit. For those few who have remained present in Kumkapı for decades as residents and/or business proprietors, this transience is about witnessing the constant and increasingly more rapid change of life in the area instigated by migrations. For such persons there is a strong sense that even though they remain in place in Kumkapı, the place is forever in flux. Ali, an ethnic-Turk, came to Istanbul from Aksaray province in the late 1950s. He has been running the same tailor shop for some 20 years. 'This is a place that continually fills and empties,' he explains. Arif, a real estate agent who moved with his entire family from Mardin to Kumkapı in the late 1990s says: 'Those coming here will stay 6 months or a year at most. Kumkapı is like a transit place. Those who improve their means a bit and achieve more economic security move onwards to other districts.' This is precisely what he and most of his family did, buying homes in the neighbouring Zeytinburnu district some years ago while keeping their real estate business in Kumkapı. One of the neighbourhood authorities, who grew up in Kumkapı but moved to another neighbourhood after getting married says: 'I see Kumkapı like an *alay merkezi* (regiment centre), people from all geographies come here and disperse from here. In the novice period of your military service they send you first to *alay* and you are dispensed from there. Here is the same.' For those who have arrived more recently, a sense of transience is more to do with their own individual intentions to eventually

move onwards. As discussed in the detailed life stories in Chapters 4, Kumkapı offers several conveniences for migrants, including presence of co-ethnic/regional/national networks, proximity of a plethora of jobs and availability and flexibility of housing. But few arrive here with the intent of settling permanently, seeing it rather as a transitional space where these conveniences can be utilized and harnessed as a stepping stone to elsewhere in the city, or abroad.

It is possible to argue that in today's Kumkapı such transience and the ever-multiplying differences are accommodated mainly for pragmatic purposes. For most residents and business owners, there is a shared interest in maintaining both diversity and transience in the locality. As one of the neighbourhood authorities said to me: 'Here it has become like a trade centre, for the local population the foreigners are profit. That is why they ignore them. The foreigners are also content. From here they find work, money... While having no house or income back in their country, in 3–4 years here they become rich and can invest there.' While such a context is conceived as being good for economic interests, residents and business owners alike also emphasize that when the incentive of dwelling locally is dictated merely by improving individual economic means and eventually moving on, developing and maintaining trust relations can become difficult. Dilara, my Turkmen neighbour (Chapter 4) explained this state simply as: 'Everyone here is after opportunities. So you can't even trust your own kind.' The difficult trust relations were also noticed by Ibrahim, the call shop owner introduced in Chapter 5, who told me: 'Here a foreigner cheats a foreigner, a Turkmen cheats a Turkmen, a Georgian cheats a Georgian, and so it goes… Turks also cheat one another. There are all kinds of people here.' In her study on sub-Saharan African migrants in Turkey Suter

(2013: 101) also addresses similar experiences of exploitation at the hands of co-nationals, which she points is often overlooked in migration research that mostly upholds the positive effects of social networks on immigrant's integration and well-being.

Given this context, residents of Kumkapı have developed a highly pragmatic approach to local dwelling, of trying avoid engagements with strangers unless necessary. When I asked Sekou, introduced in Chapter 4, who his neighbours were in the building, he said: 'There are some Senegalese, but we don't know each other. Everyone minds his or her own business.' In their study of two localities in Johannesburg and Nairobi that appear similar to Kumkapı in terms of diversity and transience, Landau and Freemantle have argued:

> Conviviality is rooted in utilitarian extraction, not a desire for shared identity or enduring bonds… people (co)operate through a largely instrumental ethics: oriented towards accessing and extracting the 'fruits' of urban space while simultaneously imagining or enacting life elsewhere. Here, residents manage their everyday interactions with Others through disconnection —by 'minding their own business'— a principle manifested in both passive tolerance and active benefit-seeking (2016: 933)

Hence in such contexts, conviviality can be achieved without necessarily having 'consensus over values and a sense of common belonging' (ibid. 936), which would also include shared understandings of neighbourliness, following local customs and moral codes, etc. The only shared understanding then is that of maintaining a pragmatic openness to differences, as one's own accommodation and transience in the area in itself depends on it.

While such an instrumental ethics and a 'mind your own business' strategy is certainly widespread among many residents of Kumkapı, it does overlook the fact that meaningful (neighbourly) social relations can be developed even when one's time and intentions in a locality are temporary. In fact, being settled in an area for a long time can lead to more protective closure and social isolation in reaction to local population changes, while newcomers are more willing and eager to interact. As Burrell (2016) has recently argued, the assumption that positive social relations necessarily build on long-term settlement, or that high population turnover, what she terms as 'churn,' is necessarily a negative factor for establishing local relations and attachments, must be questioned. Rather, she points that it can also be conceived as 'something people and place can and do adapt to more readily than "expected", through practices such as small-scale conviviality and personalized place attachments' (ibid. 1603)

The temporary room rental and flat share practices of foreigner migrants in Kumkapı provide a strong example of such an adaptive mode of convivial sociality, as the particularity of the living arrangements forces connections and social interactions that might not be ever necessary. Even if a person is highly introverted and keeps to his/her own room, he or she must share a kitchen and bathroom with the other residents, hence total avoidance is never an option. But then, as I witnessed in my flat, there are some who actually enjoy this unique social experience, saying that it would be culturally unacceptable to live together with strangers in their home countries where only family members live together. Dilara and Kemran, my neighbours from Turkmenistan introduced in Chapter 4, were very friendly and proactive in neighbourly relations, especially with those coming from the same geographic region. They would regularly

socialize at dinner or afterwards with other neighbours in the flat coming from Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. They were also friendly to other neighbours, especially those who were among the oldest stable tenants like themselves. For instance, Dilara sometimes visited and chatted with the Sri Lankan woman living on a room built on the rooftop. They were also somewhat of an anomaly as they sought out opportunities to have 'a peak' into the lives of stranger neighbours, like when they enthusiastically offered to take me upstairs to the third floor flat and introduce me to the Ugandan woman who was subletting rooms in the flat.

For Dilara, 'cleanliness' was the main criterion on which she distinguished between and approved of people. For instance, when a new Uzbek couple moved in Dilara commented: 'She is a very clean woman, she uses *ACE* (a Turkish brand name for a type of bleach) everywhere.' Similarly, when talking about a Senegalese woman who had lived in my room before and had to move out after a violent dispute with Dursun, the Turkish man living across the hall (more in section 6.4 below), Dilara commented:

> She was actually really *temiz* (clean). She wouldn't use a mop but would sit on the floor to clean the floors with a cloth. When she cooked in the kitchen there was no room left. But she cooked *temiz*. She was not that *pis* (filty), not like the Africans before her. She was a poor girl; she was a really good girl. She had a child back in her country. She had cuts on her arms like *yamyamlar* (cannibals). Her husband did it she said. At night around 6-7 she would leave to sell watches and come back at 3-4 in the morning. She did her prayers. She would cook here in the kitchen. She was also human. She told me that Dursun said things like 'come to my room', and other things like that. She cried, she cried a lot to me. She told him no, I have a child. She came here (to their room) and cried.

