

HOW TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY: PSYCHOGEOGRAPHIC EXPLORATIONS
OF A PHOTOGRAPHER IN ISTANBUL

by
MUHİTTİN EREN SULAMACI

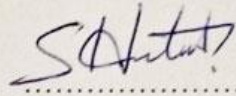
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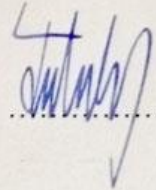
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ABSTRACT

HOW TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY: PSYCHOGEOGRAPHIC EXPLORATIONS OF A PHOTOGRAPHER IN ISTANBUL

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M.A. THESIS, August 2016

Thesis Supervisor: Asst. Prof. Hüseyin Selçuk Artut

Keywords: psychogeography, photography, flâneur, urban exploration, artistic research

This thesis is studied and created on the purpose of accompanying to the authors exhibition *How to Disappear Completely* and should not be utilised independently from the exhibition. the research aims to examine interdisciplinarity between psychogeography and photography focusing on the importance and continuity of the process itself through the artistic creation; rather than a concrete and complete work and destination. Expanding with the investigation of ideas and essential and artistic traditions starting from 18th century till 1950's, the attempt of this research is to comprehend psychogeography as a wide resource through the artistic practice in such as painting, literature and more interdependent roots and genres, especially photography. In consideration of process of artistic creation, as a practice-led research, this text wishes and aims both to argue and promote psychogeographic urban exploration could be a great basic method of creation for the photography artists, starting to address the question to the artist himself/herself and ongoing discovery of getting lost and the process of creation. In this context, the experimental process of the exhibition, *How to Disappear Completely*, will also be exposed and manifested through this research as a precise provision of the main purpose 'the artistic process' again.

ÖZET

TAMAMEN NASIL KAYBOLUNUR?: BİR FOTOĞRAFÇININ İSTANBUL'DA PSİKOCOĞRAFİK KEŞİFLERİ

MUHİTTİN EREN SULAMACI

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Anahtar Kelimeler: psikocoğrafya, fotoğraf, flâneur, kent keşifi, artistik araştırma

Bu tez, somut ve sonlandırılmış bir eser yaratma ve mutlak bir varış noktasına ulaşma arzusu ve amacından arınmış olarak, özellikle sanatsal yaratım sürecinin kendisinin önemine ve sürdürülebilirliğine odaklanarak psikocoğrafya kavramı ve fotoğraf sanatının disiplinlerarası ilişkisini incelemektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu çalışma yazarın Tamamen Nasıl Kaybolunur? isimli bireysel sergisine ve serginin sanatsal yaratım sürecine eşlik etmesi amacıyla oluşturulmuştur ve sergiden bağımsız değerlendirilmemelidir.

Bu tezin teşebbüsü, 18. yüzyılda başlayıp 1950'li yıllara dek genişleyerek devam eden düşünce yapıları ve sanatsal gelenekleri kapsayarak, psikocoğrafya kavramını fotoğraf, resim, edebiyat gibi çeşitli sanatsal yaratım süreçleri ile ilişkilendirerek değerlendirmeyi önerir. Kent kavramı ve kent yaşamını da psikocoğrafyanın terimsel ve deneysel bilincinde keşfetmeyi hedefleyen geniş bir zemin ve sanatsal üretim metodu olabileceği incelemesini amaçlar. Bu bağlamda, yazarın Tamamen Nasıl Kaybolunur? isimli bireysel sergisinin yaratım süreci de bu tez aracılığıyla aydınlanır ve sergiye, teze ve yaşama dair aslanan amacın sürecin kendisinin olduğu koşulunu ortaya çıkarır.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------|
| SI | Situationist International |
| LI | Letterist International |
| IMIB | The Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus |

1. INTRODUCTION

Istanbul has been such city that urbanisation and city planning have been driven by capitalistic desires since early years of the Turkish Republic. Especially in last decade, under the name of urban renewal and especially third bridge which will be partially completed by the time of this exhibition causing major shifts in terms of everyday life and environment. The exhibition, *How to Disappear Completely* and its artistic process are the author's take on the issues of urbanism in Istanbul.

In his seminal book, *Towards a Philosophy of Photography*, Vilém Flusser argues on the transforming effects of the documentary mode of photography, and says:

'Both those taking snaps and documentary photographers, however, have not understood 'information'. What they produce are camera memories, not information, and the better they do it, the more they prove the victory of the camera over the human being' (Flusser 2013).

In this context, *How to Disappear Completely* wishes to approach the city and everyday life, in order to excavate and hoping to reflect what is humane, by the time of massive transformation of the environment. *How to Disappear Completely* seeks for an answer to a question which is asked by the author to the author himself. All these happening, all these happened, and probably will be continued to happen; by the time of my passerby in this city, what is happening to me at the time of destruction and construction?

The great substance of this thesis is created and realised itself simultaneously and/or after my experiences based on cycling through different counties of Istanbul: mainly

Kadıköy and Sarıyer.

The research on psychogeography, which juxtaposes psychology and geography, appeared as a method in order to reveal subjective and individual qualities of urban experience. Thus, series of psychogeographic explorations conducted within the various areas of Istanbul. In this point of view, the experimental artistic process of *How to Disappear Completely* will be the focus point, right along with the side works which lead to the final exhibition. Inspired by psychogeographic ideas and traditions, *How to Disappear Completely* consists of documents, images and objects which were created / gathered during psychogeographic drifts around Istanbul right along with artistic expressions which were produced by the light of these findings.

Thus, in the first chapter, we depart from predecessors of the concept of psychogeography; tracing their approaches and responses towards the modern city. Then, we continue to explore psychogeography within the theories of Situationist International (SI) where the term psychogeography is theorised and put into practice. In chapter two, we investigate overlapping methods and attitudes of psychogeography and photographic arts. Finally, in chapter three, we examine the artistic process of *How to Disappear Completely* within the acquired context.

By doing so, this thesis, as practice-led research, wishes to promote psychogeographic urban exploration as a method of creation for photographers.

2. PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The term, Psychogeography, first put forward by Guy Debord at the second issue of *Potlatch*, as Debord stated: ‘psychogeography sets for itself the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organised or not, on the emotions and behaviour of individuals’ (Debord 1955).

The term seems to be dedicated to Situationist theory, nevertheless, ideas surrounding psycho-geography resonates in the time since early 18th century to today. Thus, before we investigate psychogeography through surrounding ideas and theories of Situationist International (SI), in first section we will look for predecessors of the term: such as Thomas De Quincey’s drug induced experiences; William Blake’s wanderings in London; Baudelaire’s figure of *flâneur* to Walter Benjamin’s thoughts on arcades of Paris.

By doing so, this chapter aims to serve as a base level of understanding towards psychogeographic experience. An experience that ‘may usefully be viewed less as the product of a particular time and place than as the meeting point of a number of ideas and traditions with interwoven histories’ (Coverly 2006). In this chapter, the author will investigate pre-situationist artists, thinkers and their work in order to reveal common methods of production and thinking in opposition to modern urbanism and status quo.

2.1 Pre- Situationist Ideas and Traditions

As a children of a wealthy family, Thomas De Quincey wrote his observations about poverty and city in the book 'Confessions of an Opium Eater'. Classic urban psychogeography could almost be said to begin- retrospectively, and from a Situationist- influenced perspective- with Thomas De Quincey (Baker 2003). Merlin Covery (2006), in his book 'Psychogeography', considers De Quincey as a pioneer of urban wanderers by saying, 'De Quincey is a prototype for the obsessive drifter, allowing his imagination to shape and direct the perception of his environment; his purposeless drifting at odds with the commercial traffic and allying him to the invisible underclass whose movements map the chaotic and labyrinthine aspects of the city' (2006). Covery suggests that we shouldn't consider De Quincey's book 'Confessions of an English Opium-Eater' as an explanation of drug addiction with surrounding negative thoughts, but instead favours De Quincey's use of drugs as a catalysing factor that enables him to explore the boundaries of his imagination and drives him to night walks with a fantastic and uncanny perception.

'Unattributed' writer of 'Unitary Urbanism at the end of the 1950s' declares De Quincey's real life from 1804- 1812 as precursor of the drive (n.d. 1959), which is a method of urban wandering that put forward by SI and he/she quotes from Confession of an Opium Eater, suggesting that we should follow his spirit:

'Seeking ambitiously for a northwest passage, instead of circumnavigating all the capes and headlands I had doubled in my outward voyage, I came suddenly upon such knotty problems of alleys . . . I could almost have believed, at times, that I must be the first discoverer of some of these terrae incognitae, and doubted whether they had yet been laid down in the modern charts of London' (1959).

