COSMOPOLITAN FACADES: HISTORICAL DIVERSITY AS A TOOL OF EXCLUSION AND DESTRUCTION IN THE TARLABAŞI URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

by

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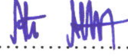

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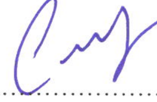

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ABSTRACT

COSMOPOLITAN FACADES: HISTORICAL DIVERSITY AS A TOOL OF EXCLUSION AND DESTRUCTION IN THE TARLABAŞI URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT

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M.A. Thesis, August 2016

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Keywords: Urban Renewal, Nostalgia, Gentrification, Tarlabaşı, Diversity

The urban renewal project being undertaken in Tarlabaşı, Istanbul proclaims itself to be honoring the history of the neighborhood's late Ottoman "multicultural" population through historical renovation and renewal. The project, a public-private partnership tied closely to the governing Justice and Development Party, presents an understanding of history at odds with the previously dominant nationalist narrative, by emphasizing a past diversity lost to poor political decisions. In this thesis I take a close look at this narrative of lost cosmopolitanism, exploring the pasts it summons, the future it envisions, and the ways in which it is used as a tool of exclusion in the present. I engage with theory on nostalgia and the malleability of the past, as well as literature on gentrification and the use of diversity as a market tool which simultaneously celebrates and destroys that diversity. I analyze the discourse around the project through newspaper articles, marketing materials, and the public statements of politicians and developers. I find that the project envisions a "return" to an imagined version of the late-Ottoman neighborhood of global capitalist consumption and European diversity. This is to be accomplished through the clearing away of the current undesirable population, and through destroying and selectively rebuilding the facades of the local building stock, which is perceived to be incorrectly inhabited and thus shows physical signs of "misuse" that are to be removed.

ÖZET

KOZMOPOLİT CEPHELER: TARLABAŞI KENTSEL DÖNÜŞÜM PROJESİ'NDE BİR DIŞLAMA VE YIKIM ARACI OLARAK TARİHİ ÇEŞİTLİLİK

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İstanbul, Tarlabaşı'nda yapılan kentsel dönüşüm projesi, tarihi restorasyon ve yenileme çalışmaları vasıtasıyla mahallenin Geç Osmanlı döneminin 'çok kültürlü' nüfusunun tarihini onurlandırdığını beyan ediyor. İktidarda olan Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi'ne yakın bağı bulunan bir özel sector-kamu ortaklığındaki proje, başarısız siyasal kararlar sonucu kaybedilmiş çeşitliliğe vurguda bulunarak önceden baskın olan milliyetçi söylemden farklı bir tarihsel anlayış sergilemektedir. Bu tez, bu yitirilmiş kozmopolitanizm anlatısını yakından inceleyerek bu anlatının taşıdığı geçmişi, tasavvur ettiği geleceği, ve günümüzde bir dışlama yöntemi olarak kullanılışını araştırmaktadır. Bu konuyu nostalji kuramı, geçmişin farklı şekillerde işlenebilir olması ve mutenalaşma literatürü ve çeşitliliğin hem yüceltme hem de yıkma yöntemleriyle kullanılabilen bir pazar aracı olarak açısından ele almaktadır. Proje etrafında gelişen söylem gazete makaleleri, pazarlama materyalleri, politikacı ve geliştiricilerin ifadeleri vasıtasıyla çözümlenmektedir. Projenin, hayal edilen bir geç Osmanlı semtinin son dönemlerindeki küresel kapitalist tüketim ve Avrupa çeşitliğine bir geri dönüş öngördüğünü öne sürmekteyim. Bu geri dönüş, mevcut durumda istenmeyen insan topluluğunu dağıtmak ve yanlış şekilde iskân edildiği düşünüldüğünden ortadan kaldırılması gereken 'suistimallere' dair fiziksel emareler gösteren yerel yapı stoğu cephelerinin yıkılıp, seçici bir şekilde yeniden inşa edilmesi ile gerçekleştirilecektir.

To my parents

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CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION

On April 8th, 2016, a five-story apartment building in Istanbul's central Tarlabaşı neighborhood collapsed. It was empty due to renovation at the time, and nobody was hurt. In the moments leading up to the collapse neighbors had noticed loud cracking sounds coming from inside, allowing them to clear the street. This early warning had the added benefit of allowing the collapse to be caught on camera. In one video, standing in the dust cloud moments after the building came tumbling down in front of him, the person filming can be heard to lightheartedly proclaim, "yes dear viewers, another building has collapsed!"[1] (İstanbul'da 5 katlı, 2016). Indeed, collapsed buildings in the neighborhood are not uncommon; less than two months earlier another building had collapsed just a few blocks away. While most newspapers essentially published the videos without commentary (the name of the neighborhood perhaps speaking for itself), the English-language *Daily Sabah* attempted to provide some context for foreign readers who may not quite understand. After four short sentences explaining briefly that a building had collapsed and that nobody was hurt, the article continues:

> The building was located in the area also known as Tarlabaşı, which houses Istanbul's oldest multi-storey buildings, with some dating back 150 years old. Most buildings located in the area are currently empty due to an extensive urban renovation effort initiated by Beyoğlu Municipality, whereas several other buildings had collapsed in recent months.
>
> The neighborhood was populated by Istanbul's Greek and Christian communities who left the city in final years of the Ottoman Empire and early years of the Republic.

[1] Throughout this thesis, all translations from the Turkish are mine unless otherwise noted. Articles originally appearing in English are reproduced as written.

> The neighborhood was initially populated by poor immigrants from Turkey's countryside, who often could not afford to reparations for the buildings. After a newly-built avenue separated the neighborhood with the rest of Beyoğlu district in early 1980's, added with the rapid change and deterioration of entertainment business in the area, the neighborhood soon made a reputation as the crime center of Istanbul with poor living conditions (Empty Building Collapses, 2016).

Despite ostensibly being about the collapse of a building, more than half of this article consists of a summary of the history of the wider neighborhood. The collapse becomes not just an accident that happened during a renovation, but rather the almost inevitable conclusion of a series of events stretching back more than a century. History, as it so often does, gets dragged into the present in order to make a point about something that's happening now.

The buildings that had collapsed in recent months shared a common feature: they were *not* in an area undergoing urban renovation.[2] The renovation that might have "saved" them is the Tarlabaşı 360 urban renewal project, a massive public-private development in the middle of a listed historical neighborhood that claims to update the building stock for modern needs while holding on to the historical fabric of the neighborhood. On the occasion of the previous building collapse, two months earlier, İstanbul governor Vasip Şahin had visited the site and proclaimed that incidents like that one show just how necessary the "urban and cultural transformation" of Tarlabaşı was (Kaya, 2016). One sees clearly how an urban transformation could indeed benefit a neighborhood filled with old, collapse-prone buildings (let us ignore for the moment that both collapsed buildings were potentially weakened by the major renovations they were undergoing at the time). But governor Şahin thinks a *cultural* transformation is necessary too. To explain why, it is helpful to hear what I will call the legend of 360.

My summary of the legend is based on an academic article titled "Gentrification in Istanbul," written by a professor in a prestigious urban planning department in Istanbul (Ergun, 2004). She presents a brief summary of gentrification in a number of historical neighborhoods in Istanbul, in each of which she runs through the same four-part narrative.

[2] The author's use of "whereas" is unclear, but based on *Daily Sabah*'s reporting on the neighborhood I am making the assumption that the collapsing buildings outside the renewal site are being contrasted with those within.

The story goes like this: first, somewhere in the late Ottoman past, non-Muslims and Muslims live together happily in peace and harmony. There is true civilization and true cosmopolitanism, and artistic and culinary expression reach unparalleled heights. Then, suddenly, the non-Muslims mysteriously leave, taking their civility and culture with them and leaving their beautiful and Western apartment buildings to rot. But a fate worse than rot awaits. Soon the dearly departed are replaced by all sorts of undesirables: uncivilized peasants from Anatolia, homosexuals, Gypsies, transvestites, immigrants from Africa and the Middle East, etc. These people, finding copious empty housing in unbeatable locations, move in. However, they neglect the beautiful apartment buildings they now live in and bring down the value of the neighborhood; these buildings "following the architectural traditions of western culture, [were] considered strange by the migrant groups who largely came from a rural background. In time, Beyoğlu was transformed into a slum area" (396). Finally, the area is "discovered" by local and foreign (that is, "cosmopolitan") artists, intellectuals, journalists, architects, etc. who "save" it by restoring the historical buildings and opening cafes, restaurants, bookshops and art galleries, eventually removing all trace of the previous migrant owners. In the case of the neighborhood Tünel, the author portrays one art gallery owner single-handedly ridding the neighborhood of crime! At last the neighborhood is rescued, and it begins to host highbrow cultural events: "new life was observed in Beyoğlu, manifest most obviously with the organization of the Istanbul Film Festival" (397). Thus, over the course of one hundred years or more the neighborhood comes 360 degrees from highbrow cosmopolitanism to barbarous squalor of homogeneity, and back again.

Though my telling of the legend is based here on an academic source, it is echoed in countless places around the city: in advertisements, guidebooks, political discourse, novels, in the minds of many of the city's residents, and even in the name of the Tarlabaşı 360 urban "renewal" project. In a very broad sense it can even be said to be factually "correct," at least as far as the movement of populations is concerned. It also points to some of the key issues driving the debates surrounding history, heritage, and the reevaluation of the late-Ottoman city. Indeed, the second phase identified above, in which the once-cosmopolitan neighborhood falls as undesirables move in, is the catalyst not just for the later nostalgic intervention, but for a radical change in the understanding of the

past. The article also betrays a great contradiction in its own theory: for a number of neighborhoods, Ergun bemoans the loss of “diversity” and yet she, like so many others, fails to acknowledge the new kind of diversity that emerged in its place. Instead, the newcomers are treated as unrefined criminals to be removed. The urban renewal project being undertaken in Tarlabaşı proclaims itself to be honoring the history of the neighborhood and its buildings, and in so doing calls upon that history as a justification for displacing the population currently living there. In the following pages I will take a close look at this narrative of lost cosmopolitanism, exploring the pasts it summons, the future it envisions, and the ways in which it is used as a tool of exclusion in the present.

1.1 Thesis Structure

The rest of this introduction situates the thesis in the wider theoretical framework of nostalgia, gentrification, urban aesthetics, and neoliberalism; while I will deal with some specific manifestations of these theories in Turkey, the purpose of this introduction is to give a more general background, which will be tied to specific developments in Turkey in chapter two. It then delineates the limitations of this study, before ending with some details about the neighborhood as it exists today, as well as a summary of the Tarlabaşı 360 project’s history.

Chapter two aims to give a background on the urban development of the neighborhood, and situate the Tarlabaşı urban development project in its historical and discursive position. Because the renewal project focuses excessively on the architecture of the neighborhood and presents itself in part as a preservation project, I explore the architectural development of the neighborhood, and the evolving ways the buildings there have been used and understood. Drawing both on academic work (in social history, history of art, and sociology), and on select primary sources (literature, film, and internet sources) I trace the ethnic and physical changes of the neighborhood, in addition to the evolving ways in which those changes themselves are perceived and remembered. Since the popular understanding of Tarlabaşı is tied in with that of Beyoğlu as a whole I focus on the wider district more generally, but wherever possible try to examine the ways in which Tarlabaşı

differs from, or contributes to, the understanding of Beyoğlu. Since the attitude towards old buildings has shifted over time and reflects dominant ideas both about who should live in the city and how it should be inhabited, I spend some time following the history of historical preservation in Istanbul. The current understanding of what preservation means is connected to how the "renewal" project is intended to function, and therefore the chapter also tries to explore some of the dominant ideas in Istanbul today around heritage architecture and the "true" essence of the city (culturally, ethnically, architecturally, historically), and how those things manifest themselves in urban planning. I also try to explore some of the ways in which desirable neighborhoods are presented in the city today.

Chapters three and four engage directly with the actors promoting and implementing the project. Chapter three looks at three newspapers (as well as some additional sources) to observe the ways that the project tries to justify its implementation. I place a particular focus on historical justifications for renewal, as well as the three major emotions that the project plays to: fear, embarrassment, and hope. The chapter also addresses the debates around who gets to decide what the neighborhood should be like, and in particular the municipality's conception of its own role in shaping both the physical urban fabric and the lives of the people who live in it.