Following on from the case of Meryem, Dilara's narrative illustrates that

neighbourliness is also significant for developing convivial relations among temporary residents, but the criteria may be different due to particularities of living arrangements, where for instance physical cleanliness becomes most important. It also shows how, when conditions force people of diverse ethnic and racial background to live together in such intimate spaces, even though racialized stereotypes of otherness may still stand at a more general level, like in her reference to the term *yamyamlar*, one can also start to recognize and empathize with shared commonalities of other subject positions at the individual level, as in being a mother that is making a sacrifice for the well-being of her children by seeking economic opportunities abroad, and being a foreigner women in Kumkapı, which requires great strength in the face of frequent sexual advances by male strangers that one is likely to receive.

6.3. 'It is not appropriate for family': gendering conviviality

Returning again to Meryem's narrative above, she ends with a statement about a Kurdish man who says he moved away from Kumkapı because it was 'a place not appropriate for family'. This is a statement I heard repeated countless times, especially among local male proprietors. For example one man running a grocery store who had recently migrated to Kumkapı, leaving behind his wife and children in his hometown in Batman province said, 'We came here because the money is here. But I would not want my children to live here, to learn about drugs and prostitution. This is not a place appropriate for family.' A Kurdish man running a tailor and dry cleaning store who grew up in the area but moved away after getting married said: 'Those who live here either become rascals, or get married and move away.' A call shop owner stated: 'I

moved away when I got married. Your child will become a dealer or a pimp. Your wife will cheat on you.' One realtor commented: 'My work is here but I would not let my family live here. It is rotten here. It is all *yabanci.*' And similarly another realtor who lived in Kumkapı with his extended family for nine years mentioned his reason for moving away as: 'There is not a good environment for raising children. They see bad examples. Plus we were renting here. With my brothers we bought an *aile apartmanı* (family apartment) in Zeytinburnu.' I heard such narratives repeat countless times throughout my field research in Kumkapı.

These remarks make clear references to the difficulties of living together in an environment where criminal activities are bountiful. On the streets of Kumkapı, drug trading and prostitution are widely and, in certain areas, visibly practiced. Families fear that this atmosphere will influence children if they raise them locally. For this same reason, families who do stay, like Selma and Irfan introduced in Chapter 4, mention the hard work and consistent effort it takes to protect their children from the bad influences on the street. Underlying these comments though is also a subtle reference to concerns about the symbolic boundaries that those engaging in these activities breach. As already discussed in detail in Chapter 3, the different demography of migrant arrivals is also seen as a potential threat to the traditional norms and integrity of family life, including having to dwell in proximity to *bekar* men or being exposed to life styles deemed immoral, which is generally attributed to the *yabancı* populations, and *bayan* in particular.

What is striking about this example is that it conveys how conviviality is gendered, which emerges in two respects. While newly wed men very often decide to move their

residences away from Kumkapı because of the patriarchal desire to protect their family from this 'immoral' world, they maintain their businesses locally because of the commercial potential. In this way, they exercise the gendered right to choose and the freedom to 'live with diversity', especially because economic need makes it necessary. In other words, a convivial mode of living and a market based cosmopolitanism (Landau & Freemantle 2016) in this environment is conditioned by distancing wives and children from this environment. Yet at the same time it is no secret that many male proprietors, Kurdish and Turkish alike, engage in intimate relations with Kumkapı's foreigner *bayan* population, ranging from paid sex to informal (i.e. 'kept wives', see Bloch 2011) or actual marriage. Most studies looking at contexts of diversity such as Kumkapı and examining social relations extending across boundaries examine these in the forms of neighborliness and friendship. This example though points to an underexplored sphere, that of intimate conviviality.

Beyond the economic potentials the locality offers, for local men Kumkapı offers a context where such relations can take material form in an otherwise conservative society. While their patriarchal desires incline them to move their families away from Kumkapı, the locality appeals to them for the prospect of sexual liberation it offers through encounters with the 'other.' In her study of suitcase trade in Laleli, Yukseker notes: 'Most male workers and store owners in Laleli have recent rural backgrounds and hold traditional views about marriage, proper sexual behavior by female kin, and male sexual freedom. For many men, Laleli offers the possibility of more liberal relationships with women, such as consensual sex outside of marriage or without long term commitments' (2011: 58-59). If Laleli was the place offering opportunities of encounter

since its heyday of suitcase trade, then Kumkapı is the place where these relationships found a roof to cover their heads. I met several property owners, including my own, and local business owners subletting rooms in a flat they rented, who kept spare rooms for themselves. While my position as a female researcher did not permit me to inquire directly about how they used these rooms, general discussions about gender dynamics in the locality provided ample evidence that many house owners keep such rooms to invite foreign female guests to stay the night. It is also common practice for a man to rent a room for his girlfriend, which as one real estate agent points out is unique to Kumkapı because, 'there is flexibility here. This would not be permitted elsewhere.' As discussed in Chapter 4, these intimacies are very often strategic, involving economic incentives. At the same time, it must be emphasized that gender based violence is rampant in Kumkapı, from the everyday level of sexual harassments migrant women face on the streets to domestic violence and rape. The violence co-exists with the intimate cross-cultural engagements that can be qualified as convivial practices, in that they are consensual, peaceful and can also involve genuine love for one another, often shaped by an attraction in each other's differences.[122]

6.4. 'It is a filthy place': ambivalence of openness

Pis (filthy) is a term Turkish-speaking people living and/or working locally use most commonly when speaking about Kumkapı. Different residents have different understandings about what is considered filthy, but one way or another everyone shares

[122] As discussed in Chapter 3, these intimacies most often involve women from the Former Soviet Union countries, and a common narrative I heard by women from these countries involved in such relations was a comparison between the alcoholism and irresponsibility of men in their country and romantic and generous gestures of Turkish men. In return, Turkish men said they found foreign women appealing for being more educated, elegant and well-groomed. Also, some of the men were in arranged marriages with distant relatives who they did not necessarily really like, and were yearning for a love-based relationship.

a sense of disgust. At the more general level, filth is attributed to actual physical conditions, such as littered streets and derelict housing, exacerbated by transient and over-crowded use of houses. But most often filth is social in that it is ascribed to certain people and actions, which intertwine with material and temporal elements of space. In *Purity and Danger* (1966), Mary Douglas famously compared conceptions of dirt across different cultures, and argued that dirt is that which represents a disturbance or threat to the proper order of things, that which is 'matter out of place.' Douglas emphasized the socially constructed nature of dirt, stating: 'There is no such thing as absolute dirt: it exists in the eye of the beholder' (1966: 2). In Kumkapı, the diversity of the population means that there are multiple social worlds colliding, hence presumed sources of filth are also multiple. Below I will note just a few of the most common discourses surrounding filth that I encountered.