Another important individual, in terms of walking and observing city, is poet and painter William Blake. One of the significant contemporary psychogeographers, Iain

Sinclair defined William Blake as ‘god father of Psychogeography’ (Spencer 2000) and says;

‘William Blake of Soho. Child Blake seeing angels in a tree on Peckham Rye. Naked Blake reciting Paradise Lost in a leafy Lambeth bower. Blake the engraver, in old age, walking to Hampstead. Blake singing on his deathbed in Fountain's Court. Blake, lying with his wife Catherine, in Bunhill Fields. Blake the prophet. Blake the psychogeographer...’ (2000).

Blake’s poems heavily influenced by his walks throughout London, Blake says in his epic ‘Jerusalem’; ‘My streets are my imagination.’ It was true that Blake was an urban wanderer who explores lower strata of London and transforms these feelings into his utopian world view through poems and drawings. Blake wrote:

*‘The fields from Islington to Marybone,
To Primrose Hill and Saint Johns Wood;
Were builded over with pillars of gold,
And there Jerusalems pillars stood’* (as cited in Covery 2006).

These new topographies in his poetry also are connected to the facts of everyday life of London. To Pramod Nayar (2014), Blake’s poem, ‘London’ depicts a surveillance story. Nayar underlines that there are three human ‘bodies’ that are being surveilled in the poem and all of them ‘members of the lower strata of society: a chimney sweeper, a discharged and perhaps disabled soldier ... , and a harlot.’ Nayar relates surveillance to social sorting. In this regard, the narrator or the surveiller walks through the city and spots ‘marks of woe’, ‘marks of weakness’. Blake also depicts three different urban spaces in relation to three ‘bodies’; chimney sweeper- church, soldier- palace, harlot-street. Collapsing psychologies of ‘bodies’ into urban spaces, Blake draws ‘London’s cartography of vulnerability.’ In a way, Blake criticises political authorities; ‘we can think of the streets, palace, and church as associated with conditions of homelessness, sickness, and disability, not with authority, freedom of movement, salvation, or pleasure’ (Nayar 2014).

Blake’s position represents two important qualities of psychogeographic experience; emphasis on imagination and individuality; and through that an embedded ‘political radicalism’. As Covery puts it:

'Blake remaps the city as he walks its streets, but if the city is to be rebuilt as Jerusalem, then it must first be destroyed, and his poems abound with apocalyptic imagery that is shaped, not merely by an anti-rationalism and anti-materialism, but also by a strong sense of political radicalism that stands in opposition to authority of every kind' (Covery 2006).

Similarly, American writer Edgar Allan Poe publishes his short story, 'The Man of the Crowd', in 1840. In the book, nameless narrator of the story drawn to follow a man through streets of London. The narrator becomes a curious follower as he noticed mystery of the man. He follows through the streets of London from downtown to suburbs, from day to night. While the idea of aimless stroller in De Quincey's writings reflects subjective experiences of the urban environment, Poe depicts a fiction story has no clear ending, allowing the reader to get moved by the mystery of the followed man, the curiosity of the narrator and the unexpectedness of the story.

Inspired by Poe's story, Charles Baudelaire in his essay, 'The Painter of Modern Life', defines a Parisian figure: Flâneur. Baudelaire writes:

'The crowd is his element, as the air is that of the birds and water of fishes. His passion and his profession are to become one flesh with the crowd. For the perfect flâneur, for a passionate spectator, it is an immense joy to set up house in the heat of the multitude, amid the ebb and flow of movement, in the midst of the fugitive and the infinite. To be away from home and yet to find oneself everywhere at home; to see the world, to be at the centre of the world, and yet remain hidden from the world...' (Baudelaire 1995).

For Baudelaire's solitary stroller, the crowd was signifying home, also a state of mind which excels both in isolation and contemplation. For Walter Benjamin who underlines act of walking by relating Baudelaire's figure of flâneur, arcades of the Paris were the habitat of the flâneur. Because, the beginning of the 19th century Paris was a medieval city with narrow streets, leaving little or no room for flâneur to stroll. As Benjamin states:

'The flâneur goes botanizing on the asphalt. But even in those days it was not possible to stroll about everywhere in the city. Before Haussmann [remodelled the city] wide pavements were rare, and the narrow ones afforded little protection from vehicles. Strolling could hardly have assumed the importance it did without the arcades' (Benjamin 1999).

While industrialism and capitalism prevail in every aspect of daily life and city in 19th century; flâneur, the independent observer strolls through uncharted areas of Paris, contradicts zeitgeist that dictates efficiency, speed, mass production and consumption; walks slowly, in a way he consumes city through random encounters and observation, but never pays bills.

Benjamin argued on flâneur as an unconventional solitary stroller. In the wanderlust Rebecca Solnit speaks about flâneur detachment from society through Benjamin's ideas:

'Benjamin himself never clearly defined the flâneur, only associated him with certain things: with leisure, with crowds, with alienation or detachment, with observation, with walking, particularly with strolling in the arcades—from which it can be concluded that the flâneur was male, of some means, of a refined sensibility, with little or no domestic life'
(Solnit 2000).

Within the crowd, the pace of the flâneur often mentioned by quoting Benjamin's 'Arcades': 'The flâneurs liked to have the turtles set the pace for them. If they had their way, progress would have been obliged to accommodate itself to this pace.' (Benjamin 1999) This interesting expression of the flâneur, also leads us another aspect of the figure: An idealised, imaginary character who arguably exist in crowds of 19th century's Paris. According to Solnit, there is no other reference to this fashion of taking a turtle for a walk. 'The only problem with the flâneur is that he did not exist, except as a type, an ideal, and a character in literature... no one quite fulfilled the idea of the flâneur, but everyone engaged in some version of flâneury' (Solnit 2000).

The idea of intellectual resistance prevails with the flâneur as well as Blake's poems. Baudelaire portrayed the figure of flâneur as a response to urban renewal project of Baron Haussmann who delegated by III. Napoleon in order to rebuild Paris. Haussmann's destruction of the medieval warrens of streets and his creation of the grand boulevards was a counter-revolutionary tactic, an attempt to make the city penetrable by armies, indefensible by citizens (Solnit 2000).

The flâneur is elusive to the point that he cannot be located at all, but the search for this

figure itself takes on the characteristics of flâneury and offers new ways of experiencing the city (2000).

2. 2. Situationist International and Psychogeography

*'Our only concern is real life; we care nothing
about the permanence of art or of anything else.
Eternity is the grossest idea a person can conceive
of in connection with his acts.'*

-

Guy Debord, Report on the Construction of Situations

The Situationist International (SI) (1957–1972) was a relatively small yet influential Paris-based group that had its origins in the avant-garde artistic tradition (Matthews 2005). The organisation emerged by combination of Letterist International (LI), The Movement for an Imaginist Bauhaus (IMIB).

The root of LI, Letterists was originally a group of avant-garde artists following in the tradition of the Dadaists and Surrealists clustered around Isadore Isou, whose desire to reduce poetry to the letter gave them the name Letterists (Matthews 2005). Isadore Isou was also a mentor and inspiration for Guy Debord who will eventually become the leading protagonist in SI's theory. Isou's aim was 'to complete the self-destruction of artistic forms initiated by Baudelaire' (Jappe 1962). By doing so, for Letterists, letter became an inter-disciplinary vehicle; 'suitable for use in collage', 'a sound element', and 'suitable for use in onomatopoeic declamation' (Jappe 1962). Until the foundation of SI, Letterists worked on the experimental methods of artistic production towards poetry and film. After a divergence within the group, Debord and group of Letterists founded Letterist International and published a newspaper called 'Potlach', in 1952. During the years 1952- 1957, the most fundamental concepts of the SI had been conceived and developed, often under the influence of the Letterists (Barnard 2004).