In chapter four I engage in a primarily visual analysis of the old website for the Tarlabaşı 360 urban renewal project. I have chosen to conduct a visual analysis because the project relies heavily on the visual markers of a perceived cosmopolitan past to justify itself as a historical preservation/restoration project, and uses these visuals to advertise itself as a simultaneously global and local site of late capitalist consumption. I look at how the developer has chosen to depict both the buildings of the neighborhood, and the inhabitants and street life of the neighborhood during three distinct moments (named yesterday, today, and tomorrow) in the neighborhood's history. I argue that each of these moments represents a specific idealized version of how the neighborhood can be used; more specifically, how it should or shouldn't be used. Borrowing a phrase from its own marketing campaign, I analyze the images of the streets of these moments as representations of "concept streets" which portray a specific lifestyle that is connected to the past of the neighborhood in various ways.

The conclusion poses some questions for further research, and suggests some things to look for as the first stage of the project nears completion.

1.2 Academic Background

Andreas Huyssen (2000) has pointed out that in the years leading up to the start of the new millennium, memory emerged as a central concern in the West. While most of the twentieth century was concerned with a modernism that focused on the future, today that focus "has shifted from present futures to present pasts" (p. 21). This explosion of nostalgic feelings coincided with the global shift towards a neoliberal economic system, which restructures urban spaces as spectacles of consumption. In order to be attractive to global capital, cities seek to emphasize their locally unique attributes (including the urban social and cultural environments). AlSayyad (2000) remarks that "because culture has thus become increasingly placeless, urbanism will continue to be an area where one can observe the specificity of local cultures and their attempts to mediate global domination." Harvey (p. 2001), on the other hand, argues that by doing this the homogenizing power of global capital then begins to erase those differences.

Svetlana Boym (2001) identifies two types of nostalgia, which she terms restorative and reflective. Restorative nostalgia "attempts a transhistorical reconstruction of the lost home," in contrast to reflective nostalgia which "thrives in *algia*, the longing itself, and delays the homecoming – wistfully, ironically, desperately" (p. XVIII). Josh Carney (2014) has challenged the exclusivity of those two categories, arguing that, while these categories make sense theoretically, the way nostalgia is activated in individuals is often a complex mix of the two. He notes that even texts, by virtue of having a range of interpretations, cannot be classified as strictly restorative or strictly reflective; rather, in his work he tries to explore how those texts work nostalgically on their publics. Following Geertz's (1973) concept of culture as text, and mindful of his claim that societies contain their own interpretations (p. 453) I understand the buildings and spaces of the neighborhood as texts, and explore the ways in which those spaces are read nostalgically by the developers and the state.

In my analysis I am mindful of Renato Rosaldo's (1989) conception of imperialist nostalgia, which he defines as "people mourn[ing] the passing of what they themselves have transformed" (p. 108). Because most nostalgia is so innocent, he argues, imperialist nostalgia is able to "transform the responsible colonial agent into an innocent bystander" and to "capture people's imaginations and to conceal its complicity with often brutal domination" (p. 108). In the Turkish case, imperialist nostalgia manifests itself in mourning for the non-Muslim populations that were either killed or forced to leave by the state, a process that was encouraged by the new Muslim bourgeoisie – the same groups that are now celebrating and mourning the culture that was destroyed. My investigation into the discourse around Tarlabaşı complicates this analysis in that the narrative presented about the renewal project introduces *two* major violent transformations, rather than one, the second of which is actually justified as an undoing of the first. Because of this, there is increasing discussion of the role of the state in the first period of destruction, and by recognizing this to a small degree the project's developers are able to subtly criticize the government of the previous era, even as they obscure their own complicity in the first destruction. At the same time, the appeal to nostalgia is used to justify another violent transformation of the very same neighborhood, and again serves to elide the destruction that will be caused.

Rosaldo also brings up the possibility of nostalgia as a Western-based feeling or even one that exists exclusively (or originally) in the West (p. 109). In the Turkish context, for example, Orhan Pamuk has been accused of producing an orientalist nostalgia in his examinations of Istanbul (for example, Işın, 2010, p. 41). Various actors in my research accuse others of being orientalist, so it is worth noting two major points made in Edward Said's study of *Orientalism* (1978). First, he notes that orientalist scholars understood the east as both titillatingly exotic, and stuck in a sort of unchanging past. Secondly, by creating an academic and popular discourse the West was able to appropriate the power of representation from the very people it was studying.

İpek Türeli (2010, p. 300) notes that when nostalgia becomes a dominant feeling, "visual and literary depictions of the city become important sites through which to imagine and consume bygone times." These visual depictions include architectural spaces, and today in Istanbul one finds a café dedicated to Ara Güler and his evocative black and white

photographs, taverns whose soundtracks feature the plaintive strains of Rebetiko music, and new mosques using classical Ottoman forms.[3] In the same way, urban renewal projects, which developed such a bad reputation in the United States for erasing the historical fabric and scale of neighborhoods, are marketed and justified as ways of retrieving and reviving a distantly remembered past. Paralleling Huyssen's remark that the past has replaced the future as the dominating reference for the present, Boym (2001) points out that, far from the dominant trends of the mid 20th century, "the urban renewal taking place in the present is no longer futuristic but nostalgic; the city imagines its future by improvising on its past" (p. 75).

Throughout the thesis I keep a focus on the buildings themselves as sites for the consumption of nostalgia. While doing this, I have kept in mind Alois Riegl, who in 1928 noted that the creators of old buildings were looking to

> satisfy certain practical or ideal needs of their own, of their contemporaries and, at most, of their heirs, and certainly did not as a rule intend to leave evidence of their artistic and cultural life to future generations, then the term 'monument,' which we nevertheless use to define these works, can only be meant subjectively, not objectively. We modern viewers, rather than the works themselves by virtue of their original purpose, assign meaning and significance to a monument (Riegl, 1996, p. 72).

The buildings in question are being given a completely different meaning now than they had when they were first built. Moreover, in the case of Tarlabaşı the buildings are actually being physically reconstructed with an eye not just to create a suitable space of consumption for the early 21st century, but also to write "in stone" a specific understanding of the neighborhood's past. The new neighborhood will attempt to signify something quite different, and attempts to create its own nostalgic feeling in the people who encounter it.

Two terms deserve elucidation here. 'Urban renewal' is a state-initiated program of redeveloping large parts of impoverished, often densely built-up urban neighborhoods by acquiring the properties in question, relocating the inhabitants and businesses, demolishing the buildings, and replacing them. This is the kind of process Jane Jacobs (1964) argued against in the United States, leading to the preservation of historical, mixed-used neighborhoods that ironically, due to their well-preserved historical urban fabric, later

[3] On Rebetiko as a signifier of lost cosmopolitanism, see Koglin (2008).

became sites of gentrification. My understanding of 'gentrification' follows Smith (1996, p. 30), who describes it as the process "by which poor and working-class neighborhoods in the inner city are refurbished via an influx of private capital and middle-class homebuyers and renters – neighborhoods that had previously experienced disinvestment and a middle-class exodus." In the American context, the neighborhoods that are gentrifying fastest now are those that escaped the urban renewal craze of the mid twentieth century, since their historical housing stock is the very thing that appeals to the re-urbanizing white middle classes.

Darryl Crilley (1993) notes that historical diversity is used by developers not to appeal to a diverse market, but rather to bolster the attractiveness of developments to a particular set of non-diverse customers. The homogeneity of the gentrified neighborhood is hidden within the *appearance* of diversity expressed through visual cues such as heritage architecture. Shaw (2000) notes that 'diversity' becomes "simply another consumable attribute for affluent tastes, and rather than appealing to a range of types of people, only those with the necessary attributes (such as cash, class and/or ethnicity) have membership in such a niche market" (p. 68). Speaking of gentrification in Australia, she writes that "at the heritage-gentrification nexus there are socio-cultural processes at work that privilege, and dispossess, and there are also nostalgic yearnings that are part of these processes… Migrant and indigenous heritages […] are not simply forgotten, they are actively denied through the production of specifically coded forms of heritage(s) that reinforce and consolidate already empowered groups" (p. 59). Similarly, urban renewal in contemporary Beyoğlu appears to coincide with Boym's concept of restorative nostalgia. The reconstruction of the lost neighborhood, however, obscures the presence of the residents of the neighborhood today, reinforcing hierarchies of class and race. While much of the discourse around Tarlabaşı could be equally applied to any poor neighborhood, there is one particular aspect that sets it apart; namely its architecture. As Müller (1999) argues, musealisation is an increasingly widespread phenomenon in urban settings, as historical cities convert their older districts into touristic or shopping centers.

The use and control of urban space has emerged in recent years as one of the primary sites of contestation in cities around the globe. Starting with Jane Jacob's (1964) attack on destructive, top-down modernist planning principles, urban theorists have

stressed the importance of the public's right shape the cities they live in (Lefebvre, 1968; Harvey, 2008). In Turkey, the Gezi Park protests of 2013 were triggered by a conflict around who gets to decide about how urban space is shaped, and what kind of shape it should take. The protesters were demonstrating against the tendency of the state to decide unilaterally how the city should look, a tendency that indeed has been a constant throughout modern Turkish history. The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) was trying to replace a park, which had been designed in the early republican period to modernist specifications, with a reconstructed Ottoman barracks that would have held a mall. Because the "Islamist" AKP was trying to build an Ottoman-style building while the protesters were defending a republican space, the protests have sometimes (and often contrary to their own stated goals) been analyzed as a conflict between nostalgic Kemalism and nostalgic neo-Ottomanism. Edhem Eldem (2013), however, points out that both of these nostalgias hearken back to a period of authoritarianism and thus share more in common than what divides them. Many protestors, instead, were demanding a more democratic process of urban planning.

Cihan Tuğal (2009) writes about the ways in which the radical Islamism that gave rise to system-friendly political movements like the AKP, while initially critical of the neoliberal democratic system, has been absorbed into it. It is also clear that the major urban transformations undertaken by parties in opposition to Kemalist reforms have nonetheless followed the forms laid out by the republican governments (Gül, 2009). What is happening now is, though couched in the language of neoliberalism and ethnic plurality, in fact the same homogenizing, top-down, large-scale reshaping of urban spaces and urban society that has been going on since the beginning of the republic. The AKP government, while positioning itself in opposition to some aspects of Kemalist ideology, in fact embodies a very similar style of social engineering.

There has been a significant amount of work on the urban renewal project in Tarlabaşı in recent years. A recent urban planning thesis traced the ways in which architectural modifications to the neighborhood changed (and after the urban renewal project, will change) the options for movement, and the availability of third spaces (Göker, 2013). A sociology thesis found that individuals' behavior and socialization have been profoundly influenced by the project (Parker, 2013). Other works have focused on the

social and economic conditions in the neighborhood today (Mutluer, 2011; Yılmaz, 2006), and resistance against the project (Kuyucu and Ünsal, 2010; Ünsal and Kuyucu, 2010; Dinçer, 2011).

Since most work on Tarlabaşı has focused on the human impact of the project and resistance against it, my study takes a different approach by exploring how exactly the state/developer wants the people in the neighborhood to act and to function, and how they justify that. Still, it is worth keeping in mind that all of the ideas and depictions I am dealing with in the present work are views from outside and from above, who nonetheless are trying to absorb the lived experiences of the historical neighborhood into a state-centered narrative of consumption and modernity.

1.3 Tarlabaşı 360 Location and History

Tarlabaşı is not an official administrative neighborhood but rather is the unofficial name given to an area made up of six *mahalles* (the smallest administrative unit): Bostan, Bülbül, Çukur, Kamer Hatun, Kalyoncu Kulluk, and Şehit Muhtar. These occupy a roughly square area bounded by Tarlabaşı Boulevard to the south (uphill), Dolapdere Avenue to the north (downhill) and two streets running from the ridge to the valley, Taksim Avenue to the east and Ömer Hayyam to the west. Tarlabaşı Boulevard is only a few blocks north (downhill) from İstiklal Avenue, Istanbul's main pedestrianized commercial strip. The pedestrianization of İstiklal led to the widening of Tarlabaşı Boulevard in the 1980s and the destruction of many historical apartments in the neighborhood (see Bartu, 2001). Those that remained were marked as a historical conservation area in 1993.