As shown in Cohen and Johnson's comprehensive edited volume examining culturally and historically variable formations of filth in the West since the mid-nineteenth century, associating sexuality, and female sexuality in particular, with filth is an age-old tradition (2005: xii). Sexual intercourse outside of marriage and adultery are common sources of pollution beliefs. It would not be an overstatement to say that Kumkapı is a sexually charged environment, as both prostitution and 'strategic intimacies' (Chapter 3) are widespread locally. Hence this aspect is one of the most common referents underlying local filth discourses. Meryem's comment below is emblematic:

> Everyday day for 40 years I walked down this street and I always looked straight. You were not supposed to look around. It was shameful to do so. And no man would eye a woman. Now who knows what is crossing the mind of a person who sees women on the street. Anyways, there also wasn't such a

> crowd. It's *pis*, very *pis* now. It's full of whores everywhere. It was all family back then, now just shops and pensions. If there was some *namus* (honor) in people at least…

Maya, a Georgian woman, who does domestic work and stays one night a week in Kumkapı in a room she shares with two Georgian friends working as sales assistants in Laleli, told me, 'As you are a *yabancı*, regardless of whether you are decent or not, they look at you differently.' Due to such perceptions, migrant women dwelling in Kumkapı often must cope with sexual harassment as a daily occurrence. I was visiting the home of Mehtap, an Uzbek woman in her thirties living with her young son from her first marriage. Soon after my arrival our conversation was interrupted by a phone call from her landlord, who lived with his family in another neighbourhood but keeps a room in the apartment above the one she lived in. He said he wanted to talk to her and asked her to come up. She was wearing a long, sleeveless dress and before she left, she wore a T-shirt to cover her chest. She asked me to wait and left the flat looking annoyed. When she came back shortly afterward, she explained: 'He wants us to vacate the house. He says "you didn't fulfil my request."[123] I lived in Russia for one year and the Russians are also *pis insanlar* (filthy people) but never have I seen a place like Turkey. I mean they look at you in such a way like you are a whore.'

When I asked Binata, my Senegalese neighbour, about what she thinks of Kumkapı, her response also focused on this aspect: [124]

> It's too bad. You see yesterday, my friend came to visit me. She is married. I was walking her back to the main street. There were two children here on the street, maybe 7 or 9 years old. They come and slap her on her bum. Then in

[123] The landlord was requesting that Mehtap have an affair with him.
[124] This conversation was in English.

> Aksaray we are waiting for taxi, and one big man comes and says to my friend, *Seks kaç para* (how much for sex)? And my friend said, 'your mama make sex?' and then she slaps him on the face. They do it to me all the time, big men, little boys, all the same, sex, sex. In Senegal it is not the same. In Senegal I never see people they come up and walk to you and ask for sex. I don't know why the mentality is only sex. It is too difficult here. People here, they don't know the African people, they think all the African girls are the same.[125] They think they all come for prostitution. It's not true. Not all is the same. I don't know why people are like this.[126]

Like sexuality, racial thinking also has a long history of being tainted with the language of filth (Cohen & Johnson 2005: xvi). When I asked Maya what she thinks about Kumkapı, her answer combined references to the general physical filth of the neighbourhood with the filth she attributed to the Africans living in the basement flat of her apartment: 'I don't like it here. It is a *pis* place, from all sides. The streets are *pis*, the houses are so, and the people are also *pis*. It is worse than Georgia. *Zenciler* living in the basement, it is very *pis*.' When I moved into my flat, one of the first persons I met was Dursun, a Turkish man living in a corner room alone. He was the landlord's friend and in charge of renting rooms in the flat. During my first day in the flat he complained extensively about the two Senegalese women who had previously lived in my room before (also referred to in previous section by Dilara), and then noted: 'My blood never warmed up to Africans, spitting on the stairs and stuff. They are really *pis*. They live there in tin homes, do their toilet outside and throw dirt on it, here of course it seems

[125] Incidentally, Kumkapı has emerged as the market place for black prostitutes. Here Binata is making reference to a consequence of this phenomenon for other African women dwelling in Kumkapı who are not involved in this trade.

[126] On one occasion, I personally witnessed little children sneaking up behind two black women walking on the street and pointing pepper spray at their faces, then running away laughing. I shared this incident with two Ugandan women I met, and both said that they had separately lived a similar experience.

like heaven to them. When those Africans (the two Senegalese) left, I had to clean the bathroom for hours, because all their *pislik* (filth) had glued on to the walls. I really worked hard to get it off.' These most base forms of racist discourses do translate into practices, having a significant impact on the livelihoods of black populations living in Kumkapı, where, as discussed in Chapter 3, their presumed 'filth' is used as a justification for providing them only the worst forms of housing, like basements, or asking for more money.

Such racism also translates into disproportionate harassment and violence. Sekou once commented: 'They keep cursing at us all the time. We don't understand what they are saying, but our patience wears out of course. This is a problem especially for the blacks. If we are attacked on the street, no Turks, or white person, will come to help us.' This comment built on a personal experience, from when a Kurdish call-shop owner stabbed Sekou's flat mate Alfa on the street. Sekou mentioned this incident when I asked him to share his thoughts about Kumkapı:

> It is not an easy place. It has not been easy for me. Because, especially with that what happened to Alfa you know, the aggression. We are afraid. We had newly come here, living at the Senegalese house. It happened at a call shop. There was a Guinean who used to go there to make calls. There was a kind of dispute. The shop owner was looking at him badly, shouting at him. He called X (a Turkish person working at a local NGO giving medical assistance to African migrants) to intervene in a friendly way. I don't know if or how much they argued. We came there as if they were ready to fight. The guy was not there, but his friends, let's say, were alerted. In order to avoid further problems, we said we were going to report to the police. Wow. They heard it and wanted to prevent us from going. When we were on the way, they were running toward us with sticks and knife. There were many, like five. They did not want us to go to the police. We saw they had knives in their hands we

> tried to intervene, and then tried running. Alfa was close to me, but they catch him and started beating him. I shouted to the others who were ahead of us that they caught him and were beating him. He was crying. I went to the police and told them. There was just one guy there and he said he could not go. Then Alfa came himself after they finished beating him. He was bleeding. His face was covered in blood, his teeth also.

Conceptions of filth are also often ascribed to particular ethnic groups. For instance, in the first section Meryem referred extensively to the *Ermenistanlı* as being *pis insanlar.* Many foreigners in Kumkapı attribute filth to the local Kurdish population, who they distinguish primarily on grounds of educational and class differences.[127] When I first met Leyla (see also Chapter 4) in her grocery store and tried asking her questions, she repeatedly advised me that I should finish my field research as soon as possible: 'This place is not *güllük gülistanlık* (a bed of roses). These Kurdish people are *çok* (very) *pis*. They have no education, culture. They are involved in every kind of *pislik*, drugs, prostitution... You are very innocent. If I didn't have to I wouldn't stay here. They bring me to the door by car, and I leave again by car…' Omar, who is from Tanzania and had lived in different parts of the world before coming to Turkey, including Egypt, Pakistan and Greece, said to me: 'The problem of the Kurdish people is they are too hostile. In Africa there is a saying, let pass, keep it to yourself, but the Kurdish they don't have this, they shout and fight. It is very hard place for me to stay. I have been to other countries, they are not like that.'

As mentioned also in Chapter 3, there is a common discourse in Kumkapı about the Kurds being a people one should not mess with, linked with perceptions that they are a

[127] Most foreigner migrants coming to Kumkapı have middle class backgrounds (see Toksöz & Ulutaş 2013, Şaul 2014)

violent people and will resort to extensive ethnic and kinship networks at moments of tension. This came up again in the following conversation while I was visiting the home of Melike, an older Turkish woman who migrated to Kumkapı from Kastamonu province in the Black Sea region in the 1960s. She had a visitor that day, Suna, who was old neighbour and close friend, but moved away to another district in 1998. As we were talking about the changes in Kumkapı the following dialogue took place:

> S: Anyways, there aren't any of our people left here, its all Kurds.
> M: Yes but my thought is that if you don't touch a snake, it will not touch you. I don't know. For me Kurd and Turk are the same. I have been pleased with Kurds. They are *bekar* but they took me under their protection when they were living with me in my house as tenants. Of course not all are the same, that is separate.
> S: But if your child were to beat up one of theirs, then 10 people will come and beat yours.
> W: But that is why I am saying, if you don't touch a snake it will not touch you.
> S: Ok, to touch is one thing, to not touch another. Now if a child has hit a child that is it, but then 10 people should not come and beat the child. There is no respect here. You only get respect if you are forever saying *eyvallah* (cheers). If they see even a tiny fault then then you will see what they do. They will speak and you can't do a thing. They also know you will not say a thing.
> W: Ahh (she sighs), you are right but what can you do?
> S: So we are content, but when you do a *alışveriş* (trade of any kind), it immediately comes to surface. They have little tolerance.