IMIB founded in Switzerland in 1953 as a tendency aimed at forming a united organisation capable of promoting an integral revolutionary cultural approach. (Jorn 1957) The movement was a follow-up of CoBrA (1948- 1951) whose aim 'recover the revolutionary spirit of Surrealism through an art that was expressionist in character' (Jappe 1962). One of the founders of the movement, Asger Jorn criticises discourse of the Bauhaus in terms of 'functional' and 'industrial' approaches towards artistic production (Barnard 2004). He defines the aim of the IMIB as an answer to a question; 'where and how to find a justified place for artists in the machine age' (Jorn 1957). To Jorn, 'artistic research is identical to human science ... [and] this research should be carried out by artists with the assistance of scientists (Jorn 1957). For this purpose, 'Experimental Laboratory' of IMIB founded in Italy in 1955. After LI joined the laboratory, the contacts between members of IMIB and LI lead to the foundation of SI in 1957.

From 1957 to 1969, SI published twelve issues of their journal 'Internationale Situationniste' (IS). Although the situationist activities based in Paris, in fact, the members of SI were originating from all over the Europe; from Italy, France, Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, Holland, Algeria, and Scandinavia. Influenced by Marx and Hegel, they developed a political theory that is against the discourses of capitalism; consumerism, the banality of everyday life, and urbanism. Apart from the journal, 'Internationale Situationniste', '... Debord's *The Society of the Spectacle* and *Vaneigem's The Revolution of Everyday Life* were published, both providing brilliant critiques of modern capitalism from a situationist perspective' (Matthews 2005).

2.2.1. Main concepts

In his seminal book, 'Society of Spectacle' (1967) Guy Debord declares a paradigm shift of human psyche, to him, early stages of industrialism, with the mass production of commodities, changed everyday life experience from 'being' into 'having'. Debord claims that today's social life which is 'completely taken over by the accumulated

products of the economy, entails a generalised shift from having to appearing.’

To him, this change in human psyche conducted by tools of modern capitalism. For this purpose, ‘spectacle’ is the mediation of real life experiences through advertising and other mass media devices. In abstract form, ‘the spectacle is not a collection of images; rather, it is a social relationship between people that is mediated by images.’ In concrete form, ‘spectacle is the expression of estrangement, of alienation between man and man’ which serves to the unity of capitalistic mode of production. For Debord, this alienation leads to a system of separations: ‘The whole life of those societies in which modern conditions of production prevail presents itself as an immense accumulation of spectacles. All that once was directly lived has become mere representation.’ Spectacle excels both in the separation of individual experiences of life and unity of the modern capitalism in which ‘the unity it imposes is merely the official language of generalised separation.’

Another separation occurred through re-conception of time; separation of work and leisure. ‘The social image of the consumption of time is for its part exclusively dominated by leisure time and vacations moments portrayed, like all spectacular commodities, at a distance, and as desirable by definition.’ Debord saw leisure time something given to proletariat as an illusion of ‘liberation from work’ which is ‘forcibly channelled into the global construction of the spectacle.’ In this sense, tourism, ‘pseudo-travel’ is one of the biggest modes of capitalistic mode of production where ‘human circulation considered as something to be consumed ... to go and see what has been [banal]’ (1967).

In 1953, the member of LI, Ivan Chitchevlov laid the foundations of SI’ s criticism towards urbanism. *Formulary for a New Urbanism* (Chitchevlov 1958) begins with a complaint: ‘We are bored in the city, there is no longer any Temple of the Sun.’ Chitchevlov criticises hypnotising effect of commodity consumption and ‘provide[s] a familiar outline of how the city must be rebuilt upon new principles that replace our mundane and sterile experiences with a magical awareness of the wonders that surround us’ (Coverly 2006). Chitchevlov frames rather a surreal city:

‘Everyone will live in his own personal ‘cathedral’, so to speak. There will

be rooms more conducive to dreams than any drug, and houses where one cannot help but love.' (Chtcheglov 1958).

Similarly, Debord was also concerned with the urbanism in terms of banal experiences it acquired. Debord considers urbanism as a mode of creating 'pseudo-community' under the service of production and consumption desires of modern society. While Chtcheglov's 'cathedrals' appear as a solution to alienated human condition, in Debord's theory of spectacle, 'cathedrals' stressed as formulations of isolation. Debord scrutinises current urbanism by means of isolation which leads to control of society:

'Factories and cultural centers, holiday camps and housing developments ... pursue the isolated individual right into the family cell ... [where] the spectacle's message ensures that his isolation is filled with the dominant images — images that indeed attain their full force only by virtue of his isolation' (Debord 1967).

Debord claims that 'we already live in the era of the self-destruction of the urban environment'. A new, modernist architecture and urban planning had divided the city into functional zones, dominated by the automobile and the freeway, and organised space around home consumption and giant shopping malls (or 'distribution factories') (Basset 2004).

As a member of SI that desires a classless society, Debord emphasises a class division masked by spectacle, Debord says:

'The unreal unity the spectacle proclaims masks the class division on which the real unity of the capitalist mode of production is based. What obliges the producers to participate in the construction of the world is also what separates them from it. What brings together men liberated from local and national limitations is also what keeps them apart. What pushes for greater rationality is also what nourishes the irrationality of hierarchical exploitation and repression. What creates society's abstract power also creates its concrete unfreedom' (Debord 1967).

Society of Spectacle framed problematics of everyday life, time, history and culture that laid the foundations by pre-situationist avant-garde movements such as Dada, Surrealism, Letterism, IMIB. Theories of 'spectacle' were the pinpoint of SI's societal and political critique right along with Raoul Vaneigem's *The Revolution of Everyday*

Life. SI critiqued a homogenous society that is dictated by modern capitalism, alienation of and banality of everyday life experiences, suppressed subjective activity and individuality. The only legitimate tactics of revolutionary criticism are therefore those which heighten awareness, raising the desire for autonomous action, self-realisation, and subjective expression denied by commodity relations (Bassett 2004).

2.2.2. Psychogeography within the context of SI's political action

Report for Construction of Situations, which was prepared by Debord for the founding meeting of SI in 1957, covers fundamentals of SI's methodology and action in opposition to spectacular society. Debord says:

'Our central idea is the construction of situations, that is to say, the concrete construction of momentary ambiances of life and their transformation into a superior passionate quality' (Debord 1957).

Such transformation should be formed around the theory what they called 'unitary urbanism'. Unitary urbanism is 'the use of all arts and techniques as means contributing to the composition of a unified milieu'(Debord 1957). Unitary urbanism is an experimental approach that is not essentially formal concern, or against the functionality of architecture. Unitary urbanism suggests that human emotions and behaviours should be the main concern of building and planning cities, while modern capitalistic urbanism focused on the concepts of production, consumption speed, efficiency, and control. As Debord put it:

'The comrades who call for a new, free architecture must understand that this new architecture will primarily be based not on free, poetic lines and forms — in the sense that today's "lyrical abstract" painting uses those terms — but rather on the atmospheric effects of rooms, hallways, streets — atmospheres linked to the activities they contain' (1957).

In this context, Psychogeographic experience again comes into service as intellectual rivalry in opposition to status quo; following the themes of its precursors, play,

experiment, walking and standing as an opposition; and seeks for an individual and subjective experience of urban environment. Debord explains the methodology:

'The word psychogeography, suggested by an illiterate Kabyle as a general term for the phenomena a few of us were investigating around the summer of 1953, is not too inappropriate. It is not inconsistent with the materialist perspective that sees life and thought as conditioned by the objective nature. Geography, for example, deals with the determinant action of general natural forces, such as soil composition or climatic conditions, on the economic structures of a society, and thus on the corresponding conception that such a society can have of the world. Psychogeography sets for itself the study of the precise laws and specific effects of the geographical environment, whether consciously organized or not, on the emotions and behavior of individuals. The charmingly vague adjective psychogeographical can be applied to the findings arrived at by this type of investigation, to their influence on human feelings, and more generally to any situation or conduct that seems to reflect the same spirit of discovery' (Debord 1955).

In SI's theory, psychogeography became a methodology of a systematic study. Psychogeography is, for Debord, a pure science, and like the skilled chemist, the psychogeographer is able both to identify and to distil the varied ambiances of the urban environment (Covery 2006). Such distillation, according to Debord, promises to develop 'hypotheses on the structure of a situationist city', whose elementary unit is not 'the house' but 'the architectural complex', which is built in relevance to human behaviour and emotions, not intention of meeting the needs of production and consumption (Debord 1957).

The theories of SI expand through the legacy of subjective and individual urban experience which was explored by predecessors, especially avant-garde movements. It aims to apply the implications of psycho-geographical research to urbanism; parallel to this, it aims to 'expand the non-mediocre part of life, to reduce empty moments of life as much as possible' (Debord 1957).