A nine-block section of the conservation area was approved as an urban renewal area in February 2006 under the management of the Beyoğlu municipality, who decided that it would be developed through private sector investments (Dinçer, 2011, p. 54). The company selected was GAP İnşaat, a branch of the Çalık Holding conglomerate, whose CEO at the time was Berat Albayrak, the son-in-law of then-prime minister (now president) Recep Tayyip Erdoğan (Albayrak has since become the minister of energy and natural resources). The owners were offered either 42 per cent of the surface area of their

existing property, or full monetary compensation for the property's current value (p. 59). The project includes 278 plots, approximately 70% of which are listed historical buildings. Three of the blocks front Tarlabaşı Boulevard, and the rest are located on the side streets sloping downhill. The project will have two office buildings and six residential buildings, which will incorporate the facades of certain historical row houses (although most of the facades will be reconstructions rather than preservations), while the interiors of the blocks will be demolished and rebuilt as unified structures in a contemporary style.

Erdoğan is heavily associated with the project, and his picture appears prominently in publicity videos and billboards, including a large billboard at the site itself and on the website (see, for example figure 22). Perhaps because of the degree to which the AKP, both on the national and local level, are publically affiliated with the project, public attitudes towards the project tend to coalesce around party lines (see chapter 3). Because of the extent to which the government is associated with the project through advertising and discourse, I understand the version of history presented by the project as one that meets with the approval of the ruling party. With that in mind, we turn now to the various understandings of the neighborhood's past.

CHAPTER 2.

HISTORY OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD

History is not simply everything that happened in the past; rather it is a carefully curated selection of events and moments in the past that historians, teachers, politicians, developers, tour guides, advertisers, authors, journalists, artists, and everyone else assemble to tell specific stories (Carr, 1964; Lowenthal, 1985). Since the understanding of history is colored by the needs and ideologies of specific times and populations, certain aspects of the past receive more or less treatment depending on who is writing history, and when. Nationalist historians have been keenly aware of this, since the process of inventing a nation requires an exclusive past that the nation can claim as its own (Anderson, 1983). Since such clear-cut concepts as "pure nations" are impossible to observe in the historical record, nationalist historiography (like any historiography) picks and choses which areas to focus on. "The essence of a nation," says Ernest Renan, "is that all individuals have many things in common, and also that they have forgotten many things" (Renan, 1947, p. 11). As the writers of history have shifted their ideological positions, or as events in the present have caused changes in historical needs, the specific things to be forgotten (or remembered) have also shifted. So it comes as no surprise that in telling the history of Tarlabaşı, different aspects of the past have been emphasized or ignored at different times, and by different tellers. The stories being told about Tarlabaşı's history today are profoundly influenced by the gentrification project, which in turn is dependent on (some of) those stories for its own justification.

Beauregard (1986, p. 47) notes two processes that are important for the creation of a gentrifiable neighborhood: First, "the creation of gentrifiable housing," and second, "the creation of prior occupants who can easily be displaced or replaced." My goal in this

chapter is to trace not just how these buildings and occupants got there and remained there until the present, but also to ask why those particular buildings are considered gentrifiable at this particular moment, and why those occupants are considered replaceable. Gentrifiable housing is gentrifiable because of an appreciation for both the artistic and historical value placed on a building, but the popular appreciation of that artistic value rests on a particular understanding of the building's history. Açıkgöz (2014) notes that in the early republican period "arguments on whether a monument had to be preserved could be built on several factors such as the period and the patron, hence the memories the monument evoked" (p. 184). In this chapter I seek to explore how the memories invoked by the buildings in Tarlabaşı have been understood, both to highlight the changing views of minority history in recent decades, and to explore some of the undertones pervading the current discourse around the modern and future use of the neighborhood.

2.1 The Development of Late Ottoman Beyoğlu

Cities have long been shaped by the forces of power and ideology. The famous silhouette of Istanbul's so-called "historical peninsula" is the product of deliberate planning choices by its rulers, who sought, through urban planning, to shape the city into a physical expression of their imperial and spiritual self-image (Necipoğlu, 2005). The nineteenth century saw profound physical changes in urban centers throughout Europe, as the great powers rearranged their capitals to express new concepts of modernity, rationalism, and radical break with the past; this is typified by Eugène Haussmann's reorganization of Paris under Napoleon III, which thrust wide, straight boulevards through the dark, narrow, and winding streets of the city's medieval core (Harvey, 2003). In their colonial cities, Europeans desiring to physically and symbolically present themselves as separate from, and superior to, their colonial subjects developed entire quarters based on modern urban planning and architectural ideas outside those cities' historical cores. Istanbul in the nineteenth century did not have the economic means to remake itself in the grand manner of Paris or Vienna. While grand redevelopment schemes were occasionally drawn up, implementing them proved unfeasible; instead the state redeveloped

neighborhoods here and there as fires periodically cleared out sections of the dense urban fabric.

Other than this piecemeal restructuring, the major changes to the urban landscape in this period were not state-implemented, despite the fact that most historical scholarship has tended to focus on state intervention. It is only recently that historians are starting to focus on the individual actors, many if not most of them non-Muslim, that are responsible for creating the urban landscape that has survived to the present (see Girardelli 2007; Ozil 2013 and 2015). While never colonized, historians have argued that Istanbul nevertheless developed more along the lines of the colonial model of a physically, architecturally, and socially divided city, with Europeans and "Europeanized" Ottomans choosing increasingly to live across the Golden Horn in European-style apartment buildings. Unlike a true colonial city, however, Pera never became a uniformly European neighborhood physically or demographically, and even though it was repeatedly selected to be the showcase modern district of the city, infrastructural deficiencies persisted throughout the Ottoman period (Çelik, 1993, p. xvi).

While the walled settlement of Galata has been inhabited since Byzantine times and working-class neighborhoods had later sprung up along the shores of the Golden Horn and the Bosporus, the hillsides of Pera remained covered primarily by vinyards and cemeteries. On the ridge, along what would become the Grand Rue de Pera (today's İstiklal Avenue), these rural areas began to be replaced in the seventeenth century by the residences of the Dutch, French, English, Genoese, and Venetian ambassadors (Çelik, 1993, p. 30). These embassy buildings were built in wood in local styles; Paolo Girardelli (2007) notes that up until the nineteenth century there appears to have been no real visible distinction, either in exterior form or interior organization, between Muslim and non-Muslim residential architecture. This began to change after a fire in 1831, starting with the construction of a new Russian embassy that was so much more prominent and grandiose than its surrounding neighborhoods that people arriving in Istanbul from the sea are said to have mistaken it for the Ottoman palace (Girardelli & Neumeier, 2016). As the embassies started competing with each other to build more prominent and magnificent edifices in the European style (the British embassy was even based on Lord Elgin's home in Scotland),

they were joined by prominent local families, many of them non-Muslim, who began to relocate from crowded neighborhoods in the old city to hilltop mansions in Pera.

The new buildings constructed in Galata and Pera represented a desire to create a particular urban form that was identified with European modernity; a high-rise mixture of apartments, theatres, department stores, arcades, offices and hotels. The most prestigious, including many embassies, churches, schools, and commercial buildings, were in neoclassical, Art Nouveau, neo-gothic, or orientalist styles, largely conforming to European tastes at the time; apartment buildings had interior layouts arranged along corridors (see Girardelli 2007, Ozil 2013, Kolonas 2005). Inside these new buildings, and especially in the structures along the Grand Rue, were European-style shops featuring imported goods from Europe, and often kept by Greeks, Italians, Frenchmen, and other non-Muslims. While many of the shopkeepers and shoppers were non-Muslim, members of the Muslim Ottoman elite were also known to patronize the stores along the Grand Rue, such as the French-style Levantine-owned LeBon pastry shop, which featured large French tiles depicting the four seasons in Art Nouveau style, and a pastry oven that was imported from France (Özlü, 2013). These imported French details in a European-style building allowed the Ottoman elite to participate in a more authentically European / Western / Modern luxury lifestyle, and to help make the case to other European countries that the Ottomans were worthy of Great Power status (See for example Boyar & Fleet, 2010, chapter 8). This view of late Ottoman Beyoğlu – an implicitly[4] cosmopolitan setting for luxurious Europeanizing consumption – is the one that has come to dominate in the marketing of the area, and is the understanding that we will encounter again in later chapters.[5]

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[4] Without bothering to identify their nationalities or ethnicities (presumably assuming it will be obvious), Boyar and Fleet provide names of shop owners like Cosma Vuccino, Boğos Torkulyan, Papadopulo and Leonlides, and Mayer. They identify the Europeanness of the department stores and shops too solely by names such as Bon Marché, Pazar Alman, and Hristodulos bookstore (Boyar & Fleet, 2010). This same tactic of having recognizably non-Muslim names as an indicator of diversity is used by the Tarlabaşı 360 website (see chapter 4).

[5] Census numbers support this understanding. In 1885 Istanbul as a whole was 44 percent Muslim and 15 percent foreign. However the sixth district, which at the time was composed of Pera, Galata, and Tophane, was fully 47 percent foreign and 32 percent non-Muslim Ottoman, with only 21 percent Muslim. In contrast the three districts within the Roman walls south of the Golden Horn were 55 percent Muslim and only 1.5 percent foreign (Çelik 2003, p. 38).

As the neighborhood quickly expanded downhill from the ridge, it eventually merged with the uphill expansion of the working class neighborhoods below, leading to a continuously urbanized area whose inhabitants' socio-economic status descended more or less in tandem with their elevation. As one descended the hillside into the neighborhoods of Tarlabaşı, Kasımpaşa, Dolapdere, and Tophane, one encountered the petit-bourgeoisie, the working classes, and the urban poor. Ayşe Ozil (2015) argues that Tarlabaşı in this period represented a new kind of urbanity with a mixed socioeconomic population, falling somewhere between the luxury neighborhoods around the Grand Rue and the working-class neighborhoods below. Some middle class residents, among them doctors, lawyers, and architects, built large apartment buildings in the neighborhood. Other lower and lower-middle-class residents provided services for the wealthier inhabitants higher up, working as tailors, waiters, petty merchants, and prostitutes. She notes that there was particular effort paid on the part of the prestigious Greek schools to encourage the poor Greek families of Tarlabaşı to send their children to school, which met with some success.

Some tailors living in the neighborhood appear to have been involved in the management of brothels; indeed, Beyoğlu as a whole had been known for prostitution since at least the conquest (Mansel, 1995, p. 14). By the late Ottoman period this profession showed the same elevation-linked economic stratification as the overall neighborhood. Those that worked on Abanoz (Halas) Sokak, very near the Rue and famous for its brothels to this day, catered to an upper-level clientele. The brothels in Tarlabaşı, appear to have had a dodgier reputation; Ozil notes they were known as frequent sites of shoot-outs.

Housing in Tarlabaşı reflected its middle and lower-class populations. In June 1870 a fire destroyed more than three thousand houses, including much of Tarlabaşı and the entire northern side of the Grande Rue between Taksim and Galatasaray. A master plan was drawn up to remap the streets in the burned area to feature squares and a greatly-widened Tarlabaşı Boulevard which would have rivaled the Grand Rue, but due to its prohibitively high cost the project was scrapped, and the neighborhood was rebuilt largely on the same streets as before the fire, with only minor street-straightening (Çelik, 1993). However, the new buildings that were built along those streets were in a different style, either row houses or a type sometimes called "Tanzimat boxes" (Girardelli, 2007). This

hybrid building type flourished in the working-class neighborhoods around Pera, including Tarlabaşı in the period after the fire. Since the local administration had recently made construction in brick or stone (*kargir)* mandatory, the new buildings were less fire-prone and expected to survive much longer than their wooden counterparts. While all buildings required state permission to be built, their construction was mostly undertaken by private individuals. On the whole they featured regular, simple, and symmetrical facades with some classical elements, but incorporated some local designs like bay windows and centralized plans of rooms branching off a central hall. While art historians have tended to emphasize the hybrid nature of these buildings, in the popular discourse the "European" for "foreign" aspects of the buildings would come to be emphasized (Çelik, 1993).