What is significant about this narrative is that it points to one of the central practices of convivial living in Kumkapı: avoidance. As the previous narratives starkly portrayed, at the discursive level, people often talk about the place and its different populations in highly negative and racist terms. Yet actual conflict across groups is minimal, as most

residents, those most vulnerable in particular, practice avoidance in their everyday lives. This is a trait that Sekou said he learned by living in Kumkapı. His first housing experience ended violently. He suspected the landlord was cheating on bills and tried inquiring about this, receiving instead vulgar curses in return. He got upset and replied with curses as well, which led to physical violence. 'During the fight I was using my poor Turkish. Naturally I am not a violent person but I wanted to show him that I am not afraid of him and that he should show me respect,' Sekou explained, 'but now I know better. It is not worth it. It is better to just ignore and move on.'

For people like Melike, having peace in her old age and maintaining a life that gives her a sense of familiarity depends on this practice of avoidance. Her husband passed away some 15 years ago and her one daughter moved away to another district after getting married. The daughter frequently told Melike that she should move in with them but Melike did not want to leave her home in Kumkapı where she has lived for the past forty years: 'I came here when I got married. This is the only other home I have lived in besides my childhood home. Despite how much the people are changing, this is the place that I am used to. The noise and commotion here sounds like music to my ears. I will feel *yabancılık* (estrangement) elsewhere.'

Whereas for people like Sekou, avoidance is necessary because he knows that Kumkapı is exceptionally flexible in accommodating differences that would not be as welcome elsewhere in the city. Hence while some of the social and cultural differences prevailing in Kumkapı might be discursively associated with a sense of disgust and contempt, there is also recognition that the diversity of the locality is what offers anonymity. This came up clearly in a one conversation with Dilara, when I asked her whether she had

considered moving elsewhere in Istanbul:

> Like there are many Turkmens and Uzbeks in Zeytinburnu, but I would not prefer living there. Actually, it is not that bad here. If you don't do anything, then no one touches you. Zeytinburnu is like a village; everyone knows each other and looks at you because you are a foreigner. Here we are comfortable, everyone is foreign so no one looks at you. It is very mixed but people have gotten used to it. They (the *yerli*) have gotten used to it, like you want to rent a house and no one asks you where you are from.

As indicated by this comment, the extent of diversity in Kumkapı provides migrants with a sense of anonymity and normalcy compared to other parts of the city, where they are otherwise reminded of their outsider position. Van Leeween describes such indifference to ethnic and cultural differences in everyday life as a mode of 'dealing with urban diversity' (2010) and a pragmatic 'side by side' mode of urban co-existence that makes a sense of freedom possible in a multicultural city (2008, see also Tonkiss 2003). He argues: 'Cultural otherness in those circumstances simply gets integrated into daily routines and a shared background understanding. In other words, one gets used to it. Such an ethos of relaxed indifference is only possible if one actually lives in the midst of a visible diversity of lifestyles and ethnocultural variety' (2008: 648). By becoming immersed in contexts of diversity, people not only get used to differences, they also develop the strategies to cope with it by becoming familiar with its different dynamics and discourses. In remembering his novice days in Kumkapı, Sekou remarked on this learning curve he experienced through the process of dwelling: 'One of the main problems is language. Before learning the language I was frustrated a lot, I would be offended when people cursed when speaking with me. But after understanding what they mean, how people use them all the time, I became more relaxed… People who are

new don't know the context, and if you don't understand each other you fight.'

6.5. Conclusion

In Kumkapı the experiential commonality is that living together amid such diversity is an ambivalent process. For many inhabitants, regardless of background, it is a place where you can find comfort, security and solidarity with familiar people and spaces even amidst the great diversity. Yet, it is also a place where this familiarity is under constant challenge, either because of the transient intentions of most newcomers, or the distrustful environment created by the fact that most people are there for the aim of improving opportunities. For the new international migrants in particular, it is a liberating space showing remarkable modes of accommodating differences otherwise marginalized, discriminated and controlled in the wider city, which has allowed different ethnic communities a sense of place in the city. As demonstrated in the previous Chapter, the looseness of formal structures has also permitted this diversity to thrive economically, by offering all Kumkapı inhabitants the freedom to rapidly and flexibly adjust to consumer demands and realize transnational business potentials. Yet it is this same flexibility that has seemingly, and opportunistically, put legal, social and moral norms on hold, permitting exclusion, exploitation and a deep sense of insecurity, even in the purview of the state. What the case of Kumkapı reveals is that in urban contexts where migration driven changes are characterized by an intensification of diversity and informality, differences are accommodated and excluded, opportunities are expanded and limited, and boundaries are crossed and maintained all at the same time. In this chapter I have examined these ambivalence through the lens of

conviviality, a concept that is used to analyse people's abilities and competence to forge positive relations across differences. I have situated these practices within the framework of some of the common narratives circulating in Kumkapı relating to its different traits, which tend to be univocally negative, to demonstrate the ways in which convivial living are practiced in the minutia of everyday life. The different examples discussed have shown that conviviality cannot be conceived as an absolute and present of absent quality, being shaped by different variables including ethnicity, race, gender, and the like. People can feel closer and more distant to different kinds of differences, and this is often also temporally shifting. I have also demonstrated that there are variable degrees of convivial practice in terms of proximity and distance, which can range from friendly greetings to intimate engagements. In this respect, as in the previous chapter, we can see that conviviality is a process of becoming rather than a fixed entity. I argue that it is these daily encounters and their ambivalent openness that also makes convivial living possible, as it is through this process that individuals continuously engage and question the ethics, capacities, and resources for tackling difference in everyday life.

Conclusion

Global migration patterns in the 21st century are giving rise to new, intensified and rapidly changing forms of demographic, social and cultural multiplicity. In this thesis I have examined the lived experiences of inhabiting urban contexts of concentrated and fluctuating differences, through presenting an ethnographic account of a neighbourhood in Istanbul, which over several decades has remained a central hub for successive new waves of migrants arriving in the city from ever more disparate places and for ever more varying reasons. I set out on this journey by proposing to use a dwelling lens for understanding how urban spaces such as Kumkapi are being impacted by migration driven population changes and how the diverse populations living side-by-side within this space are relating with one another. In this conclusion I will reflect on some of the key insights this approach has offered and discuss how these contribute to the ways we think about and study migration and urban change in the 21st century. I present these under the headings of the three main arguments emerging from the ethnography presented.