SI separates itself from its predecessors with a few critiques. Compared to surrealist methods of urban experience which focused on play, on the search of subconscious, uncanny, and mysterious, they embrace urban space with all variables that it contains. For them, their aim is to define 'ambiances' and passages of 'ambiances' whether space is mysterious or mundane. The findings will be the basis of the structure of 'situationist

city' which continuously evaluated by similar methods.

How to conduct psychogeographic research is defined and developed around the theory of 'dérive' which is a strolling method that theorised by SI.

Dérive is 'a mode of experimental behaviour linked to the conditions of urban society: a technique of rapid passage through varied ambiances' (Debord 1958). Dérive suggests a dynamic nature of wandering, 'a playful-constructive behaviour' and through these 'rapid passages' it demands self-awareness of urban geography. In this sense, it separates itself from journey or stroll.

Under 'dictatorship of automobile' (Debord 1967) walking appears as resistance, nevertheless, the use of taxis is ok. If doing so, one shouldn't forget the disorientation that brought by using the automobile.

'In a dérive one or more persons during a certain period drop their relations, their work and leisure activities, and all their other usual motives for movement and action, and let themselves be drawn by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there' (Debord 1958). In this regard, Ken Wark (2011) argues that dérive, with its subversive nature, transforms capitalist conception of time space within the realm of urban experience. In capitalism time is divided as work time and leisure time which simultaneously creates 'work space' and 'leisure space'. By dropping work and leisure activities, dérive collapses spaces of capitalistic discourse. By wandering about in the space of the city according to their own sense of time, those undertaking a dérive find other uses for space besides the functional one (Wark 2011). Workers work in the factory, in exchange for leisure time- 'free time'. In leisure time, workers end up with consuming commodities. In this sense, dérive appears in the full sense of the words as 'liberation from work' (Debord 1967). Dérive corresponds 'the practice of lived time, time not divided and accorded a function in advance, a time inhabited neither by workers nor consumers' (1967).

For Covery (2006), the dérive takes the wanderer out of the realm of the disinterested spectator or artistic practitioner and places him in a subversive position as a revolutionary following a political agenda. Letting go with the flow in combination with

the playful, experiential attitude serves a recognisance mission with the purpose of gathering information about the space; and turn them into psycho-geographical maps. In this regard, Covery sees psychogeographer as a soldier, 'an advance guard sent out to observe enemy territory' and he quotes Robert Macfarlane:

'Mapping has always marched in the vanguard of the imperial project, for to map a country is to know it strategically as well as geographically, and therefore to gain logistical power over it' (Macfarlane as cited in Covery 2006).

From a *dérive* point of view cities have psychogeographical contours, with constant currents, fixed points and vortexes that strongly discourage entry into or exit from certain zones (Debord 1958). Psychogeographer's recognisance mission is the distillation and evaluation of these contours.

Transformation of these contours into a psychogeographical map can be observed as an example through 'The Naked City' which is created by the collaboration between Guy Debord and Asger Jorn, in 1957. 'The Naked City' presents a 'renovated cartography', which depicts cut-out sections of Paris and passages between them. The subtitle of the map goes as follows: '[An] illustration of the hypothesis of psychogeographical turntables' (McDonough 1994). Thomas McDonough underlines Debord's appropriation of the term, 'plaque tournante' which 'denotes a railway turntable (a circular revolving platform with a track running along its diameter, used for turning locomotives)' (1994). For Thomas McDonough, this analogy of person as a locomotive, indicates the SI's approach to the city; locomotive's movement is restricted by the 'plaque tornante', so as person's 'movement is restricted by the instrumentalised image of the city propagated under the reign of capital (1994).

For Debord, considering dynamic nature of the theory of unitary urbanism, psychogeographical maps which have no proper readings has to be continuously reworked according to changes in the 'constant currents', 'fixed points', and 'vortexes'. The production of psychogeographical maps may help to clarify certain movements of a sort that, while surely not gratuitous, are wholly insubordinate to the usual directives (Debord 1955).

Within the methodology of Situationist psychogeography, the theory of *dérive* distinguishes itself from Baudelaire's aimless stroller, the *flâneur*. Careless stroller armed with a political agenda, and the city and its quarters are no longer conceived of as spontaneously visible objects but are posited as social constructions through which the *dérive* negotiates while simultaneously fragmenting and disrupting them (Covery 2006).

'*Flâneur*'s ambiguous class position represents a kind of aristocratic holdover (a position that is ultimately recuperated by the bourgeoisie)' says McDonough; but in a *dérive*, a person suspends his/her class relations.

SI's theory refused the creative activity, play or imagination as the dedicated domain to artists, but, instead, they aimed to spread these activities to all spheres of the society and provided tactics and strategies for this purpose. For the first time in the history, walking and urban experience theorised and reinforced with certain practices.

Psychogeography, 'the act of urban wandering, the spirit of political radicalism, allied to a playful sense of subversion and governed by an inquiry into the methods by which we can transform our relationship to the urban environment' (Covery 2006). Moreover, such inquiry, 'psychogeographic experience' may be under the service of a certain political stand (SI) or of an artistic process (William Blake) or both of them in close relation.

3. PSYCHOGEOGRAPHY AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Alongside with the lucid experience of urban life; when we improve flâneur's vision with camera's vision, we may find traces of a crossroads of psychogeography and photographic arts.

'I am kino-eye, I am a mechanical eye. I, a machine, show you the world as only I can see it. Now and forever, I free myself from human immobility, I am in constant motion, I draw near, then away from objects, I crawl under, I climb onto them. I move apace with the muzzle of a galloping horse, I plunge full speed into a crowd... Now I, a camera, fling myself along their resultant, manoeuvring in the chaos of movement, recording movement, starting with movements composed of the most complex combinations... Freed from the rule of sixteen-seventeen frames per second, free of the limits of time space... My path leads to the creation of a fresh perception of the world. I decipher in a new way a world unknown to you.' (Vertov 1984)

This excerpt which resembling a metamorphosis of flâneur into a 'machine', 'a kino-eye', in fact, written by Soviet-Russian Dziga Vertov who is pioneering directors of avant-garde cinema in the beginning of the 20th century. Vertov's silent film *Man with a Movie Camera* arguably mimics gaze of flâneur; drawn into an urban landscape and the encounters it brought about; observes discourses of modern life; the act of walking superseded by a surreal flow.

In fact, flâneur's movement and perception overlaps with street photographers' practice who focus on depicting sceneries of public places. Susan Sontag sees photographers 'as an extension of the eye of the middle-class flâneur...' and writes;

'The photographer is an armed version of the solitary walker reconnoitering, stalking, cruising the urban inferno, the voyeuristic stroller who discovers the city as a landscape of voluptuous extremes. Adept of the joys of watching, connoisseur of empathy, the flaneur finds the world picturesque' (Sontag 1977).

Photographers such as Paul Martin, Arnold Genthe, Charles Nègre photographed streets of London, San Francisco's Chinatown and Paris, respectively, amongst many others (Sontag 1977). Especially, Charles Nègre's photograph, *Chimney Sweep walking* (1851, fig.1), delineates flow of the flâneur's gaze. By the time of the photo is taken, in 1851, photographic technology has certain restrictions; exposure time is relatively longer than desired in order to capture a movement. Nègre make them pose, 'passionate with the idea of movement, he asks the first chimney sweep to position his right foot forward, slightly up and the knee bend in order to mime walking' (Photo Humanist International 2015). Resulting a visualisation in which we may find traces of a moment of De Quincey's drug induced experiences, by the aid of slightly skewed horizon-line, blurry and darkened edges.



fig. 1 *Chimney Sweep Walking*, by Charles Negre, 1851

French photographer Eugène Atget's photographs reveal the spatial presence of streets of Paris at the turn of the 19th century. While he mimics itinerant gaze of flâneur through the shop windows, also Atget focuses on the labyrinths of urban space; alleys, old buildings, parks. Although, the depiction of movement prevailed, unlike to Charles Nègre's focus on human condition, Atget portrays urban landscape, resembling habitat of the flâneur. It becomes apparent when we examine *Shop Sign* (fig.2).



fig. 2 *Shop Sign*, by Eugene Atget, 1899

Narrow streets that mentioned by Benjamin is visible. Thanks to the long exposure, movement of the pedestrians transforms into ghostly expression reminding flâneur's detached existence from society and alienating experience of modern city in which the experience is dictated by architecture and commodity circulation. If flâneur is the embodiment of critical eye of the urban alienation, Lee Friedlander's series of photographs which he took from inside of a car appears as a gaze of a flâneur who surrendered to the 'dictatorship of automobile'. The photo entitled *Massachusetts* (fig.3) echoes Atget's photographs of shop windows. (fig.4) If the first level of alienation occurred in the streets, experiences of using automobile appears as the next.



fig. 3 Massachusetts, by Lee Friedlander, 2007



fig. 4 Storefront, by Eugene Atget, 1925

So that, the photographs of Friedlander visualise a spaceless and timeless social landscape through that experience, although he gives the location and the time info in title of each photograph. When we look at them, we may think that being in an automobile is similar to being exposed to series of images which can be a boring experience. Alienating experience is apparent Andrew Bush's photographic series 66 Drives where he took automobile drivers heading on the road; how Lee Friedlander altered the gaze of the driver.