2.2 The Neighborhood in the Nationalist Imagination

Çelik's concept of Ottoman Pera as a pseudo-colonial district set in contrast to what is sometimes termed the "historical peninsula" (or even "the Muslim city") has been a popular trope for centuries. Tursun Bey in the 15th century, Evliya Çelebi in the 17th, Lady Mary Wortley Montagu in the 18th, Ahmed Cevded Paşa in the 19th (Boyar & Fleet, 2010, p. 320) – all of them mention a vast difference between the neighborhoods to the north of the Golden Horn and those to its south. In the earlier Ottoman period this difference caused Beyoğlu to be seen negatively by local Muslim writers, but positively by Europeans, who saw it as a place of "liberty;" later, however, as the Ottoman threat to Europe decreased, it came to be seen by Europeans as a sort of cheap imitation of the West, a sentiment which was shared by many later Ottoman writers.

Nationalist historiography looks upon cultural and ethnic diversity with suspicion. Since the nation-state bases its legitimacy on a homogeneous population, diversity is seen as a threat to sovereignty, and those groups that don't fit into the national narrative start to be perceived as "foreign." In Turkey "Turkishness" was originally conceptualized primarily in religious terms, and only secondarily in linguistic terms; the Greek-Turkish population exchange of 1923, for example, resettled people based solely on religious grounds, regardless of what language they spoke (Hirschon, 2003). Because of this focus

on religion, efforts at demographic engineering were primarily directed at the various non-Muslim groups who had lived alongside the Turkish-speaking Muslims for centuries, but were now increasingly perceived as potential enemies. Geographies that were associated with non-Muslim populations thus became suspect themselves.

In light of this it is hardly surprising that the buildings, streets, and spaces of Pera and Galata were perceived very negatively by Turkish Nationalist writers of the late empire and early republic. Arus Yumul (2010) argues that the neighborhood represented an intermediate category that was "'both inside and outside' the newly constituted borders of the Turkish Republic, a suburb that defied the distinction between 'us' and 'them' and thus symbolized the mixing of cultures" (p. 66). In an era of ideally homogenous nation-states, Pera presented a physical space that was the "center of decadence, estrangement, materialism, debauchery, moral depravity, artificiality, cosmopolitan degeneracy and of foreign cultural invasion" – or, as one writer put it, Pera was "a prostitute lodging in the bosom of Turkishness" (p. 67). Novels like Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's *Sodom ve Gomore* show corrupt and decadent Levantines, foreigners, and Ottoman bureaucrats naturally at home in the landscape of Beyoğlu.[6] The theme of the neighborhood as a site of prostitution is echoed again in Ömer Seyfettin's (2002) story "The Collection," written in 1914 and set very near the site of the Tarlabaşı 360 project. It introduces a rich, cultured, francophone, and modern Levantine family who turn out to be high-class prostitutes who pimp out both mother and daughter to the narrator, and whoever can pay their astronomical price. It is certainly no accident that they live in an elegant modern apartment building with a Greek doorman, down the street from the Armenian-owned Tokatlıyan Hotel, in the heart of Pera.

These negative views manifested themselves violently across the country over the course of the twentieth century, and Beyoğlu was no exception. Beginning with a massive state-initiated boycott of foreign and Ottoman non-Muslim businesses in 1911 (Üngör and Polatel, 2011, p. 61), a process of economic and demographic engineering began that would all but rid Istanbul of its former style of diversity. In 1915 the prominent heads of the Armenian community were rounded up and deported, setting in motion events that

[6] A number of works have been written about the nationalist depictions of Pera in this period, including Boyar and Fleet (2010, chapter 8), Özpalabıyıklar (2000).

would lead to the complete decimation of the Ottoman Armenian community (p. 65). While Istanbul Greeks were exempt from the exchange of populations between Greece and Turkey, due to emigration during the Greco-Turkish War their population had been reduced to 100,000 by 1924 (Hirschon, 2003, p. 8). Those who remained faced bouts of violence in the following decades, most notably the events of 6 and 7 September 1955, in which Greek-owned businesses were attacked by state-sponsored mobs after false reports of a bomb attack at the birthplace of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk in Thessaloniki (Kuyucu, 2005, p. 361). A large number of Greeks were also forced to leave during the height of the Cyprus conflict in 1964 when the Turkish government cancelled the Turkish citizenship of all dual Turkish-Greek nationals, their property confiscated by the state or left vacant (Mills, 2010, p. 28-9). The "citizen speak Turkish" campaign publically discouraged the use of languages other than Turkish, further emphasizing the minority status of other ethnic groups and leading to public harassment, in Istanbul especially of Jews, who historically spoke Judeo-Spanish (Çağaptay, 2006, p. 25). The Wealth Tax of 1942 was levied most heavily against non-Muslims in Istanbul, resulting in the confiscation of large numbers of minority properties by the state, and the emigration of large numbers of minority citizens, particularly Jews (Aktar, 2013). The Turkish government was also involved in the 1934 anti-Jewish pogroms in Thrace, which contributed to a general sense of insecurity among the Jewish population in Turkey; many have since moved to Israel (Bayraktar, 2006). Taken together these actions by the state (though carried out with larger or smaller degrees of popular support) had the effect of nearly eliminating the non-Muslim population of the city and the country; today Turkey is home to approximately 3,000 Greeks, 50,000-60,000 Armenians (Karimova & Deverell, 2001, p. 11), and 23,000 Jews (Minority Rights Group International, 2016).

The removal or destruction of the non-Muslim communities created a social vacuum since, with very few exceptions, there had been no native Muslim bourgeoisie that could replace the departing minorities. By distributing their confiscated properties and movable assets to new Turkish Muslim businesses and individuals, the state was able to decide who would step in to take the place of these departed minorities. This marked the beginning of the heavily centralized, étatist regime that endeavored to transform not just the economic and demographic nature of the country, but nearly every aspect of life to

match its idealized view of a modern Turkish nationalist society (Keyder, 1994, p. 45-53). From the abolition of the Caliphate and the move of the capital to Ankara, to laws governing proper headwear and which alphabet to use, the state went to great lengths to create an appearance of rupture with the Ottoman past.

One powerful way the state illustrated this desired rupture was through urban planning, which in the early and mid 20th century focused on destroying the "traditional" fabric of the city. Whereas in the late Ottoman period interventions were limited to areas destroyed by fire, in the second half of the 20th century massive boulevards began to slice through the city, radically changing the character and connectedness of many neighborhoods (Gül, 2009). Modernizing reforms in urban space aimed to shatter the *mahalle* pattern of close social relationships centered around a neighborhood imam; in other words, to liberate the individual from "the idiocy of traditional, community-oriented life" (p. 79). Adopting the language of modernism, these changes were described as respecting Turkish civilization, as opposed to recreating the orientalist fantasies of Europeans: "we would like to see Istanbul regularized according to such aesthetic parameters that no traveler could find a fault, not in the mystic atmosphere Pierre Loti was fond of" (Niyazi Ahmet, quoted in Açıkgöz, 2014, p. 182). Even after the one-party period ended the government continued to follow urban planning principles established in the early republic, plowing boulevards through central districts (including Tarlabaşı) and destroying huge swathes of the historical city (Gül, 2009).

Ümit Fırat Açıkgöz (2014) argues that because of the continued presence of non-Muslims in Istanbul, and the lingering threat posed by Greek irredentism, the major focus of historical preservation efforts in the early republic was on Islamic Ottoman monuments. Turkish/Islamic monuments were seen as a justification for the existence of Turks in the region, and thus an argument towards ownership of the land by Turkey. Monuments by Sinan and other Ottoman artists were seen as important by Turkish nationalists, since they "confirm our right to exist in this country" and "in addition to being solidified and indestructible evidence of our existence in this country, the Turkish monuments possess political significance that is more substantial than their scientific and aesthetic values" (p. 181). These monuments also served as counterpoints to orientalist claims of inferiority by Europeans, and as evidence of the existence of Turkish civilization. It's notable, however,

that preservation focused primarily on the form of the buildings, rather than their function; Topkapı Palace and Hagia Sophia were both protected as museums rather than a palace and a mosque, becoming sites of rupture between the "outdated" imperial and Muslim Ottoman state and the self-proclaimed modern secular republic. Many charitable foundations too were divided and their various properties given over to new uses, even as the buildings themselves were maintained. Stripped of their former uses, these buildings could be seen as markers of Turkish architectural genius, rather than symbols of the Ottoman state.

The overwhelming focus of preservation was monumental architecture, and indeed a regulation of 1933 specified that monuments were to be surrounded by a ten meter strip of open land, paving the way for demolitions of domestic architecture (Güçhan and Kurul 2009, p. 27). Furthermore, the emphasis on building a new, modern state tended to override interest in the preservation of anything other than these monuments (Açıkgöz, 2014, p. 178). When domestic architecture received attention at all it was only wooden "Turkish" houses that were studied, and even then not so much for preservation as to provide a library of forms that later nationalist architecture could draw on to create an authentically Turkish modern style. This idea was advanced particularly by Sedad Hakkı Eldem, but it attracted few followers; for most architects of the early to mid 20th century, international styles were more attractive (Altınyıldız, 2007, p. 294). These buildings were often concrete squares and displayed a distinct lack of the detailed surface ornamentation that decorated the façades of the previous era (Bozdoğan and Akcan, 2013). The biggest architectural changes, however, would come in the second half of the century.

2.3 "Invasion" and Subsequent Reassessment

The second half of the 20th century saw massive rural to urban migration throughout Turkey. The population of Istanbul exploded, with the vast majority of migrants coming from rural areas. Many of these migrants settled in the neighborhoods that the non-Muslims had left, including Tarlabaşı, taking over their abandoned houses. At first, confiscated non-Muslim properties were transferred by the state to a new landlord class; the first group of rural migrants, mostly from the Black Sea coast and central

Anatolia, benefited either by purchasing buildings from their official caretakers or by extra-legally appropriating them and retroactively becoming legal owners. Since the 1980s they have been joined by a large number of internally displaced Kurds fleeing the violence in the southeast. These internally displaced people settled in Tarlabaşı in such large numbers that by the 2000 census southeastern Anatolians made up the largest group in the neighborhood. The most common property structure in Tarlabaşı today is de jure ownership. In 2008 the neighborhood was approximately 75% tenants, 20% owners, and 5% occupiers. Partly because of the neighborhood's proximity to Taksim Square and İstiklal Street, two of the city's main commercial and touristic destinations, the majority of the population works in low-end service jobs (Ünsal and Kuyucu, 2010, p. 57).

Interestingly, as these new groups began living in those houses they also started to fill the discursive gap left by the non-Muslims, that is, neighborhoods like Tarlabaşı that had at one time been stigmatized for their non-Muslim populations were now equally stigmatized for their migrant populations. However, while the physical spaces that were stigmatized remained the same, the human target of distain shifted to the new populations. As the memory of the non-Muslim groups became more distant it also started to transform into something positive, a transformation that extended to the physical and cultural remnants of the vanished populations, including architecture.

The following statement by the photographer Ara Güler[7] indicates the attitude of long-time Istanbul residents towards the new populations, and points to those populations as a likely source for nostalgia towards the previous populations:

> "The real population of Istanbul is one million. Today, 13 million people live here. We have been overrun by villagers from Anatolia who don't understand the poetry or the romance of Istanbul. They don't even know the great pleasures of civilization, like how to eat well. They came, and the Greeks, the Armenians and the Jews – who became rich here and made this city so wonderful – left for various reasons. This is how we lost what we had for 400 years."[8] (Kinzer, 1997)

[7] Güler's work from the middle of the twentieth century has itself become a focus of nostalgic consumption (Türeli, 2010)

[8] Güler himself is Armenian, but in the article he says that he has always considered himself "just a Turkish person like any Ahmet or Mehmet" (Kinzer, 1997)

Many other long-time Istanbul residents echo his sentiment. In *Istanbul* Orhan Pamuk's major thesis is that the essence of Istanbul is an all-pervading sense of loss and nostalgia; he echoes Güler (whose work features prominently in the book), writing that Istanbul has been "overrun" by "wave after wave of immigrants," resulting in a city where "for the last 150 years, no one has been able to feel completely at home" (Pamuk, 2005). Put another way:

> Istanbul was conquered again in the 1950s, five hundred years after Sultan Mehmet's victory, by the Anatolian invasion. These people brought their own civilization to my city, instead of trying to adapt to ours. I am sure that none of these people have ever been to an exhibition in their lives, all they think about is getting enough money for a summer house. We became a nation of lahmacun eaters. Fifty years ago no one in Istanbul knew what lahmacun was, or, if we did, we called it pizza. (quoted in Bartu, 2001, p. 138)

These quotes show that, for a certain segment of the population (those that Pamuk might identify as Istanbullus) it is precisely the vanished non-Muslim populations who are now understood to constitute Istanbul's true cultural identity[9]. Pamuk's assertion that the very essence of the city is a melancholic longing is based on this vanished culture. And interestingly, these examples all tie population change to concrete cultural issues (housing style, cuisine, exhibitions) as well as fundamental conceptions of what the city means (romance, civilization, essence). Öncü (2007) notes that for the city's migrant population, "the glorification of Istanbul's ancient history – along with its aesthetic preservation and display in segregated tourist spaces – has become the new exclusionary rhetoric of the moment" (p. 208).