Comprehending urban contexts of migration driven diversity through a dwelling lens allows one to recognize the different temporalities that are at play in shaping the present moment. Cities have a complex provenance in that there are multiple pasts and futures inhabiting the present, shaping material forms, daily rhythms, systems of differentiation, socialization patterns, among others. As I have examined in Chapter 2, these variable temporalities can be shaped by more macro political and economic forces, which dictate the changing nature of migrations to the city, both in terms of causal factors and settlement patterns and conditions for migrants arriving in the city. These complex temporalities of the city become layered in the present, leading to different but simultaneous forms and rhythms. Tracing these marks ethnographically in the present, as I

have shown, complicates linear readings of migration histories that narrate these histories in terms of successive group replacements. Dwelling acts of the past provide the foundations upon which new arrivals to the city build their new lives, through processes of negotiation and re-appropriation.

In bringing temporality to the centre of my analysis, I have shown also how a dwelling lens complicates the way we think about urban diversity and group formation. In Chapter 3, I examined a central pattern of social differentiation that becomes evident through an examination of discourses on housing allocation. But I showed that these differences are not set or static, building again, as in the material forms discussed in Chapter 2, on legacies of the past and continuously evolving in view of the changing demographics of new migrant arrivals.

In Chapters 4 and 5, I have reflected on temporalities at the more micro level, by examining the creative strategies of individuals to carve a space for themselves in the city. These attempts are invariably shaped by social conditions, including, but not limited to ethnicity, race, gender, age, citizenship status and labour opportunities. What I have emphasized though is that the different temporalities of migrants' lives also shape their dwelling strategies. Perceptions of being temporarily in place, desires and plans for the future, as well as the unfolding of new events with the passage of time, each have an incremental impact on how and where one dwells.

A dwelling lens positions the private sphere at the centre of diversification processes and recognizes space beyond its containing capacities. Migration driven diversification creates and modifies the composition and function of urban social and spatial patterns, and this is not limited to the use of the public and semi-public spheres. The ethnography presented in Chapter 3 and 4 reveals that migration driven diversification also impacts the private sphere deeply, wherein diverse reasons, conditions and temporalities of inhabiting Kumkapı intertwine with a breadth of

residential practices. Moreover, the private sphere also surfaces as a significant space of encounter, where differences are made and negotiated. Housing is a market mediated by market relations and asymmetric power relations. As such it presents also a significant opportunity for understanding how relations across differences unfold within structures of inequality. To this end, in Chapter 3 I reflected on the powerful role of landlords and estate agents in shaping local discourses around the categories of difference that circulate locally, not only shaping housing opportunities, but also employment conditions (Chapter 5), as well as forms and degrees of convivial practice (Chapter 6).

A dwelling lens again complicates the way we think and study space in contexts of urban diversity. In the literature there is a tendency to approach space merely as a physical container for human interaction. The ethnographic accounts presented here, however, have shown how the material qualities of space can take on an independent role in facilitating certain affects and encounters. In Chapter 3, for instance, I examined how meanings attributed to social differences, are intertwined with ideas about how 'private space' is being used and should be used. In Chapter 4, I examined how changing migration trajectories become infused with domestic materialities, which in turn, influence the former classificatory systems. Together, these findings challenge the bounded and binary thinking around public and private spaces by showing how what happens 'inside' is closely interlinked with public imaginaries 'outside.'

A dwelling lens also demonstrates how living in urban contexts of migration driven diversity is very often characterized by a deep sense of ambivalence and continuous acts of balancing to cope with these conflicting factors simultaneously infringing upon people's lives. There is a long lasting tradition in urban studies to portray the city as a site of great ambivalence, between strangeness and familiarity, between solitude and anonymity, inclusion and exclusion,

bewilderment and fascination, cosmopolitanism and racism, hopeful opportunity and desperate precarity (Keith 2011, Tonkiss 2003). Much of the literature on migration and urban diversity also builds on a similar understanding of ambivalence, pointing to its much more intensified nature in the contexts studied. But little attention has paid to how people living in these contexts cope with such ambivalence in their everyday lives. In its emphasis on processes over forms, a dwelling lens, I argue, provides a productive lens for addressing this limitation.

Ambivalence is a theme that runs throughout the thesis chapters. In Chapter 2, it appears in the ways that spaces such as churches are being used and modified to accommodate the new flows of migrants and refugees while the original congregations are absent, pointing to a tension of securing continuities of dwelt life forms of the past and adapting to the new demands of dwelling in the present. Ambivalence emerges in different actors' discourses in Chapter 3 in the ways difference is downplayed or emphasized depending on circumstances and engagement, as well as vested interests. In Chapter 4 it surfaces in the ways that people confront contradictory needs, expectations, ideals and desires. Chapter 5 shows how ambivalence emerges not only in actors' economic strategies but also in migrants' statuses wherein practices and people can be qualified as formal and informal at the same time. In Chapter 6 it surfaces in the co-existence of categorical distaste for otherness and everyday habitual engagements.

Individuals living and/or working in Kumkapı continuously batter with and try to resolve various tensions on a daily basis in an effort to ensure their personal well-being and life opportunities. Throughout, this ethnography brings to the fore the ways in which such processes are characterized by calculation, negotiation and compromise. The cases presented bring temporariness and permanence into discussion but also learning through dwelling, and enacting as well as navigating the inequalities that structure social and economic relations. Longer

presence and greater immersion in a place means that people learn strategies to alter or improve their access and control over their living condition. This learning does not mean that constraints disappear but in some cases individuals learn how to improve their navigation abilities. Change in circumstances influences choices in the present, but ultimately it ties into how people dwell and the ways we study the intersection of dwelling and migration.