Technical developments of photographic production have been always an agent of photographic expression. Beginning from the early 20th century, faster exposure times which allows capturing split seconds of a movement/scene results in interest in immediacy, subsequently, resonating through aesthetic preferences of the photographers. One these changes is very well defined by famous street photographer Henri Cartier-Bresson's methodology of 'the decisive moment' which influenced many other 20th century photographers. His artistic process is an emphasis on immediacy of photography. One can say that he reminds a trapper, who waits his victim to fall into the trap. Cartier-Bresson positions himself on a fixed vantage point, and waits his subject in order to perfect his composition. Cartier-Bresson's famous notion of the decisive moment answers to an essentially modern urban condition: only the metropolis contains such a vast amount of chance encounters and only the modern urbanite, who has interiorised the shock experiences of modernity is capable of making the necessary fast and immediate reactions (Warren 2006). It is hard to deny Cartier-Bresson's awareness of space, but his awareness more like spatial rather than emotional, compared to flâneur's sensational approach to the city.

Although, movement practices of flâneur resembles street photographers' movement, the idea of 'letting it go with the flow' muted or at least suppressed, by the act of photographing and its technical and/or aesthetic decisions. However, similar to the flâneur, artists who challenges conventional methods of travelling and experience of space, such as walking with an artistic agenda, rather than using contemporary means of transportation; purposefully making themselves exposed to the modern modes of travelling and/ or urban experience, in order to reveal and/ or express qualities of it.



fig. 5 Untitled from the Last Stop series, by George Georgiou

Artistic process of George Georgiou which he preferred to shot London through the windows of busses is ‘designed to look at the topography and migrations of London: To explore the increasing diversity of a major Western City as the movement of people continues to change both the urban landscape and the community within it (Georgiou n.d.). Georgiou underlines anthropologist Marc Augé’s theory of non-places which defined as ephemeral public spaces that has no meaning, such as motorway, supermarket, or a bus stop; ‘public spaces designed for people to move through in solitude but without isolation’ (Georgiou n.d.). Window of the bus provides an observation method in which the pattern of city planning through the network of buss-lines. So as the flâneur who let himself being exposed to the discourses of modern city with a critical eye, we can see George Georgiou as a modern flâneur who lets himself drawn into chance encounters of public transportation and reveals social landscape of London through it. (fig.5)

As cities have become the cultural backdrops of daily activities for the majority of people in the world, digital information spaces increasingly assume a similar role. (Dörk et al. 2011) While Georgiou’s space of exploration is the public spaces of London, artists who used *Google Street-View* in their artistic process discover modes of ‘information space’. John Rafiman’s ongoing project *9-eyes* (fig.6) is collection of screen-shots from Google Street View in which sometimes uncanny, sometimes poetic



fig. 6 Untitled from the 9-eyes series, by John Rafman

scenes of social landscape are captured. In a way, images echo Blake's 'surveillance poem'. Blurred faces which usually reminds a criminal act adds different mood to the scene. In some photographs, blurry faces make the space more like a crime scene. In some pictures, for example, the picture where children are jumping rope, add an uncanny feeling of the moment which is essentially joyful act in first place. Besides, some images depict a dreamlike, poetic scenery which has no space or time information apparent. Although, he is looking for certain moments, a 'decisive moment' per se, but randomness of the encounters defined by a modern discourse which is Google Street View. All in all, images question ideas of public and private and conception of space through a flâneury activity within the 'information space' of *Google Street View*.

'Sophie Calle works within the lineage of conceptual art, at times recalling the earlier tactics of American conceptual artists of the '60s and '70s Vito Acconci (surveillance) or Douglas Huebler (mapping), she always places herself in the midst of her practice...' (Warren 2006). She talks about her project, *Venetian Suite*: 'In January 1980, I followed a man whom I lost sight of a few minutes later. That very evening quite by chance, he was introduced to me at an opening. I found out he was planning a trip to Venice. I decided to shadow him' (as cited in Trainor 2003). *Venetian Suite* (fig.7) is collection of notes and photographs in which we can observe her pursuit of a man across Europe. We observe city through her desires and emotions, in this regard photographs and notes reminds us Bretton's pursuit of Nadja (or Poe's The Man of the Crowd). Almost only

the one aspect of the story differentiates: Calle's pursuit ends when the man noticed her existence.

Calle's approach similar to a detective that she explored in her work *The Shadow* in 1981. She hires a private detective with the help of her mother. For a day, the detective follows her in various places in the city which has personal significance to her. Consequently, she exhibits three different layers of this experience: the detective's photographs of her, and notes where the detective mentions Calle as 'subject'; her perspective of the journey; photographs of the detective while he shadows her. Complexity of these narratives uncover variety of subjectivity and individuality.

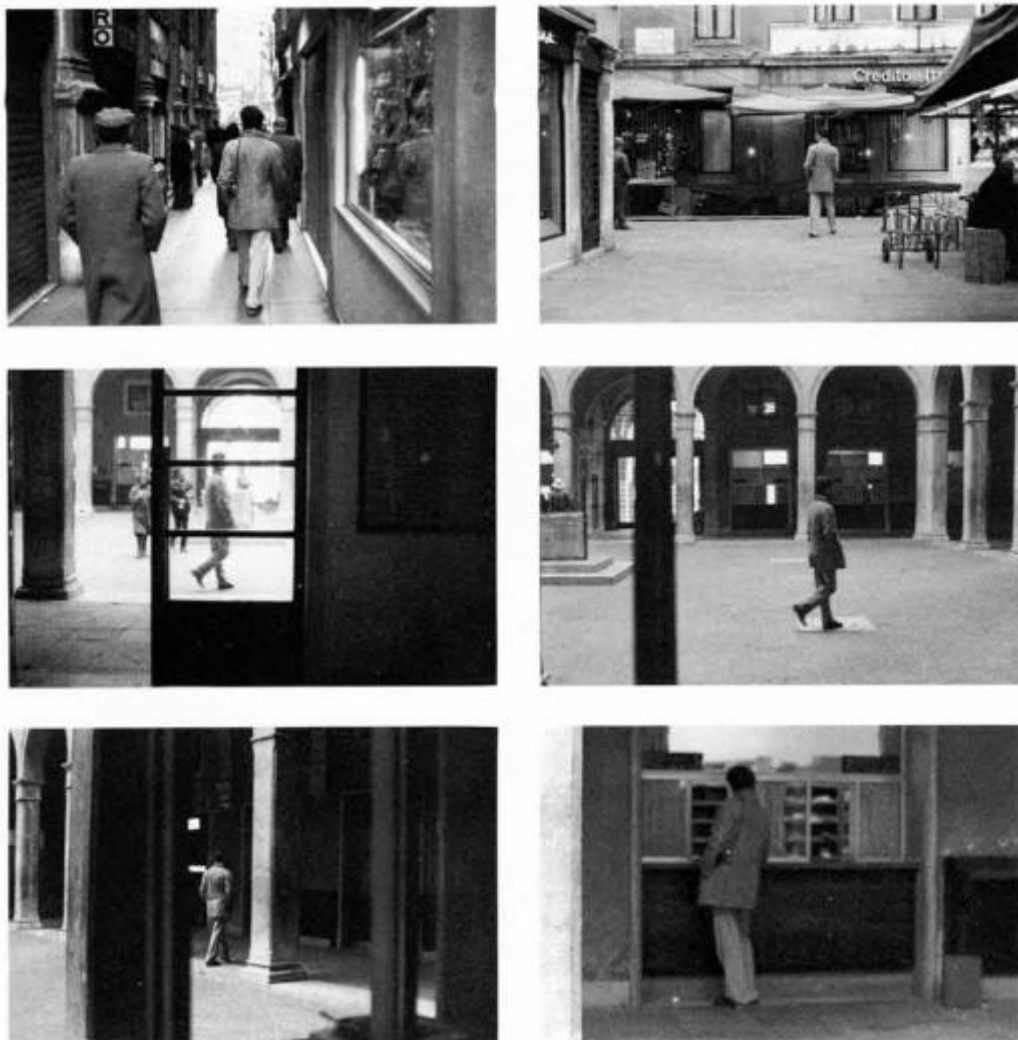


fig. 7 Images from *Venetian Suite*, by Sophie Calle, 1980

Physical and emotional qualities of walking open up new narratives and meaning to Calle's works. In Richard Long's artistic practice, walking becomes art itself not a method. Long says:

'My first work made by walking, in 1967, was a straight line in a grass field [fig. 8], which was also my own path, going 'nowhere'. In the subsequent early map works, recording very simple but precise walks on Exmoor and Dartmoor, my intention was to make a new art which was also a new way of walking: walking as art. Each walk followed my own unique, formal route, for an original reason, which was different from other categories of walking like travelling. Each walk though not by definition conceptual, realised particular idea. Thus walking— as art— provided an ideal means for me to explore relationship between time, distance, geography and measurement' (as cited in O'Rourke 2013).



fig. 8 A Line Made by Walking, by Richard Long, 1967

Long links his practice with the history of walking, such as pilgrimages, wandering Japanese poets (Warren 2006), his practice almost becomes a meditation in which he

finds himself. Long says; 'In some of the road walks I'm simply following an idea. In other kinds of works, the walking can reveal the idea' (O'Rourke 2013). His works covers various forms of expression; text, photography, sculpture, but walking is always in the centre as a pivotal point. Although, his work was considered as Land-art by some domains, but he always refuses it. For Long, process is the core of the work walking through landscape miles and miles, leaving marks is the secondary act. In this sense, his photographs are documents of his marks on earth, marks of his experience. Also, when he put the photographs in a gallery space, the sceneries depicted in them creates an enigmatic presence to the viewer by distancing viewer from the original piece.

Physical experience of the artist becomes focus point in Dutch artist Bas Jan Ader's practice. *Fall* series are video documentation of his performances where he falls from a roof, a tree, and into a canal. Videos appears as an existential quest which seems to be an attempt to understand world through a major phenomenon: gravity. These works are clues of his existential quest that concentrates finding sublime through physical experience. For the purpose of this text, Ader's multi-layered work *In the Search of Miraculous* presents stimulating insights.

First layer of *In the Search of Miraculous* photographs of his performance in which he walked from Los Angeles to the Pacific Ocean at night-time. The performance documented with 18 black and white photographs that the lyrics of music-band Coasters' song Searchin' written on them. Some of the lyrics are as follows: 'Gonna find her/ Gonna find her/ Yeah, I' ve been searching'/ Searchin' every which a-way/ Well, now if I have to swim a river you know I will/ And a if she's a hiding up on a blueberry hill/ Am I gonna find her, you know 'cause I've been searching' / My goodness, searchin' every which a-way.'

Jan Verwoert links romantic cults with modern culture, mainly pop culture. For Verwoert, *In the Search of Miraculous* 'plays on the iconography of a solitary traveller that may initially have been derived from Caspar David Friedrich's paintings of lonely wanderers facing sublime landscapes...' (Verwoert n.d.). It is fair to say that the performance was a travel by means of finding a place on earth. Ader was born in Nazi-occupied Netherlands and eventually migrated to the US to continue his art education.

In this sense, Ader's existential quest in which he explored themes of detachment, loss and grief becomes almost a heroic journey in later stages of the work. His plan was to realise the quintessential sailor's dream, to cross the Atlantic in a one-man yacht, document the voyage and then close the project with a third work, a walk through Amsterdam at night that was to mirror the Los Angeles piece (Verwoert n.d.). On summer of 1975, he sailed to the Atlantic, and unfortunately after three weeks later radio contact is lost with him, eventually his boat found in the Irish coast, his body never found; declared as 'disappeared'.

According to Covery (2006), Debord's statement on psychogeography as 'charmingly vague' has 'allowed so many writers and movements to identify themselves and their work under this label. Perhaps, that's why, Covery expanded his approach to the term as it covers multiple cities, times, and traditions, rather than analysing it from SI's perspective, so I am.

In this chapter, ideas resonating around psychogeography also finds their place in a 'charmingly vague' manner. Nevertheless, in these works, unorthodox methods of the artists who embraced a flâneury activity one way or another welcomes subjective and individual experience and promotes unique narratives and objects.

In order to clear it out, how I embraced 'charmingly vagueness' of the term may be found out with an exercise which was written by Debord in the second issue of Potlatch, entitled *Exercise in Psychogeography*:

*'Piranesi is psycho-geographical in the stairway.
Claude Lorrain is psycho-geographical in the juxtaposition of a palace
neighbourhood and the sea.
The postman Cheval is psycho-geographical in architecture.
Arthur Cravan is psycho-geographical in hurried drifting.
Jacques Vaché is psycho-geographical in dress.
Louis II of Bavaria is psycho-geographical in royalty.
Jack the Ripper is probably psycho-geographical in love.
Saint-Just is a bit psycho-geographical in politics. (Terror is disorienting.)
Andre Breton is naively psycho-geographical in encounter'*(Debord 1954).

If I would exercise psychogeography in the context of this chapter:

Dziga Vertov is psycho-geographical in editing.
Eugène Atget is psycho-geographical in emptiness.
Lee Friedlander is psycho-geographical in a car.
Henri-Cartier Bresson is psycho-geographical in aesthetic.
George Georgiou is psycho-geographical in buying bus tickets.
John Rafman is virtually psycho-geographical in encounters.
Sophie Calle is psycho-geographical in desire and curiosity.
Richard Long is psycho-geographical in every step.
Bas Jan Ader is psycho-geographical in existence.

4. HOW TO DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY

Since this text focuses on the artistic process of the *How to Disappear Completely*, the exhibition which is created by the author himself, in this chapter, mental and practical progression of the creation will be elaborated. Because of the subjective and intuitive nature of the artistic process, in this chapter, replacing address form with ‘I’ instead of ‘the author’ will be more appropriate.

4.1. Preface

In May 2015, I bought a bicycle. I rode through the coastline of Istanbul from Kadıköy to Pendik for few times. A month later, I heard the public call from the bicycle collective, ‘Cyclists’ Transport Platform’ (Bisikletli Ulaşım Platformu) for the purpose of a demonstration at ongoing construction site of third bridge of Istanbul. I, as a person who aware of the construction and possible environmental consequences of it, decided to attend to the bike-ride which will take place from Sarıyer to Garipçe where the main operations conducted. The route was actually a familiar one, which I used for commuting to the northern coastline for recreational purposes. But, I always had to use automobiles. Unfortunately, I was late, I lost the group. I had to cycle alone. In a hurry to catch with other cyclists I tried to speed up. My pace went down and down as I hit the uphill of Sarıyer. I found myself taking breaks in every 5-10 minutes, and moving slowly as a turtle. I realised the single tracks right beside the asphalt. I always wandered where they lead through, when I was in a car. I went to explore one of them, beach, because I wanted to catch the demonstration. The view at the end of the dirt road was quite

fulfilling and like a scene that I saw in old postcards of Istanbul. Then, I continued to my route. After I got to the top, I rode downhill for a while. I was in a boulevard per se; a boulevard which surrounded by trees, instead of building blocks; no automobiles, none whatsoever; only the whizzing sound of the wheels, and birds; gentle breeze of the wind alters the temperature.

Eventually, the signboards of the construction started to appear. Now, I was looking at gigantic construction site which reminded me as a huge scar on the face of nature. I remember that my eyes were filled with tears, and asking to myself: What's happening here? What's happening to me?