The period in which Istanbul was ignorant of lahmacun is precisely the time in which the non-Muslims were being removed; while the departures and arrivals are not directly related to each other, it's easy to see how they could become connected in the popular imagination. It is also noteworthy that so much of the discourse around the recent immigrants revolves around taste, and their supposed inability to appreciate the "superior"

[9] Of course, the imagining of the non-Muslims as the true character of Istanbul in contrast to the immigrant "Anatolians" overlooks the fact that most of the non-Muslims present in the city in the late Ottoman period were in fact migrants themselves (see Ozil, 2013 and 2015).

urban culture of Istanbul, from architecture to food. Although the Istanbullus scold the newcomers for not assimilating to Istanbul culture, the opposite is also true. "While Pamuk laments the disappearance of a specific Ottoman diversity in the city, he fails to observe, let alone rejoice, in the appearance of another, creative and energetic diversity created by its outsiders and strangers" (Işın, 2010, p. 42).

This sentiment often has a distinctly political bent to it. Ayfer Bartu (1999) notes that people's feelings about the destruction of the historical buildings in Tarlabaşı to build Tarlabaşı Boulevard in the 1980s was tied to their political positions. Today is no different. In a highly personal article that appeared in *The Guardian* soon after a suicide bombing on İstiklal Avenue[10] in March 2016, the author (a foreigner living in Istanbul) noted the street's "sheer cosmopolitan glory" and claimed that the attack was directed at that cosmopolitanism (Crabapple, 2016). A number of the comments on the article, however, opined that Istanbul's cosmopolitanism was "long gone." One of them noted that the

> image of cosmopolitanism that global capital and travelers bring to the select neighborhoods of the city is a mirage… it's a industrial/post-industrial mess of a city filled with migrants from conservative heartland of Anatolia, the kind of people who gave despot Erdogan his first major office, the kind of people who have nothing to do with the cosmopolitan culture that made Istanbul so great… [the attack] is a continuation of a path that the Istanbulites willingly chose nearly a century ago.

This commenter, and others on the article, seem, in fact, to make a connection between the loss of Istanbul's old diversity and the rise of the AKP.

The upsurge of publicly expressed nostalgia for the late Ottoman city, however, is not only a product of elitism, but also coincides with global trends. AlSayyad claims that the modern discourse of globalization obscures a movement towards "cultural differentiation." He argues that "as the nations of the globalized world order become more conscious of their religious, ethnic and racial roots…they will continue to seek forms and norms that represent these subidentities, even if these send confused messages to a global audience" (AlSayyad, 2001, p. 13). The focus on the Ottoman heritage of these

[10] The author referred to İstiklal as both the Broadway and the "Champs Élysée" of Istanbul – the first of many streets we will see compared to that Parisian boulevard, and one of many spelling variations.

neighborhoods, and especially the non-Muslims that used to live there, can be understood as a way of emphasizing the specifically local character of the increasingly globalized city.

Similarly, tourism today has started shifting away from the monumental to focus more on "local heritage" (Shaw, 2005, p. 61). The New York Times travel section, for example, frequently mentions the antique shops of Çukurcuma and the backstreets of Kadıköy (Fowler, 2016), and Orhan Pamuk's Museum of Innocence, tucked away on a back street and offering a decidedly non-monumental view of the city's recent past, is a favorite of the "I'm a traveller not a tourist" crowd. Indeed, of all the short-term visitors and residents I've met in the last four years, as many were reading Orhan Pamuk's memoir-cum-history *Istanbul* as were reading conventional guidebooks. Guidebooks themselves have picked up this strain. The upscale Monocle Travel Guide series' volume on Istanbul, which recommends staying, eating, and shopping at some of the city's most expensive and exclusive places, includes essays urging Karaköy to keep its small business character, and arguing that the *hüzün* that pervades the city is not just paralyzing but productive too; the buildings once inhabited by the Greeks and Armenians (the example is of course Beyoğlu) are now occupied by "new minorities," with neighborhoods like Cihangir now "home to French, Italian and British writers and artists, drawn in part by its disheveled and haunting charms" (Grove & Lord, 2015, p. 73). It is telling that the guidebook, seeking to appeal to an elite global audience, highlights as cosmopolitan the European expatriates in a gentrified (and notoriously insular) neighborhood. Neighborhoods like these offer the perfect combination of global (Western) comforts and local charm; "even though tourists are hardly ever willing to put up with the local living standards, a taste of authenticity on the building facades" is welcomed (Bozdoğan and Akcan, 2013, p. 229).

Müller (1999, p. 365) notes that our view of the city we live in is more influenced by the tourist gaze[11] than we often realize, and that while certainly stronger while visiting other places, doesn't totally vanish when we return home. A localized understanding of the demands of the tourist gaze is illustrated by Daily Sabah's travel section, which seems to

[11] See Urry (1996)

cater to foreigners living or visiting Istanbul.[12] In an article about the hip, gentrified Kadıköy neighborhood of Yeldeğirmeni the author invites us to imagine “a traditional and typical Ottoman neighborhood, with churches, synagogues and mosques” that represent “the cultural mosaic that is inherent in Istanbul's history.” The neighborhood, we are told, features century-old apartments with “bay windows on the front façade and the interiors opening up onto a central courtyard of greenery and trees” that is teeming with art galleries and has become “one of the most popular hotspots for expats in Kadıköy” (Ergil, 2014). This article explicitly connects the architecture with former local diversity and, like the Monocle guidebook, with current international diversity. At the same time, we are told that “tradition and bohemia meet in the most creative of ways, which Turks definitely have a knack for” reminding us of the nationalist context of this diversity.

2.4 Constructing Diversity

As opposed to the early Republican period, in which non-Muslims were still present in the city and their buildings were therefore seen with suspicion, once those minorities were effectively eliminated the perception of them began to change. Amy Mills, in her work on Kuzguncuk, finds that the cosmopolitanism that people today perceive to have existed in the Ottoman past could only be celebrated after the Jews, Armenians, and Greeks who supplied this cosmopolitanism had been removed. This gives those who remain the power to represent the erstwhile non-Muslim other through photographs, music, architecture, and other means. For example, a current resident of Kuzguncuk can point to the Armenian church sitting side by side with a mosque as proof that Muslims and non-Muslims cohabited peacefully, ignoring the fact that the congregation of the 19th century church was replaced by the congregation of the 20th century mosque (Mills, 2010). The voices of those who fled often paint a less-rosy picture of the so-called cosmopolitanism of those times (see Mills, 2008), but since they have been effectively removed from the

[12] In one article titled “Living as a Hipster in Istanbul” (Arsıya, 2015) they take the tourist desire for a simultaneously international and local “authenticity” to its logical extreme.

Turkish context they are now represented not through their physical presence or their stories, but rather through their buildings.

Because the last years of the Ottoman Empire are now long enough ago to not be remembered directly, and because the vanished non-Muslims no longer hold the power of to represent themselves, the Ottoman past becomes “malleable” and thus subject to “great dispute and admiration” (Carney, 2014, p. 19). Ayşe Öncü (2007) argues that for the affluent upper and upper-middle class, intellectuals, and the corporate elite, Istanbul’s late nineteenth century *Belle Epoque* offers a similar promise to that of Istanbul in the future global era; rather than existing as a distant historical event, it represents a “timeless moment bringing together a constellation of elements (a mixture of intellectual freedoms, political emancipation, economic vitality and cultural creativity) and tying them to the present through the idea of 'multiculturalism'” (p. 238). At the same time, she writes, as the Islamist movement has been in local and national power, it has shifted to a neoliberal, religious-nationalist establishment, and “'Islam' has been opened to consumption, continuously performed and displayed as part of the city's 'multicultural' past and present” (p. 244). Ayfer Bartu (1999) argues that for Islamists, Istanbul before the modernizing urban transformations holds a kind of pristine beauty; the inward-looking *mahalles*, each with their own character, are now something to be celebrated. Thus the two groups often portrayed as vying against each other for cultural and political power in Turkey (the Secularists and the Islamists) have both been able to locate in the late 19th century a moment of nostalgic glory.

Indeed, some of the most highly sought-after neighborhoods today are former non-Muslim neighborhoods. Some, such as Kuzguncuk, Galata, Arnavutköy, and Cihangir, are well-established gentrified areas, which gentrified largely through the efforts of individual property owners. In contrast to the writers of the early 20th century who saw the apartment buildings of Beyoğlu as sites of corruption and vice, it is those same buildings that drive the attraction to those neighborhoods today; real estate agents have learned that people will happily pay extra to live in a coveted “Rum evi.” Tolga Islam conducted interviews with gentrifiers in the Galata neighborhood in 2002, finding that they were highly educated, multi-lingual, and lived in small family groups, all unusual for the city as a whole. When asked to rank the factors that were most important to them in choosing to live in the

neighborhood, the most commonly emphasized aspect was living in an old house, followed by proximity to "cultural and leisure activities;" among the least important are affordability and "living side by side with lower status groups" (Islam, 2005, p. 132-3). The appreciation of these buildings, once seen as dens of sin and symbols of foreign penetration, is today a marker of cultural capital in Istanbul, so much so that migrants from the countryside are mocked for their perceived inability to live "properly" in a building like this.

As the power of nostalgia to turn once-impoverished neighborhoods into fully integrated spaces of consumption has become more apparent the state has started to pay attention. State-sponsored urban renewal projects like Tarlabaşı serve to create more readily consumable areas both through creating a readily consumable atmosphere of cosmopolitan nostalgia and European modernity, and by creating a space for offices, luxury apartments, and global brands. In order to implement these plans, they started making new laws related to preservation, the most relevant of which was law 5633, passed in July 2005. It allows neighborhoods marked as conservation areas to be developed as urban renewal projects, either through restoration or by demolishing the structure and rebuilding it in a way that respects both the historical conditions of the buildings, and the development potential of the site. Municipalities are allowed to partner with private developers, or with TOKİ. While it uses language that appears to require public participation and mutual agreements with owners, on closer inspection "public participation" is no more than notifying residents of centrally made decisions, and allowance is made for expropriation if an agreement cannot be reached. The law has been used to justify a number of large-scale urban renewal projects in Istanbul, including the Tarlabaşı project. The first project to be completed, however, was the Sulukule project, which completely demolished a majority-Roma neighborhood and generated a highly-visible opposition movement, which however was unable to stop the development (Dinçer, 2011).

State-led urban renewal projects in historical areas, like the Demirören shopping center and Fransız Sokak, are interpretations of the Ottoman past. They do not offer a literal replication of the Ottoman past, but rather infuse a contemporary frame with a nostalgic feeling to attract consumers. At the same time, however, they serve to reinforce a

certain understanding of Turkey's past, and make an argument for its future. Girardelli (2007) attributes the focus on these specific buildings to the "collective realization that the Levantine heritage represents one of the few links with the past on the scale of the residential and urban fabric, in cities which preserved mostly outstanding monuments of older epochs" (p. 127). While this may be true, it is perhaps also the visual Europeanness of these neighborhoods (represented in part by their histories of diversity) that lead the state to focus on them. Müller (1999, p. 366) quotes a survey taken in Germany that asked what people imagine a city to have, the vast majority said a city should have a town hall, a church or cathedral, and a marketplace, and that these are the very things promised by tourist guides in all European cities. Beyoğlu, in fact, fits this description very well: it has churches, synagogues, pedestrianized shopping streets, a large square, European consulates and cultural centers, and even a beaux-arts town hall. The neighborhood, in this sense is an excellent site from which to advance claims of Turkey as an integral part of Europe.