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Map of area studied


Özal Millet Caddesi
Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa Caddesi
Aksaray Caddesi
Finansbank
Çay Ocağı
Hotel Rio
Laleli
Laleli Caddesi
Mesihpaşa
Laleli-Üniversite
Hotel Genova
Nobel Hotel
Mesihpaşa Caddesi
Yaztur Hotel
Hotel DELTA
Grand Asiyan Hotel
Azimkar Sokak
Hotel emg
Yunus
Tep
Koska Caddesi
Şair Fitnat Sokak
Şair Hasmet Sokak
Ragıp Paşa Kütüphanesi
Gold hotel
Venera hotel
Nanda hotel
Çoban Çavuş Cami
Garanti bank
Akbank
Ağa Çeşmesi Sokak
İkbal Sokak
Derinkuyu Sokak
Hayriye Tüccarı Caddesi
Nisanca Bostanı Sokak
Mimar Kemalettin
Naz Otel
Molla Taşı Caddesi
İmrahor Hamamı Sokak
Güvenlik Caddesi
Hadım Odaları Sokak
Kızıltaş Sokak
Tugrakes Sokak
Nisanca Mutrıe Sokak
Latif Sokak
Daltaban Yokuşu
Nişanca Yokuşu
Havuzlu Mescit Sokak
Katip Sinan Mektebi Sokak
Katip Sinan Cami
Sümbül Sinan Sokak
Taşçantaşı Sokak
Nur Sokak
Turanlı Sokak
Fermanlı Sokak
Uysal Sokak
İbrahim Paşa Yokuşu
Alaca Camii Sokak
Katip Kasım Camii Sokak
Fabrika Sokak
Langa Karakolu Sokak
Katip Kasım Cami
Asker Sokak
Asya Sokak
Hemşehri Sokak
Mabeyinci Yks.
Türkeli Caddesi
Sepetçi Selim Sokak
Umit İstanbul otel
Mollataşı Caddesi
Ehlidil Sokak
Tabur Sokak
İsmail Sefa Sokak
Beşikçi Sokak
Arap Mehmet Sokak
Gloriya Kargo
Kargo
Sayyan Sokak
Langa Hısarı Caddesi
Soğancı Raşit Sokak
Mermerciler Caddesi
Kenanbey Sokak
Nalbant Cami
Ermeni Patrikhanesi
Sevgi Sokak
Alişan Sokak
Yeni Kapı Parkı
Kennedy Caddesi
Gazi Mustafa Kemal Paşa Caddesi
Nişanca Nişanca
Cafe
Kapıkaşın
Kenikapı Kadıköy
Hazinedar Sokak
Kayalıcı Şevki Sokak
Ordu Caddesi
TT Kabataş-Bağcılar Tramvay
Sky kamer hotel
Embirum hotel
Antik hotel
Resturant
Ing bank
Grand beyazit
Nezih hotel
Karasu hotel
Piran hotel
Hotel Niles
Yemek salonu
Hotel balin
Sarajevo
Albaraka bank
Beyazıt
Ordu Caddesi
Mihatpaşa Caddesi
Soğanağa Camii Sokak
Küçük Haydar Efendi Sokak
Tatlıkuyu Sokak
Yahyapaşa Sokak
Tiyatro Caddesi
Sinekli Medrese Sokak
Paşa Tost
Aziz Usta
Gedik Balık
Mollabey Sokak
İşbaşı Sokak
Esirci Kemalettin Cemi Sokak
Özhanedan
Surp Hovhannes Kilisesi
Gedikpaşa Fırını Sokak
Gedikpaşa Caddesi
Aynen Dürüm Ciğer
Delil Döner
Süryani Kilisesi
Bahçelikahve Sokak
Asmalıhan Sokak
Balıpaşa Yokuşu
Kumkapı Hanı Sokak
Saraç İshak Sokak
İbrahim Paşa Yokuşu
Altun
Dolphin
Akbank
Gedikpaşa Konağı
ALF HOTEL
Gökhan Gıda
Loor
Hira Locantası
Şehsuvar Bey
Behram Çavuş Cami
Kumluk Sokak
Çaparız Sokak
Fener Restaurant
Tavaşı-Süleymanağa Camii
Hisar Çeşmesi Sokak
Findıkkıran Sokak
Babayiğit Sokak
Telli Odaları Sokak
Tavaşı Çeşmesi Sokak
Gerdanlık Sokak
Üstad Sokak
Büyük Kömürcü Sokak
Batumlu Sokak
Muhsine Hatun
Işın Sok

Appendix 2: Migration and functional changes in Istanbul's historical peninsula

Istanbul's historical peninsula is surrounded by the Sea of Marmara and Haliç, the horn shaped major waterway that goes inland from where the Marmara Sea meets the Bosporus strait. Eminönü is the name of the central work district located at this juncture. Up until 2012, it was also the name of the administrative district encompassing the historical peninsula, but then it became joined under the much larger Fatih district.[128] For centuries, Eminönü and the shores of Haliç remained the liveliest economic zone in the city, occupied by labourers and traders of all kinds, warehousemen and sailors (Kuban 1995, Şen 2012). The area was a first point of arrival, temporary settlement and transition for migrants coming to the city from Anatolia, the Balkans and elsewhere, abundant with *han*'s (inns) and *bekarevleri* (bachelor rooms) (ibid.). *Mahalle*'s, a term used both to describe a residential neighbourhood of settled populations and a unit of urban administration, were located in the interior and periphery of the triangular peninsula. Muslims lived mainly in the interior *mahalle*'s (e.g. Çarşamba, Vefa, Süleymaniye, Fatih, Aksaray, Laleli) and non-Muslims in the peripheral ones (e.g. Kumkapı, Samatya to the South, and Fener, Balat to the north) (Şen 2012).

[128] A representative of the Fatih Municipality that I interviewed, who was previously working at the Eminönü Municipality before this change explained to me that there was both an economic and political rationale behind it: 'The state accounts municipal budgets according to population size. So if there were 3 million people daily coming to Eminönü to work, the budget was being accounted only according to 15 thousand residents. Also there was growing fears among the AKP (Justice and Development Party) that because of the growing prevalence of Kurds among residents that BDP (Peace and Democracy Party – Kurdish political party) would take over the Municipality.'

In the 1950s, small and medium sized industries and workplaces started expanding from Eminönü and Haliç into some of these *mahalle*'s. This changing functional use of neighbourhood spaces also brought about a changed demography. As workplaces entered residential areas, settled families started leaving because workplaces brought with them more crowds, noise, traffic and pollution, as well as new strangers, such as migrant bachelors, whose culture and demography were thought as unfitting for an urban family neighbourhood.[129] The population figures for Eminönü district point to several of these functional and demographic shifts in Istanbul's historical peninsula over several decades. Firstly, residential populations dropped significantly. In 1955 there were close to 147.000 residents living in the district. After a steady decline, in 2007 this figure was down to 32.500. Secondly, the gender composition of the area changed. Gender aggregated data is available for after 1965, when already men had become predominant among residents at 63 per cent. Similarly, Şen (2012: 314)'s study of internal migration statistics points that between 1995-2000, 54 per cent of new migrant arrivals in Istanbul were men, while for Eminönü this figure was 75 per cent. Thirdly, recent figures are also reflective of the changing ethnic origins of internal migrants. In the period 1990-2007, the population in Eminönü of people born both in predominantly Kurdish provinces and abroad increased substantially, while all others declined. The most notable decline was of Istanbul born populations, from over 25 thousand in 1990 to 3800 in 2007, which is an 85% decline.

[129] Çağlayandereli (2006) argues that inner city decay in the historical peninsula already started in the late 18th century due to 'Westernization' efforts in the Ottoman Empire and the re-location of administrative and economic centres to the 'new city' (modern day Karaköy, Beyoğlu, Beşiktaş). During early Republican period, the departure of bureaucrats, technocrats, industrialists and traders is noted, for different reasons including emigration of non-Muslims and Ankara becoming new capital. Elite classes moving away meant that newcomers were always able to find a place to stay.

While the overall trend in the historical peninsula tends towards the loss of residential function, some neighbourhoods, particularly those closer to trade and tourism centres, have been more impacted. The table below indicates these changes in the administrative neighbourhoods, *mahalle*'s, that are part of Kumkapı, Gedikpaşa and Laleli. As seen below, already in 1990, Kumkapı had more density in residential population compared to Laleli and Gedikpaşa. What is notable is the 95% population decline between 1990-2014 in two of Laleli's core neighbourhoods, Mesihpaşa and Mimar Kemalletin. This decline is in fact highest among all neighbourhoods in the historical peninsula right after *Beyazıt Mahallesi*, just north of Laleli and Gedikpaşa (see Table 1 below). Kumkapı, too, has seen a decline in residents, becoming more prevalent from East to West. *Şehsuvar Bey* has seen the least decline (20%, 2600) which as mentioned above is evident in a distinct neighbourhood feeling the area presents from its Western counterparts: *Muhsine Hatun* (50%, 2400), *Nişanca* (50%, 5600) and *Katip Kasım* (75%, 1900). Overall though, of the 33 neighbourhoods throughout the historical peninsula, these four still have the largest numbers of residents, ranking third, fourth, first and fifth respectively (the second rank belongs to *Küçük Ayasoyfa*, which is West of *Şehsuvar Bey*). This points to the on-going significance Kumkapı as a residential space. And what my ethnography discloses is that with the influx of international migrants there are also many residents actually unaccounted for in official records, particularly in *Muhsine Hatun, Nişanca* and *Katip Kasım Mahalle*'s, which is the area where I focused my ethnography.