4.2. Cycling Experience

*It is by riding a bicycle that you
learn the contours of a country
best, since you have to sweat up the
hills and can coast down them....
Thus you remember them as they
actually are, while in a motorcar
only a high hill impresses you, and
you have no such accurate
remembrance of country you
have driven through as you gain by riding a bicycle.
-Ernest Hemingway*

When I cycled to Garipçe in 2015, I had no plans or no idea about psychogeography. The great substance of this thesis is created and realised itself simultaneously and/or after my experiences based on cycling through different counties of Istanbul: mainly Kadıköy and Sarıyer.

Experiencing a territory through bike riding is not a quite new concept. It has been said that Tour de France allowed French people, who never left their hometown, to look at

their land's map for the first time. Besides the newly built railways in the beginning of the 20th century, the Tour de France was another way to unify France, to prove distant cities like Nantes and Marseilles could be linked by a mere bicycle (The Inner Ring 2013).

I consider cycling as an exploration tool, rather than a transportation method. Cycling allowed me to be exposed to the natural forces such as wind, temperature etc. or help me to experience streets of Istanbul with rich sensations. It helped me to control my pace as I desired, yet I never after a fast experience. Faster than a walker, slower than an automobile. I have to differentiate my use of bicycle from travelling and/or recreational means of it. I had no intention to reach a certain place, or a monument. It was a tool for the purpose of getting lost in the streets. What the brush means to an archaeologist, I brushed off the dust from the land, hoping to find what's happening in this city, what's happening to me.

4.3. Drifts in the Neighbourhood

After my initial experience with my bike at the construction site, I commuted by bike almost every day. Each time, I altered my route and tried to pass through the places that I grew up. I realised that my experience of the city covers a small area compared to the whole city.

Another thing that I noticed was the disappearance of familiar places of my childhood and my adolescence. As a child, I had some sorts of navigation which originated from buildings. I knew my friends' house by the shape and colour of the architecture, or I found my way to home through a unique building: three street after this big mansion there was home. Cycling through these streets, I've lost my orientation. I ended up with total detachment to the places. I started to take panoramic photographs of constructions that I came across while I'm cycling. (figs. 9-10)



fig. 10 Çiftehavuzlar, July 2015



fig. 9 Göztepe, May 2016

Sophie Calle mentioned about similar feelings that she had after several years of travelling out of Paris, she says: ‘I had forgotten everything about Paris. I had no habits, I didn’t know anyone. I had no place to go, so I decided to follow people-anybody... I became attached to these people, so I took a camera and made notes’ (Trainor 2003).

Like her, I also embraced that feeling and decided to use it for a motivation to explore Kadıköy. I shot countless numbers of panoramic photos without a proper reason. They were mere research findings, rather than artistic products, yet.

In the summer of 2015, I got an invitation from a friend. Dila Yumurtacı who is also a colleague invited me, Derya Yıldız, Didem Erbaş, Melisa King and Neslihan Koyuncu to hold one-day-group-exhibition at the her family home which was about to be demolished. The apartment was planned rebuild under the name of urban renewal, same as hundreds I took photographs of.

We worked for 3 days and transformed every possible space into a places of

intervention; the elevator, the garden, the rooms, hallways. I gathered all the leftovers I've found in the apartment, and installed them in guest room. Installation also involves screenings of panoramic photos that I took and a video projection which contains portrait of a girl gazing towards the audience. My intention was to create a room of memories, or a room of 'unwants'. The title of the work was 'Internal Transformation Room'. (fig. 11)

This marks the stage which I haven't conducted any proper research towards psychogeography. I was following my instincts. Wilfried Hou Je Bek underlines immediate nature of psychogeography, Bek says: 'Psychogeography is the fact that you have an opinion about a space the moment you step into it. This has much to do with the space as with our hardwired instincts to determine if it is safe' (O'Rourke 2013). My opinion through the experience on streets was that whole these desire of new and construction not mere physical exchanges, but also mental exchanges in itself, altering and erasing memories of its habitants. That one day was our counter-act in opposition to these tendencies; to preserve is about to be lost and create strong relationship with it.



fig. 11 Installation view of Internal Transformation Room, 2015

4.4. First Stage of the Research

After the exhibition at Şerif Bey Apartmanı, I conducted initial research covering various fields of sciences of which cover urban issues, such as architecture, sociology, psychology and art history.

Besides, I expanded my knowledge on the issues of urban renewals in Istanbul, including of third bridge. Frustration got much more real as I learned and saw it with my eyes as I continue to cycle through my neighbourhood. Realising that the biggest ‘dispersal’ will occur in northern forests of Istanbul where the last forestry areas located in the city, I decided to not to leave this area without living it and having memories, remembering our experience with Şerif Bey Apartmanı. I started to design series of drifts in Sarıyer.

At first, I thought as a photographer and planned to go to the villages right next to the highway construction. My intention was to document various aspects of the construction through these villages, by taking photographs of people who live there, and their socio-economical presence in the area; possibly document the construction from their perspective. But, I’ve never been into documentary photography, though I always admired efforts of documentary photographers, and records of them. In my practice, I never desired to inform or show a reality or a phenomenon, my intention is linked to the idea of reflection. Recalling Brian Eno, I see my works as triggers for experiences rather than mere objects.

4.5. Getting Lost

*How will you go
about finding that thing the nature*

of which is totally unknown to you?
- Plato

Eventually, my experience with cycling and implications I got through them lead me to go there and be there. I dropped my 'work' and 'leisure' activities; my agenda as photographer and as an artist. This decision led to thinking about experimental methodologies of wandering. Recalling my implications, the idea of 'getting lost' appeared as a most fundamental desire for my exploration in the field.

Lost as a word has two meanings: 1. Unable to find one's way; not knowing one's whereabouts, 2. That has been taken away or cannot be recovered. In this sense, my motivation comes from the second meaning of the word; to find out what has been lost; and the first meaning of the word defines my method.

For Benjamin getting lost is quite close to being there, and says;

'Not to find one's way in a city may well be uninteresting and banal. It requires ignorance—nothing more. But to lose oneself in a city—as one loses oneself in a forest—that calls for quite a different schooling. Then signboards and street names, passers-by, roofs, kiosks, or bars must speak to the wanderer like a crackling twig under his feet...'
(as cited in Solnit 2000).

It is true that getting lost in a city is a hard task, especially if you have a smartphone. My approach to the idea of getting lost was obtain a movement of which the direction of it freed from political, artistic, environmental agendas of the field, which I found hard to do independently. Thus, I'd be able to be there completely.

For geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, space and place are interdependent concepts. We live in space; as we get to know it, we acquire sense of place, in short place is meaningful space. Place is security, space is freedom: we are attached to the one and long for another. (Tuan 1977) Thus, within the freedom of undefined (undefined by any agenda) places of Sariyer, I looked for the individual experiences and places; places that belong

to me; places which I found by 'getting lost'.

In 'A Field Guide to Getting Lost', Rebecca Solnit states that:

'The question then is how to get lost. Never to get lost is not to live, not to know how to get lost brings you to destruction... the important thing is to lose the whole world, get lost in it and find your soul.' (Solnit 2005).

4.6. Method of Wandering

In order to get lost in the city, I conducted a research on unconventional methods of walking. I would like to underline three of these findings which I inspired and adopted to my method. First, Robert McFarlane's method where he altered the map with the aid of object. Although, I didn't use any maps, I adopted his approach to recording. In A Road of One's Own he explains the method:

'Unfold a street map of London, place a glass, rim down, anywhere on the map, and draw round its edge. Pick up the map, go out into the city, and walk the circle, keeping as close as you can to the curve. Record the experience as you go, in whatever medium you favour: film, photography, manuscript, tape. Catch the textual run-off of the streets; the graffiti, the branded litter, the snatches of conversation. Cut for sign. Log the data-stream. Be alert to the happenstance of metaphors, watch for visual rhymes, coincidences, analogies, family resemblance, the changing moods of the street. Complete the circle, and the record ends. Walking makes for content; footage for footage' (MacFarlane 2005).

Second, William Burroughs's colour walks was quite unique in the sense that it requires multiple cognitive efforts; finding the selected colour, thinking about it, and proceed to next one. Burroughs says:

'Another exercise that is very effective is walking on colours. Pick out all the reds on a street, focusing only on red objects-brick, lights, sweaters, signs. Shift to green, blue, orange, yellow. Notice how the colours begin to stand out more sharply of their own accord. I was walking on yellow when I saw a yellow amphibious jeep near the corner of 94th Street and Central Park West. It was called the Thing. This reminded me of the Thing I knew in Mexico. He was nearly seven feet tall and had played the Thing in a horror movie of the same name, and everybody called him the Thing, though his name was James Arness. I hadn't thought about the Thing in twenty years, and would not have thought about him except walking on a yellow at that particular moment' (Burroughs 1993).