While the earlier republican era portrayed itself as European/modern by focusing on its own nationalism and modernism, the Europeanness that is being cultivated now is one of cosmopolitanism. This is in line with the global human rights regime and the European Union, which have increased their emphasis on protecting minority rights and celebrating multiculturalism. Marcy Brink-Danan argues that in Europe today the presence of Jews is used as a proof of cosmopolitanism and a rebuff to claims of intolerance by other groups, so much so that "to be a European city, it seems, is to 'have Jews'" (p. 281). In light of this, she argues, Jews are "called upon" in Turkey's EU negotiations to prove a "recognition of diversity" (p. 282). Beyoğlu has emerged as a primary site of performing Europeanness by virtue of its important Jewish history and general visibility, a fact she attributes more to the practical goal of arguing Turkey's closeness to the EU rather than to nostalgia. Today in the Taksim metro station, frequently visited by tourists to the area, one encounters a series of large photographs depicting the history of transportation in Istanbul. In the first, labeled "advertisements in Tünel," the advertisements in question are in Armenian, Hebrew, French and other European languages; the second, labeled "on the way to Kurtuluş," shows a tram bearing the old Greek name for that neighborhood, Tatavla. In one of the sites most strongly associated with modernity (a metro) the city has chosen to illustrate its cosmopolitan past.

Historical preservation in Turkey today relies heavily on use value and newness value. Historical buildings are restored so thoroughly they look as if they were newly built (and in many cases they are, since "restoration," especially for minor monuments like houses and barracks, often means being completely demolished and rebuilt). Masterpieces from the Ottoman classical age are getting glassed-in porches, machine-made wall-to-wall carpeting, modern windows, and fresh paint jobs[13], all of which serve to keep the buildings up to modern and expectations, while removing the accretions of time and the signs of age. This restoration style is read negatively by many visitors from western Europe or (especially) North America, who expect a 500-year-old building to show signs of age; many people I've brought to the famous Süleymaniye Mosque have expressed disappointment that the building didn't "feel old." Uğur Tanyeli, a professor of the history of architecture, echoes this and points to an emotionally political reason for this: "In Turkey, the historical has to be brand-new and squeaky clean. So what is actually wanted is the illusion of history – It has to be historical, but it is not allowed to carry any baggage of the past, or any of history's patina, there can't be anything about it that creates unease" (Letsch, 2012).

Religious properties that had been given over to other uses or abandoned in the early republican period are once again hosting Islamic organizations, many of whom are restoring the buildings as close as possible to their original forms. Walton (2010) notes that "the neo-Ottoman practices and representations" that these organizations utilize "participate in many of the same modes of publicness as Turkish secularism, even as they also call into question principal secularist presuppositions and emphases." He also notes that the organizations are quietly critical of the secular state, but they prefer disengagement through the construction of separate pious spaces – it allows them to stay within the politics of civility in Turkish public sphere while they "decouple publicness from the assumptions and imperatives of Kemalist secularism" (p. 90). The renewal projects in Beyoğlu, I argue, are looking to implement a public consumerist space that is not tied to the Kemalist project, even while implementing the same top-down process.

[13] The sixteenth century Yavuz Sultan Selim Mosque, for example, features all of these things after its renovation

One form of the global reaction against modernism is the emergence of postmodernism as a trend in architecture, which in Turkey has led to an increase in the use of historicizing elements such as tile roofs, wide overhangs, and bay windows, even in suburban gated communities. One major characteristic of this change is a shift away from the rigidly demarcated planning zones of the 20th century, to mixed-use development, which "has emerged as a *recombination* of work, dwelling and recreation in a single project, all arranged around consumption, namely retail shopping, which functions as the centerpiece and generator of neo-liberal economies across the globe" (Bozdoğan and Akcan, 2013, p. 207, emphasis mine). The fact that it is described here as a *re*combination is indicative of one of the reasons this style of development is so attractive to developers today.

CHAPTER 3

DISCOURSE

A man sets off to visit the past. Not today's past, though, but the past of tomorrow. His task is to capture, with his camera, the faces of the men, women, and buildings who have no future in the streets where they now stand. From his starting point between an Ottoman mosque and a nostalgiafied shopping mall on 21st century İstiklal Street, he walks down the gentle grade of Gum Tree Lane until, as he passes Hacı Abdullah Restaurant, he begins "to breathe the Tarlabaşı air" (Tatlıcan, 2014). Crossing the boulevard he stands under a rainstorm originating from the clouds of dripping laundry above him, and surveys the ancient (well, oldish) world in front of him; a world on the brink of extinction. The "reality" he sees there "hits [him] like a slap in the face" (ibid.). He and his camera wander the streets, enter some of the houses and businesses there, and even grab a drink at a blue-tiled nightclub where an illiterate Roma singer ends the night with a heartfelt rendition of Ferdi Tayfur's arabesque classic "Gurbetin Kahrını Sen Çekemezsin" ("the best moment of my Tarlabaşı shoot!"[14] our man gushes). After learning so much about the soon-to-vanish neighborhood, he sums up his adventure with newfound understanding: "I would like to say, 'there's nothing to fear here. When you are going to Taksim you can comfortably park your car here.' But what a pity that Tarlabaşı, the attraction center of one age, is the crime center of today." Well, he admits, "I don't know what the statistics say but that's the view from outside."

Indeed, after filming a documentary and interviewing residents in the neighborhood, all İsa Tatlıcan can say is, essentially, "I'm no expert, but that place is

[14] These photos are in fact stills from a documentary film that Tatlıcan directed. While outside the scope of this thesis, the film presents the same narrative seen here, and it does so with the help of experts and residents, and liberal usage of sad music. The video can be seen on YouTube here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DlszQ9VErA.

probably pretty unsafe." The captions under his photographs describe what he observes and give facts about the neighborhood, but the text is written like a travel report, as if the author is venturing into a foreign land. In contrast to the official photographs of the development project (see chapter 4), Tatlıcan enters the houses and businesses in the neighborhood. Nevertheless, no real effort is made to tell the stories of the people living there beyond some large generalizations. He doesn't mention any resident's desires to stay, or uncertainties about where they will go; instead he claims unfeelingly that with the coming urban renewal project, "the 150-year-old neighborhood and its inhabitants are silently (*sessiz sedasız*) saying goodbye to Istanbul." Goodbye to Istanbul, as if they are sailing off for greener pastures, or simply vanishing into the pages of history.

Tatlıcan and his photographs, which appeared in the popular newspaper *Sabah*'s online version, will serve as a guide for this chapter, leading us through the official discourse about the neighborhood, seeing buildings and people as outsiders see them, and even venturing into people's homes and businesses (legal or, more often, not) without ever stopping to listen to their stories. Unlike in the following chapter I am not concerned here with a visual analysis of the series itself, but rather will treat it as a jumping-off point to discuss some of the wider themes that circulate about the neighborhood, its history, the people in it, and the future.

My analysis in this chapter is based primarily on articles from four newspapers, all of which I accessed online: two Turkish-language publications, *Sabah* and *Cumhuriyet,* and two English-language ones, *Daily Sabah* and *Hürriyet Daily News*. I selected *Sabah* because it is close to the ruling AKP government and tends to present a very favorable view of the renewal projects. *Cumhuriyet* represents a more classical Turkish secular perspective, often critical of the ruling party and historically close to the CHP. In light of Müller's thoughts on the tourist gaze, I have also chosen to look at the two main English-language dailies of Turkey, *Daily Sabah* and *Hürriyet Daily News*.[15] Since these two newspapers are clearly targeted at a foreign audience, I thought it would be interesting to examine how these projects are presented to readers who may be less familiar with the

[15] My initial plan was to take as a second English-langauge source *Today's Zaman*, which would have added a third ideological perspective to the analysis. With the government takeover of that publication, however, its archive became difficult to access. Deciding to stick with the English-language theme, I settled on *Hürriyet Daily News* instead, although its editorial position is not as far from *Cumhuriyet* as *Today's Zaman* would have been.

debates within the country. I decided to look at both newspapers since the total number of articles produced in English is low (*Daily Sabah* returned only three results, one of which was a translation of a Turkish article).

For all of them I searched for articles that contained the word "Tarlabaşı." Due to the large number of articles I have focused in particular on articles from January 1st, 2010 to December 31st, 2011, representing the time in which construction was beginning on the project, as well as articles from January 1st, 2015 to May 31st, 2016, as the first phase of the project was nearing completion. However, I also skimmed the headlines of articles from the years in between, and have used articles related to pertinent events (as when the project "won" an award in 2013; see below).[16]

The chapter draws most heavily from the Turkish and English versions of *Sabah*. This reflects my interest in how the government and developers try to justify the project, since the majority of articles in *Cumhuriyet* and *Hürriyet Daily News* that dealt with the project in detail focused on opposition movements against it. However, reading those two newspapers was especially helpful for showing two things. First, that a lot of the anxieties about the neighborhood that the pro-development forces activate are present across the board. Secondly, they served to highlight some of the aspects of the neighborhood that the supporters of the project won't mention, even though they could potentially help their case with conservative readers. The biggest example of this is the almost complete silence on the existence of the neighborhood's large transgender population. *Hürriyet Daily News* made one passing reference to transgender residents in the neighborhood (see below), while neither version of *Sabah* mentioned them once in the period I looked at. *Cumhuriyet* ran a couple of articles about transgender sex workers that mentioned Tarlabaşı, although only one of them was explicitly about sex workers in the neighborhood (Acarer and Yılmaz, 2014). Given Tarlabaşı Boulevard's strong cultural identification as a location of prostitution and the neighborhood's fame as the home of many trans people, the total silence of the website and the pro-government newspapers is particularly striking. It would

[16] Many (if not most) articles in all Turkish-language publications including the word Tarlabaşı are notifications of road closures on Tarlabaşı Boulevard, either due to weather, accidents, construction (particularly during the pedestrianization of Taksim Square), or protests. Since Tarlabaşı is located very near to Istanbul's preeminent sites of protest (Taksim Square and İstiklal Street) a search for the name of the neighborhood presents a summary of major demonstrations; the Gezi protests in 2013 led to many articles, for example, and every year there is a spike in the days surrounding May 1st. Most of these articles mention the neighborhood only in passing.

appear that transgender people are so much of a taboo that they cannot even be mentioned, even to justify the destruction of the neighborhood.

The chapter is divided into two parts. It begins with a section discussing the views of various actors about how much power the municipality should have, and the historical role the government has played in the neighborhood. Secondly I briefly explore three of the major emotions that outsiders feel about Tarlabaşı today (fear, embarrassment,[17] and hope) and how the urban renewal project addresses them.

3.1 A Municipality Does More Than You Think

The first thing Tatlıcan tells us about the neighborhood is some history. After mentioning that minorities used to live there, he discusses their departure in detail: "the people still living in the neighborhood after the 1924 population exchange were forced out of the neighborhood by political events including the 1941 wealth tax, the 1955 events, the 1964 forced migration and the 1974 war in Cyprus." By referring to them as political events he makes a claim about the responsibility for the departures. Another column in *Sabah* is more explicit: "their shops were taken over by those who came in the wave of migrations that the planners of the 1960s foolishly encouraged" (Uluç, 2016). Tatlıcan continues, "The hole left by the departed minorities was filled first by migrants from Anatolia, then by Kurds whose villages had been destroyed, Roma, Africans, Syrians and other refugees. Together with the migrants came collapse."

These articles, along with the project's website (see chapter 4) offer some of the most direct claims that the state was responsible for the transformation of the neighborhood. Even most academic articles (particularly those from urban planning and architecture departments) about gentrification and urban history in Istanbul gloss over these details. One implication of this claim is that, since the state is seen to have been responsible for the "fall," it is the state's responsibility to recover it. In Beyoğlu it seems the state agrees.