Table 1: Registered population in six *Mahalle*

Locality	Mahalle	1990	2000	2010	2014	1990-2014 %
Kumkapı/Laleli	Nişanca	11164	7399	5764	5607	50
Kumkapı/Kadırga	Şehsuvar Bey	3248	2515	2514	2599	20
Kumkapı	Muhsine Hatun	4948	3108	2769	2414	51
Kumkapı/Langa	Katip Kasım	7616	3207	2188	1938	75
Kumkapı/Gedikpaşa	Saraç İshak	3559	1373	1281	1158	67
Gedikpaşa	Mimar Hayrettin	3231	1310	567	679	79
Laleli	Mimar Kemalettin	4068	1632	240	235	94
Laleli	Mesih Paşa	2423	1737	79	132	95

Source: Hayır-Kanat (2016)

The changed function of the localities is reflected in population figures for the area (Hayır-Kanat 2016). Between 1990 and 2014, the different *mahalle* (administrative neighbourhoods) all saw some degree of decline in residential population: around 95% in Laleli, 75% in Gedikpaşa and 50% in Kumkapı. While in the former two this decline is accountable vis-à-vis business expansions in the area, this ethnography reveals that in Kumkapı residential figures still remain high but are unaccounted for because of the rise of irregular migrants as residents.

Appendix 3: Labour emigrations from Turkey

Throughout the 1960s, Turkey started exporting its labour force through formal bilateral agreements. While the booming European economies needed unskilled labour, Turkey had a large labour surplus, particularly in its rural areas and signed labour migration agreements with Germany (1961), Austria, Holland and Belgium (1964), France (1965). Less encompassing agreements were signed with England (1961), Sweden (1971), Denmark (1973) and Norway (1981). After acquiring the necessary skills and training, it was expected that Turkish 'guest-workers' in Europe would eventually return, contributing to the development of the Turkish industrial economy. Between 1961-1974, close to 800 thousand Turks left for Europe as guest workers, and another 50 thousand from 1974-2005. The tide shifted to Arab countries from the mid 1970s up until the mid 1990s, where also another 800 thousand Turks were received as guest workers. Following the mid 1990s, Former Soviet Union states peaked as the main destination receiving some 155 thousand labourers (Kirişçi & Içduygu 2009). Most workers in Europe ended up staying and their families also joined them. Hence Turkish emigration to Europe continued through family re-unification, even when Western European economies started suffering an economic downturn after the 1973 oil crisis – thereby ending the recruitment of labour from Turkey. During the 1980s and 1990s, Turkey suffered from deep political uncertainties linked with the military coup and Kurdish conflict, again discussed more depth in the next sub-section. Consequently, asylum seekers from Turkey also entered emigration flows. Today an estimated 3.3 million Turks live abroad, of whom 2.7 million are in European countries (ibid.). In 1995, Turkish immigrants in Europe consisted of 77% family reunification, 22% asylum, 1% workers and 1% students (Içduygu & Sirkeci 1999).

Appendix 4: International migration to Turkey in numbers

The 2015 Population and Household Survey records a foreign born population of around 1.5 million, representing 165 different nationalities, the top ten being, Bulgaria, Germany, Iraq, Syria, Azerbaijan, Macedonia, Afghanistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, Russian Federation. This is comparable with the 2000 census that recorded around 235.000 foreign born populations in Turkey.[130] A similar pattern is reflected in data on residence permits. From 2000 to 2010, the number of residence permits granted to foreigners annually increased merely from 160.000 to 200.000. There has been a steady increase since then, with 460.000 permits being granted in 2016[131], the top ten recipient nationalities being: Iraq, Syria, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Russian Federation, Afghanistan, Georgia, Uzbekistan, Iran and Ukraine.

For several decades already, Turkey has also been at the centre of different refugee movements. Following the Islamic revolution in Iran in 1979, Turkey adopted a policy enabling Iranians to enter the country without visa for a temporary stay. It is estimated that around 1.5 million Iranians benefitted from this arrangement between 1980-1991 and that most moved onwards to third countries (Kirişçi 2007). In 1991 and 1994, 460.000 Kurds from Iraq and 25.000 Bosnians were hosted in refugee camps along the Western and Eastern borders of Turkey. An overwhelming majority returned to their countries after the conflict ended (ibid). In December 2016, the United Nations Commissioner for Refugees recorded close to 246.000 asylum seekers

[130] In 2000, 50 countries were listed; the top ten were Germany, Bulgaria, Northern Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Russia, Holland, France, USA, Saudi Arabia and England. This shows a shift away from the prevalence of 'Turkish' populations in the country's immigrant stock, as the European countries listed in the 2000 census include many ethnic Turks who had to give up their Turkish nationalities.

[131] 2016 figures available online at: *http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik6/ikamet-izinleri_363_378_4709_icerik*

and more than 45.000 refugees, primarily from Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran and Somalia.[132] These figures exclude the massive influx of Syrian refugees to Turkey in recent years, who are hosted under a separate scheme outlined by the Turkish government. In 2014 there were 225 thousand registered Syrians; in 2017 this figure has reached a dramatic 2.9 million people.

Given its geographical location, Turkey has also become a country of destination and transit for irregular migrants. In 1998, 30.000 persons were apprehended in Turkey for having an irregular status (e.g. Illegal entry or exit), which peaked to 95.000 in 2000, then declined steadily down to 40.000 in 2013, which can be linked with increasing border control efforts of Turkish authorities and collaborations with the EU. In 2015, however apprehensions peaked to 146.000, and further up to 174.000 in 2016, linked with the influx of refugees trying to cross Turkey's Western borders along the Mediterranean. In 2008, 25 per cent of apprehended persons were citizens of the Former Soviet Union (e.g. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation and Ukraine) and close to 50 per cent from the Middle East, Asia and Africa (e.g. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Mauritania, Somalia or Syria) (Icduygu and Biehl 2012). Related again to the Mediterranean influx, in 2016 Syria, Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan formed over 85 per cent of all apprehended irregular migrants.[133]

Based on similar data as above, Düvell (2014) concludes that immigrants (1.4 million) constitute 1.93 per cent of Turkey's population (75 million) using World Bank estimates, 2.5 per cent if

[132] Between 1997-2007, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) annually received an average of 5000 asylum applications, consisting mainly of Iraqi and Iranian application (Içduygu & Biehl 2013). In 2012 alone, 14.000 asylum applications were received, including now also sizable numbers of Afghan and Somali asylum seekers. This figure jumped dramatically to 236 thousand in 2016 due to large groups of Iraqi and Afghan refugee arrivals. Though comparatively small in numbers, the breadth of refugee sending countries has also increased, including especially many African countries such as Sudan, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Congo, Guinea, Ivory Coast etc. Monthly statistics are available on the UNHCR website for between 2012 and 2016. http://www.unhcr.org/turkey/home.php?lang=en&page=5

[133] Calculated by author based on figures available at: http://www.goc.gov.tr/icerik3/duzensiz-goc_363_378_4710

taking UN figures, 4.1 per cent if refugees included (3.2 million), or 4.8-5.3 per cent if irregular migrants added.