Most intriguing was the method that I found in the mobile app Derive. Derive is a smartphone app which gives you different methods of wandering. One of the directions was that ‘walk until you see something scary when you are a child.’ Similar to Burroughs’s method, this method also requires multiple thinking processes. You have to think about your childhood and through that you experience the area.

4.7. Drifts in Saryer

I had two drifts in Saryer which each of it took a day with bicycle and each of them had different directions.

My first direction was as follows: ‘always take the hardest path’. Considering I am on a bicycle, this requires to define what the hard is. For instance; uphill or downhill? I took uphill. A street with dogs or empty? Street with dogs. Asphalt or dirt road? Dirt road etc. Second drift is directed by the idea of going north. I didn’t used a compass or a map, I just proceed to the direction which I thought as north. Besides, I often took photos and videos with my cell phone camera; recorded the sound of various places; collect items such as a pile of leafs, a garbage bag, a pile of bullet casings. Also, I wrote diary entries in the beginning and at the end of drifts.

In these drifts, I eventually got lost few times both in abstract and literal means of the word. One of the striking findings, amongst many others, was that the abundance of Turkish flags that hanging on the windows of houses, on the doors, and even on a branch of a tree. (fig. 12- 13) One might think of that presence of flags as a pleasing fact, since their presence indicates a level of belonging and attachment to the place by its owners. But ironically, there were garbage piled up almost in every street, in every corner, apart from that it was quite easy to find a pile of debris that was thrown out to here and there. I never contacted anybody intentionally, I communicated when people approached to me, but I eavesdropped a lot. All in all, my sense of detachment and belonging with the city multiplied, but I created places for my memory and ideas about

the exhibition.



fig. 13 Sarıyer, 2016



fig. 12 Sarıyer, 2016

4.8. Outcomes

The core of this text focuses on the artistic processes, yet I'd like include some of the outcomes of my psychogeographic research, hoping to enlighten concrete links between process and production. After all drifts in different counties of Istanbul, I realised the dispersal of and my longing for nature. When I examined materials which I gathered, photos, videos, recordings and diaries, I found out that they were one way another related to concepts of concrete and nature, mainly water. Thinking about cities, water is essential resource which shapes and directs city planning. Both historically and contemporarily, Istanbul's image and everyday life are defined by water in many ways. Aside from literal means, water signifies continuity of life and nature with its restless circulation and fluctuation. (figs. 14, 15, 16)



fig. 14 Untitled, How to Disappear Completely



fig. 15 Untitled, How to Disappear Completely, 2016



fig. 16 Untitled, How to Disappear Completely, 2016

So first piece of *How to Disappear Completely* was exhibited at Neslihan Koyuncu's studio under the name of Open Studio Days. After the exhibition at Şerif Bey Apartmanı, we formed an artist collective called 'UZ' and this exhibition was the first under this title. In August 2015, we exhibited our individual works without depending on a certain theme. I prepared a light sculpture entitled *Withdrawn Landscape*. I got inspiration from the works of artists who projected photographic images onto urban spaces such as Krzysztof Wodiczko's Homeless Projection (Van Helder and Witgest 2011) and Shimon Attie's site specific installations. To me, their core idea is to superimpose two realities on one surface, thus they altered the perception of them. I projected a continuous video on the surface of a bark of a tree. By doing so, my intention was to create an ambiguous narrative of animate and inanimate. While the bark signifies dying skin of a tree, continuous flow of the water symbolises continuity of nature. Visually ambiguous nature of the sculpture allows viewer to engage in multiple ways; they may choose to focus on the material, or the virtual which is light itself.



fig. 17 Exhibition view of *Withdrawn Landscape* at Rem Art Space, 2016

I continued to work on the idea of light sculptures and contributed to the group exhibition, *Surplus* which held in Rem Art Space in June 2016, with the second version of *Withdrawn Landscape* (fig.17). This time, I used concrete as the canvas of my video projection in combination with a photograph. While the video depicting a water flow which one may observe during a daily ferry trip going from one side of Istanbul to the other, presence of the concrete creates chaotic and disrupted connotations. For me, the photograph represents a resolution or negotiation with these connotations.

Lastly, I'd like to mention a collaboration with Didem Erbaş, since it has major contribution to create and develop ideas which leads to *How to Disappear Completely*. Didem Erbaş is an artist who I appreciated by heart, also a colleague who studies at Sabancı University and a member of UZ. After the realisation of our interests on art and Beginning from the fall of 2015, we continuously exchanged ideas, books, and works which eventually lead to a project that took its context and shape on the process of these exchanges. In May 2016, our project, *Residue* which is the accumulation of these exchanges awarded by Siemens Sanat's competition *Borders Orbits*.

How to Disappear Completely won't have a concept text. I believe the exhibition best to be experienced without another direction, at least my intension is to create an exhibition space that stands alone by itself without a concept text. Nevertheless, if desired, the concept text of *Residue* elaborates similar themes of *How to Disappear Completely*. In fact, for me, they are different spots of a same road, similar to other pieces that I mentioned in this section. So, the concept text of *Residue* goes as follows:

'Residue, is an inventory of the process of creation embracing two artists who study and produce in the fields of different disciplines without seeking a departure and/or a thematic meeting, this inventory is the desire for the experience of intuition and recognisance of a conversation.

As two urbanites, we experienced the destruction, transformation and chaos all around the city from the countryside to the downtown. We did not talk. We looked at the water, we looked at the ground, at the plant, at the stone. We did not talk. We intuited the desire of water, the expectancy of the moment arising between the ground beneath the concrete grey and the sun

in the sky, we sensed the fall of the tree without decaying, the submission of the plant, the escape of the stone of no fixed abode. we did not talk. instead of the act of talking,

Didem made a painting. Eren took a photograph.

The conversation required time, ontologically. we did not require time. Because the water, ground tree plant and the stone each has always been there standing still from the start.

Then, when time cannot exist, place turns into abstract.

In the end the work you see through became the representations/spectacles of our intuition and a wish for escapology from the concrete reality of destruction and chaos. We acted in solidarity against the destruction and chaos by taking shelter in the continuity of nature.'

5. CONCLUSION& FUTURE WORK

Baudelaire thought of the figure of the flâneur by time of ‘old Paris’ is transformed into a new structure architecturally, politically, and culturally. Manifesto of SI came up with an appearance as a consequence of disappearing because of discourses of modern capitalism. Disappearance of real in exchange of the ‘spectacle’.

Hence, realisation of this research and appearance of the exhibition, *How to Disappear Completely* takes its name from the disappearance of the nature that shelters, surrounds us and the memory of the places and the practice of living. As exploration keeps going on without any ultimate conclusion, since the focus of the of living and artistic creation is the process naturally and individually. When we perceive the artistic process as a whole infiniteness, the works that I’ve created and mentioned in this text becomes stepping points of a continuous exploration which I’d like to continue.

At this point, August 2016, *How to Disappear Completely* is the third exhibition that came out of same process which was elaborated in this text. In December 2016, the forth exhibition will hold in Depo in Istanbul as an award exhibition of Borders Orbits. Needless to say, as the transformation of the city continues, struggle will prevail in every possible domain, from the author’s perspective. In this regard, following act of the author will be conducting an event in author’s home which will be also demolished under the name of urban renewal in Autumn 2016 and creating another common ground as UZ did at Şerif Bey Apartmanı. Also, this continuous research and process planned to be published on a website by the author, for the sake of solidarity with those who share similar tendencies towards politics of urbanism as another future work.

Although technological progress through the camera, alters the practice of photography, yet the automated process prevails. The art of photography has still been the heart of the discussion that subjective inputs are not adequate and component when compared and contrasted to the other artistic creations. Within the boundaries of the automated process, there is a possibility to find that is 'humane'. One of the possibilities lie altering the act of photographing in such a way that distinguishes the photographer from the conventional methods of image making and/or sharing. Embracing subjective and intuitive acts of the artist that promote play and experimentality may yield significant results for photographers. Here is the exact place where psychogeography as a concept to explore is the potential to enhance subjective inputs for both the art and the artist of photography.

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