[17] Embarrassment that such a neighborhood could exist in the heart of the historical and touristic center of the city.

Asked about the role of the Beyoğlu municipality since the Tanzimat era, Demircan gave a summary of the role of the local government in designing the city:

> It is possible to discuss a municipality in two main parts. First, a municipality is responsible for basic city works such as cleaning, lighting and garbage collecting. On the other side, defining the appearance of streets, functions of buildings, the image the municipality presents to visitors, are the most important job for us. When you think of İstiklal Street's historic atmosphere, *it is the municipality that gave the street such an impressive look*. In each period, a different style emerged and introduced another dimension to Beyoğlu. To illustrate, we encouraged the use of French windows at certain cafes and many others took it as an example later. A municipality does more than you think. You may compare it to a fashion designer or a life mentor, both of whom makes your life or appearance better. *Municipalities shape your life*. For a long time, municipalities were seen as organization that merely clean your street. However, these entities have a main mission which is to design schools, car parks, religious places and, more importantly, *the identity of a city*. The Beyoğlu Municipality has always been associated with culture and art, not with trade or industry. If you ask how the district has gained this identity, we should the go back to the times of Ottoman Sultan Beyazıt (Dark, 2015; emphasis mine).

Demircan's vision of the municipality is all-powerful, responsible for giving Beyoğlu not only its services but also its identity. The article discusses the creation of the sixth district in the late nineteenth century, and seems to indicate a sense of strong-municipality leadership since those days. Demircan's view of urbanism reflects Boym's observation that planning today "imagines its future by improvising on its past" (2001, p. 75). Speaking of Beyoğlu Municipality's various renovation projects, he notes that the municipality has a principle of "designing for the future while sustaining our traditional roots," which means conveying "the message that new things continuously enter our lives, but we should use them to polish the past. In the restoration process, the past and the present supported each other" (Dark, 2015). This past, of course, is not the recent past, but rather that more distant, mythical past that was destroyed by the previous government.

Cihan Tuğal (2009) finds the AKP mayor of the Sultanbeyli municipality planning the pedestrianization and aesthetic modification of a street, which was opposed by some tradesmen who have, he said, no "urban consciousness" or "aesthetic and architectural concerns," but only "commercial concerns." Another administrator notes: "If we change the physical structure, people's ideas will change" (p. 208). Just like Demircan, the mayor

has a concept of how the city should be, and anyone who has a different idea is selfish and holding the neighborhood back. This hearkens back to modernist planning schemes, even though the ultimate goal here is to create a neoliberal space of consumption rather than a space of Kemalist nationalism.

Because the municipality is understood to shape the identity of the city, those in the government are frustrated and almost bewildered by the legal and political challenges that have been brought against them. People who oppose the government's plans are referred to as *istemezükçü*,[18] an old word that means something like "naysayer" but which carries implications of Janissary conservatives who opposed the modernizing reforms of the sultan in the nineteenth century. Demircan's understanding of the *istemezükçüs* is that they are a "professional protest group" who

> comes out against every new development. They don't want us to restore the Emek cinema which had been abandoned to its fate, or to restore the Atatürk Cultural Center, or rebuild the Gezi barracks, or reorganize Taksim square, or build the Taksim Mosque. They want us to just leave everything where it is to collapse. This is orientalism. These so-called intellectuals live comfortable lives and yet say to the poor people "don't change your condition." This is a psychological problem, an arrogant attitude (Öztürk, 2013).

Saying that these groups are orientalist recalls the early republican desire to create a modern, Western city instead of the orientalist vision of Pierre Loti (see chapter 2). The irony, of course, is that it is now the secular elite who is accused of orientalism (although a *Hürriyet Daily News* (Branding the 'Istanbul Cool', 2010) article points out that some tourists are also interested in the impoverished "reality" of the city).

Local opposition to the project, for example individual voices, are trivialized or explained away. At a funeral in 2014 a man yelled at Demircan, "you destroyed my home! I hope you too sleep in this coffin!" *Sabah* quickly published an article claiming that they had learned that the man "had been paid one million Turkish lira for his home, which anyway he was using as a storehouse for illegal alcohol" (Öztürk, 2014). Nowhere on the pages of *Sabah* or any promotional material for the project are any negative words against

[18] Or sometimes the *istemezük korosu*, the "chorus of naysayers"

the project heard from residents. This is a great contrast to the other two newspapers I analyzed (see below).

Even at the official level the voices of the inhabitants seem to be ignored. Kuyucu and Ünsal (2010) conducted interviews with officials which revealed that their idea of "participation" was the inhabitants' acceptance of, or objection to the projects, after their official approval (which as we've seen is allowed by law 5366). *Hürriyet Daily News* noted that some people, such as Tayfun Kahraman, the chair of the City Planning Chamber's Istanbul branch, have criticized the mayor for not addressing the social needs of the residents before starting the project, contending that the social problems there will simply be transferred to other areas. Demircan's reaction shows him to essentially agree with this charge: "I am the mayor of Beyoğlu, thus I look at how I can remove problems from my district's borders" (Şenerdem, 2010). Let us now examine who those "problems" might be.

3.2 Fear

Nearly everyone featured in Tatlıcan's photo series is smiling, yet a sense of mild unease pervades. In one photo, taken from a distance, a young man is being searched by police. In another a shoddily-dressed man leaning backwards with narrowed eyelids and a telling grin seems to be high. Throughout the series the shells of buildings seem poised for collapse. And of course there is his comment about the neighborhood being the "crime center" of the city, quoted above. This sentiment is reflected in the general discourse around the neighborhood, which is often described as dark, desperate, inhabited by the poorest of the poor and with a reputation for crime. In the articles I analyzed, reports about crime dominate; drug dealers and users, harassment, dead bodies in suitcases, and other unpleasantries were widely represented. There were also periodic articles about collapsed buildings and fires. In fact, though all the newspapers, advertising materials, and other

sources I've found (both those included in this thesis and elsewhere),[19] fear of the neighborhood has been the dominant sentiment.[20]

The government frequently uses the vulnerability of buildings to earthquakes as a reason to undertake urban renewal projects. This is not without merit; earthquakes have caused extensive damage and great loss of life in Turkey in recent years. Erdoğan has announced a massive nation-wide urban renewal project in large part using the vulnerability to earthquakes as an excuse. The president of one development company notes that people should not worry about the fact that companies like his are making a profit from the urban renewal projects around Istanbul (including Tarlabaşı), since the more important thing is that "60 percent of the buildings in this area are not earthquake resistant [so] in an earthquake we would potentially see a very great loss of life" (Plan Devletten İnşaat Özelden, 2011). In Tarlabaşı too the fear of earthquakes is frequently used as a justification for the destruction of the neighborhood: "Demircan asked whose heart, whose conscience could rest easy when Tarlabaşı is in this condition, and said, 'if there were to be an earthquake in Istanbul today, would we find even two stones still standing on top of each other?'" (Kentsel Dönüşüm Başladı, 2010). The collapse of buildings in the neighborhood, as we have seen, has also been pointed to as a sort of proof that the structures are weak, and would probably not survive an earthquake, although as I noted in the introduction it is often buildings undergoing renovation that collapse.

Both Turkish-language papers featured frequent news about drug raids. A raid in 2014 involved police helicopters lending air support to a joint operation made up of forces from the organized crime, terror, intelligence, narcotics, public order, traffic, and special operations forces; "The searches conducted in the abandoned buildings of Tarlabaşı captured large amounts of ecstasy pills, heroin, and cocaine" (Somer, 2014). Additionally, there were frequent articles about visibly inebriated people threatening people, getting on busses, and generally causing trouble in the neighborhood.

While not always explicitly negative, all of the newspapers and the project's marketing materials portray the neighborhood as one of ethnic difference. Articles about the Roma, Kurds, Africans, and increasingly Syrians living in the neighborhood are

[19] See also Yılmaz (2006, p. 37) on the discoursive fear.

[20] When I first moved to Istanbul I was warned many times by many friends, both local and foreign, to avoid Tarlabaşı.

common. These articles often emphasize the poverty and difficulty that these groups experience, and paint their lives as desperate ones. Tatlıcan's series includes a photo of a BDP-sponsored Newroz sign hanging in the neighborhood (with no comment by Tatlıcan) and a photo of two "children from the southeast making the victory sign."[21] An article from *Cumhuriyet* spoke of authorities "hunting" for Syrian refugees who are living in the abandoned houses of the neighborhood, to be sent to camps if they are found (Çelikkan, 2016). In fact, *Cumhuriyet* in recent years has featured many articles about Syrian refugees in Tarlabaşı, sometimes subtly connecting them to a danger of Islamic terrorism. Indeed, while not as explicitly stated as it is in the discourse around the Okmeydanı urban renewal project, the fear of terrorism is exploited in Tarlabaşı.

The state continues to have a model of an ideal citizen, which it contrasts to those who are not considered "Turkish" either because of their ethnicity or because they refuse to act according to the values of an ideal citizen. These groups are stigmatized and become "disposable" in the eyes of the state. The geographical regions they inhabit are seen as dangerous and in need of securing, either by declaring a "state of exception," as in the majority-Kurdish southeast, or implementing urban renewal projects, as in Istanbul (Mutluer, 2011). A 20-year resident of the neighborhood made this same point, noting, "there are very old buildings in Kurtuluş too. But they want to remove Eastern people from here" (Songün, 2010). Since Tarlabaşı is inhabited by groups that do not fit the model of an ideal citizen, either from the nationalist (correct ethnicity and behavior) or neoliberal (correct value) perspective, and it is located in one of the most central and desirable locations, it has proven to be an irresistible site for transformation. Demircan's concept of a strong municipal government, coupled with public distrust of the population living in the neighborhood, gives him the power to undertake a project of this size.

And it works. An article in *Sabah* from 2014 discussing improvements in various neighborhoods in Istanbul asks, "why have incidents in the neighborhoods that used to be nests of illegal organizations decreased?" The answer for Beyoğlu is, "in this region urban renewal is taking care of it" (Oktay & Kaya, 2014).

[21] The victory sign (also know, for example in the hippie town I'm from, as the "peace sign") is commonly associated with the Kurdish movement in Turkey.

3.3 Embarrassment: Stuffing Mussels the Wrong Way

The first person we meet in Tatlıcan's photo series is, as the caption tells us, "a child mussel-seller." The young man stands behind his tray, hands in his pockets, gazing off camera stoically (Tatlıcan likes this image; it appears, cropped of its surroundings, in the opening montage of the film from which these images come). Behind him is utter ruin: a fragment of a former ceiling is draped limply across its lot, bags of garbage sit on chunks of concrete, and in the distance stands a grey apartment building, its bands of black where once there were windows echoing our young mussel-seller's striped t-shirt. Later in the blue-tiled nightclub we are offered a plate of these delicious stuffed bivalves, but lest our hunger get the better of us Tatlıcan warns: "in Tarlabaşı there are 150 unregistered (*merdiven altı*) stuffed-mussel producers" (Tatlıcan, 2014). In fact, mussels emerge as a theme in the discourse of the neighborhood. In February 2016 both Turkish-language newspapers published photo or video reports about a raid on a basement in Tarlabaşı where stuffed mussels, a popular street food in Istanbul, were being prepared in "stomach turning" conditions (Beyoğlu'nda Midye, 2016; Beyoğlu'nda Mide Bulandıran 2016).[22] The articles feature grainy images of dark-complexioned men in a damp basement surrounded by piles of mussels and stuffing. The Tarlabaşı 360 website also notes the prevalence of mussel-sellers in the neighborhood today. This is done in a section of the website lamenting the state of neighborhood today, and describing the geographic origins of the population living there (see chapter 4).

While the focus on these delicious shellfish may seem almost humorous, their context suggests ethnic undertones. Most mussel-sellers in Istanbul today are Kurds from the southeast, particularly from Mardin. The Kurdish-inhabited part of the country is, however, landlocked,[23] and therefore unlike lahmacun, stuffed mussels can't be a marker

[22] To my admittedly untrained eye, the "stomach turning" conditions in which the mussels are being prepared don't seem radically different from the kitchens of some restaurants I've visited around Istanbul. When I tried to find these articles gain at a later date and searched "mussel" in the website, a surprisingly large number of "mussel operations" came up throughout Turkey.