Appendix 5: Informal economies of Gedikpaşa and Laleli

Müftüoğlu's (2005) meticulous research on the shoe sector in Gedikpaşa points to significant characteristics of the economy of this locality more generally, which is the predominance of labour intensive production works. Of all workplaces in Gedikpaşa, 64 per cent were linked with the shoe sector, and of these 76.5 per cent were manufacturers with remaining being traders (e.g. stores selling supplies and shoes). Among the 36 per cent workplaces involved in sectors other than shoes, the prevalence of manufacturers again is notable (70.3 per cent in slippers, bags, textile and leather garments, the rest being trading stores for these items, or services like cafeterias, electricians, banks, etc.).

Another significant point highlighted in Müftüoğlu's (2005) study is that the vast majority of shoe manufacturers in Gedikpaşa are small in scale or do piece work (78 per cent),[134] which characterizes it as a *fason ekonomisi* (contract economy). These workplaces carry out labour intensive work, have limited capital and are unable to grow because of dependency relations formed with main manufacturers and traders determining models and amounts, which also shift according to seasons and trends. Because of such fluctuations and the fact that payments are piece based, employment in these workplaces is almost entirely informal. For this reason,

[134] There are several steps to producing a shoe, some requiring mastery and technological equipment, others simply intensive labour. Small-scale producers in Gedikpaşa generally carry out the first and final stages of production, entailing cutting of shoe uppers, final mounting and control, while piece workers carry out intermediary stages, such as different stitching processes and heal mounting. For a more detailed description see Müftüoğlu (2005: 99-105).

workers often see their jobs in the shoe sector as being only temporary: In Müftüoğlu's survey 48.6 per cent of workers responded in this way, adding that they would quit work if no more production is pending or would change workplace if there is a higher pay (171). Because of such informality, it is a sector that attracts marginalized populations. Müftüoğlu points to the high prevalence of child labour in the shoe production sector, particularly in the piece workshops: of her respondents 64.3 per cent noted that they started working in a shoe workplace between ages 7-14 (2005: 168). Today it is possible to say that undocumented migrants are also significant among the marginalized populations working in this trade.

In the last two decades, informality in the shoe sector of Gedikpaşa has also expanded in scope to include not just labourers but the businesses themselves. In 1999 the licenses of all shoe manufacturers in Gedikpaşa were cancelled. They were ordered to move to the organized industrial sites designated for the shoe sector, Aymakoop and Aykosan, both located in Ikitelli, Istanbul's main industrial zone at the time. Çağlayandereli (2006: 140) notes that only a third left and of those only a third moved to Ikitelli, suggesting that those remaining continued their works informally. In 2009, license cancellation and eviction pressures surfaced again, following a decision by Fatih Municipality declaring Gedikpaşa an urban renewal zone, although no project has been carried out to date. Pınar's (2010) short photo-documentary about Gedikpaşa's shoe tradesmen points to why employers are so reluctant to move their workshops elsewhere.[135] As already pointed out in Müftüoğlu's 1994 study, it is to do with the prevalence of small-scale traders, piece work and their dependency relations with main manufacturers and traders, who are also mainly locally based but do not face the same eviction pressures. In Pinar's video a

[135] Fatih Pınar, June 2010, *Gedikpaşa Ayakkabi Esnafi.* Availlable at: https://vimeo.com/13021597 (Accessed 19 May 2017)

workshop owner comments: 'Here 80-90% of bosses are doing work with small money. If you go to AYMAKOOP, you need a car. You have to carry materials back and forth. If they send wholesalers and suppliers there, we will also follow them one by one. But their power only works on the poor fellows, on those who have a capital of just 5 TL, 10 TL.' Another shoe workshop owner states: 'I give 70 per cent of the merchandise I produce to Laleli. I receive a phone call and in 10 minutes I send them. If I were in Ikitelli it would take two hours to bring. A customer will not wait for you. Those over there (in Ikitelli) went bankrupt because they could not maintain their relations with Laleli.'

As alluded to in this last comment, the on-going prevalence of workshops in Gedikpaşa, today not only in shoes, but also bags, textile and leather garments, is closely linked with Laleli, which remains a leading market place for the international trading phenomenon termed in Turkish as *bavul ticareti* (suitcase trade). In the 1980s and 1990s, it started initially at a small scale, with tourists traveling in busses, buying wholesale textiles and garments that they filled in sacks and suitcases, which they sold at retail markets back home. Then it became much more organized, with big traders also entering the market, who bought large amounts of textiles and sent their purchases by air shipment, which then entered wholesale markets back home. At its peak in the mid 1990s the volume of suitcase trade was estimated to have reached 10 billion Dollars, a fourth of Turkey's total exports (Yükseker 2004: 15). Though not to the same degree, today Laleli still remains a central hub for international traders visiting Istanbul, despite growing competition from China. There are also other hubs for such trading in Istanbul today, such as Osmanbey, Merter and Zeytinburnu, but as a representative of the Association of Laleli Industrialists and Business Men (LASIAD) commented to me, Laleli holds on to the leading position as it is like a one stop shop where all needs are met, including accommodation,

entertainment, shipping and transfers, offering the added value of being located within walking distance of Istanbul's top tourist attractions.[136] Its customer profile has also diversified; the LASIAD representative estimated that the Former Soviet Union countries now hold 60% of the share of Laleli exports (the biggest still being Russia, followed by Ukraine and Kazakhstan), followed by 20% each for the Middle East and Africa.

Like Gedikpaşa, the Laleli economy is characterized by informal practices at all stages, from manufacturing and wholesale in Turkey to international shipping and wholesale/retail sale in destination country. The question of how to formalize the Laleli market is one that periodically resurfaces. Yükseker mentions one idea that emerged in the mid 1990s, which was to declare Laleli a 'Special Economic Zone.' But it was quickly disqualified as its location in the heart of the city would make it physically impossible to separate and the government was unwilling to make such an investment when the future of the trade was unknown. But observers of the market like the Istanbul Chamber of Commerce recognized that Laleli had become a 'de facto free zone.' Formalizing the Laleli market is also a political risk given the extent of its reach. The LASIAD representative commented to me: 'Laleli is a locomotive of the country's economy. The tradesmen here are like a mosaic, coming from all corners of the country. Hence the money that comes from the pockets of the foreigners gets redistributed to all corners of the country.'

The role and position of the shops in Laleli is notable for understanding the market's popularity. As Yükseker explains, shopkeepers in Laleli can better be described as *komisyoncu* (brokers) who mediate between manufacturers, such as those in Gedikpaşa, and traders. In the words of a shoe manufacturer that Yükseker quotes, 'they buy what they can sell; they don't sell what they

[136] The LASIAD representative commented that there are currently around 500-600 hotels in Laleli, which are all located within the shopping district where there is around 4000-5000 stores. He also noted the advantage of having the shipping companies nearby so that traders can actually see their shipments being packaged and sent.

buy' (p. 78). This aspect, combined with the fact that informality is permitted makes Laleli a market that is easy to enter. One does not need large capital to start up a business. Just a small shop with a few items to display is sufficient, astronomic rents being the only handicap. While business in Laleli is extremely volatile and price sensitive due to items being traded in Dollars and cash, it's popularity does not seize. Eder and Öz refer to a local businessman who went bankrupt twice in Laleli, yet still would not consider leaving the market, as profit margins are substantially higher than the domestic market, and is convinced from experience that it will eventually pick up again (2010: 98).

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