[23] In Orhan Pamuk's *A Strangeness in My Mind* two young Kurdish boys from Mardin have their hearts set on selling mussels in Istanbul; to them the fact that people from an inland city had cornered the market of a seafood treat is proof that people from Mardin are "exceptionally cunning and clever" (Pamuk, 2015). The municipality, it would seem, disagrees.

of the new "invading" culture that disregards the civilization of Istanbul. In fact, stuffed mussels are a historical local delicacy, one that is frequently associated with Istanbul Armenians; aside from the street, they are sold in Armenian delis to this day. This culinary continuity between Istanbul Armenians and the later Kurdish migrants parallels the wider process of "Anatolians" inhabiting the gap left by the departed non-Muslims. The embarrassingly incorrect way they inhabit the physical spaces and occupational spaces of those who may have lived in them are strongly connected in the pages of *Sabah* and the words of the developers.

Both the English and Turkish language versions of *Sabah* posted articles in late September 2013 reporting that the Tarlabaşı 360 project had been awarded "Best Commercial Renovation / Redevelopment Project in Europe" at that year's International Property Awards, which the Turkish-langauge article called the "Oscars of renovation" (Tabak, 2013). However, according to the award organization's website the project was in fact awarded the "Best Commercial Renovation / Redevelopment Project Turkey," while the Europe-wide award went to another property ("Class A Business Center" in Saint Petersburg).[24] The "winning" project's full-page description in the award committee's annual booklet, clearly intended for a foreign audience, points to the embarrassing conditions of the neighborhood:

> These historical buildings were originally constructed by Levantine architects but later occupied by immigrants from East Anatolia. They brought with them their own culture and lifestyle and even kept livestock in the centre of the city. As they were unaware of the historical value of the properties, they also made alterations to them causing serious structural problems. Each storey and even every room was occupied by different families with unsanitary bathrooms added to each unit (European Property awards: 30).

Regardless of which award was won, the papers and developers took the opportunity to gloat. Demircan announced at the award ceremony that "Tarlabaşı was Istanbul's poisoned

[24] The awards only take into consideration properties that self-submit, and which are limited to six per country per category. There was no runner-up in Turkey, indicating that Tarlabaşı 360 was likely the only project to apply, although the five-star rating it received is based on total points earned rather than rank. In Europe, Russia, Cyprus, and especially Turkey dominate the lists of both winners and "highly commended" properties.

princess. With this project, we are waking up Sleeping Beauty and introducing her to Istanbul residents" (Tarlabaşı, Avrupa'nın en İyi, 2013).

More than once on our journey with Tatlıcan our attention is drawn to the buildings around us: a beautiful Rum interior staircase; two beautiful but hollow shells of former Rum apartments. While Tatlıcan, Demircan, and others claim to appreciate the beauty of these buildings, this is a quality they feel is not shared by their current residents. Tatlıcan claims these people have “lived in the buildings for years without paying rent and made no effort to maintain the buildings.” This is a common trope; Demircan, for example, claimed, “until now, no building in this area has been restored for 50 years. Now tens of buildings have already started to be restored in areas surrounding the project” (Şenerdem 2010).[25] Indeed, one resident reported that a municipal official had told her that the people in the neighborhood “came from their villages and occupied the abandoned buildings in Tarlabaşı,” exactly the discourse we are used to hearing about the neighborhood; the resident noted, “this is how they see us. They say we are occupying villagers. But I am paying 500 Turkish Liras a month rent here” (Songün, 2010).

Demircan’s dream is to turn Beyoğlu into what he refers to as a “museum city” (Taş, 2012). One cannot help remembering Müller (1999), who discusses musealization as a strategy for transforming urban spaces into places of monumentalized pasts that attract the tourist gaze. The museum city he wants to make, however, is one without traces of age; in fact, he dismissed the *istemezükçu’s* criticism of another controversial urban renewal project by saying, “the Demirören Shopping Mall is pretty new and shiny. The ones who oppose the renewed building don’t know the past. Now it is like the original, but they still oppose it. They will love it when it looks old” (Beyoğlu mayor, 2012).

The Demirören shopping center, however, is radically different than it was before the restoration, as a photograph hanging on the side of the building itself ironically proves. Tarlabaşı looks to be no different. Demircan countered claims that the project was destroying the architectural history of the neighborhood by noting that “some” of the buildings in the expropriation plan were set to be renovated, rather than demolished

[25] Many of the property owners in the area, however, contend that they have not received permission to renovate their homes for many years, and were thus forced to leave their buildings derelict. Others point out that even buildings that were restored “in line with [their] original style” are about to be demolished anyway (Songün, 2010).

(Şenerdem, 2010). He also notes that the plan will proceed in whatever way the council on monuments decides, thus seeming to give himself preservation legitimacy (Kentsel dönüşüm başladı, 2010). One local resident asked a logical question: "They will dig a hole for a four-story underground car-park. How can they do that without demolishing all the buildings?" (Songün, 2010).

The municipality frequently argues that the buildings in the neighborhood are either abandoned or in poor condition. Explaining why the nine blocks in the project were chosen as the first phase of the development, he said,

> we specifically chose the 278 buildings in Tarlabaşı that were the most abandoned, the least densely inhabited, and that were ready to collapse at any minute. At any moment they could disappear forever. Let's treat the neighborhood with the worst gangrene as soon as possible. We chose this neighborhood because we said, if we cure this place the remaining areas will quickly and enthusiastically improve themselves (Kentsel dönüşüm başladı, 2010).[26]

The use of the medical analogy here, of a doctor curing its sick patient, seems to indicate that there maybe be some hope for the neighborhood yet.

3.4 Hope: The Genie of the Lamp

"Good things happen in Tarlabaşı too," Tatlıcan happily notes as he shows us a small group of dark-haired boys playing violins. They are taking classes at the Tarlabaşı Community Center, a place frequently identified as a site of hope in a neighborhood of despair. The community center celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2016 with "year-long events focusing on multiculturalism and peace" (Altuntaş, 2016). The center aims to empower women and children through dance, music, art, and drama workshops, as well as literacy courses, seminars on rights, and legal assistance.

Only one article from any of the newspapers seems to paint some internal aspects of the neighborhood in a genuinely positive light. An interview in *Hürriyet Daily News*

[26] At this time in 2010 he also claimed that 70 percent of the buildings in the neighborhood were empty, a claim that he would late back away from (and that his aids would claim was an "approximation" although the true number was nowhere near that high).

(Jozuka, 2011) with two foreigners, an anthropologist and a photographer, who are trying to "knock down Tarlabaşı prejudices," discusses the sense of community that exists there. The pair have a blog (which as of 2016 doesn't seem to have been updated for a couple of years) that celebrates the neighborhood.[27] It talks about the sense of community there, the fact that transsexual prostitutes and "conservative" AKP supporters frequent the same cafes, and that an entire street had become worried when they didn't see an old lady one day and joined together to find her (she had died). They also note that they are aware of the dangers of the orientalist gaze but that they think the blog is a good way to raise awareness of the neighborhood.

Every other article about the neighborhood locates hope in the form of people from elsewhere who have decided to help out the population of Tarlabaşı. And these articles use terribly grim words to describe the place. The article cited above about the 10th anniversary of the center notes that it is having trouble finding funding, and that the neighborhood is "host to many different cultures, migration-based adaptation problems, poverty, unemployment and illegal relationships" (note that "many different cultures" appears among a list of problems) (Altuntaş, 2016). One article carries the title "Turkey's Changemakers: Tarlabasi Community Center fuels hope amid poverty," and notes that despite being walking distance from the "hip and happening" Istiklal, Tarlabaşı is "the center of deprivation, sorrow and helplessness" (Turkey's changemakers, 2011). This "helplessness" of the neighborhood is another frequently emphasized point, serving to reinforce the idea that the people there can't take care of themselves. Interestingly, even the coordinator of the Tarlabasi Community Center, Suzan Oktan, paints a picture of overwhelming despair from which people need saving: "their common ground is the culture they share, a culture of deprivation and poverty, under which they all live." The article notes that the center "has touched the lives of almost 1,000 people" and quotes Oktan saying "we never wanted to do something for them, but only with them" (ibid.).

For the government, however, it seems these good things are of little interest. No politician involved in the renewal project ever mentioned any positive, community-based developments in the neighborhood. In the time covered, *Sabah* ran only a single article

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[27] The blog includes a series of photos that offer a third and strongly contrasting view to the two photo series I have analyzed in this thesis. They show the neighborhood as vibrant and full of celebrations, and include stories of the inhabitants. It can be found here: www.tarlabasiistanbul.com

about any kind of positive community development, patronizingly titled "Tarlabaşı's children can touch science" (Altun, 2015); even then, predictably, the article is not about positive developments in the neighborhood, but rather about a program that brings a group of children from the neighborhood to one of the local universities (Istanbul Technical University) every day after school to do experiments, use microscopes, and other science-related activities. There is no mention of any local efforts to improve the neighborhood, nor any mention of positive aspects of the area.

Instead, the urban renewal project itself is seen as the point of hope for the neighborhood. And one of the major hopes it brings is money. The mayor, the development company, and *Sabah* have been bragging for years about the increases in rent in the areas being renewed. By 2015 they were claiming that property values in Tarlabaşı had increased fiftyfold since the project began (Tarlabaşı 360, Beyoğlu'nda fiyatları, 2015). Demircan brags about having added 190 thousand jobs in Beyoğlu since he took office, which he gives his urban renewal projects partial credit for (Güngör, 2015). In May 2012 parliament passed a bill easing restrictions on foreigners purchasing real estate in Turkey (Turkey facilitates real estate, 2012). *Sabah* predicted that this would bring investment that would have otherwise gone to Arab countries that were no longer viable because of the effects of the Arab Spring. They note that "according to representatives from the real estate sector foreigners are especially gearing towards branded projects in centralized locations" where one executive believes "15 to 20% of the sales for these projects will be done by foreigners" (ibid). In the article Feyzullah Yetgin, the general manager of Çalık Real Estate, notes that "from a location standpoint," Çalık's projects are "extremely appealing to foreigners."

It's not just money of course. They also try to present the project as a positive thing in other respects. For example, in describing the project as a "win-win" strategy, Demircan claimed that "the city, the investors, and the property owners will win. And because the environment will be beautified, even the public will win" ('Projede kazan-kazan', 2010). Demircan is fond of declaring that Tarlabaşı Boulevard is going to become the "Champs-Élysées of Istanbul."[28] And of course, history will win too:

[28] Although, he has also made this same claim about the Okmeydanı urban renewal project (Öztürk, 2016)

> Frankly, the things that should happen are currently happening in Tarlabaşı. Tarlabaşı 360's construction area is in a very special region that has hosted different cultures throughout its history and is still carrying the traces of those cultures. It is the meeting spot of the ladies and gentlemen of past times and the heart of an elite and select life featuring many cultural and artistic activities … We are not just building conventional offices and residences in Tarlabaşı, we are also trying to bring a nearly extinct history back to life and bring back an alive but forgotten treasure in Istanbul in the most modern and preserved way possible … The biggest feature of Tarlabaşı 360 is the renovation of all the structures by preserving historical texture and cultural values. (Turkey's first urban*,* 2016)

The other two newspapers, however, devote quite a bit of space to denying the economic claims made by the project's supporters. "The 'urban transformation' in Istanbul's historical Tarlabaşı neighborhood has started, but inflated property prices do not reflect the reality on the ground, according to experts. 'This is an area full of problems. The crime rate is extremely high and there is a security problem,' one real estate agent says" (Yüzbaşıoğlu, 2010). Architect Cansu Yapıcı, representing İstanbul Culture Variety (classic *istemezükçü*) tries to tear down the municipality's claims by saying that they are trying to turn the city into a sellable commodity, but that "this plan is doomed to backfire because by erasing Istanbul's memory and history, they, on the contrary, are making it less of a sellable commodity" (Parlak, 2010). And perhaps most damning are claims that the project, which aims to help the neighborhood, may actually make it worse: "As the bulldozers move in to one of Istanbul's most impoverished neighborhoods, the municipality is already touting a successful 'urban transformation' while critics say the project neglects existing cultural heritage and leaves social ills unaddressed." (Şenerdem, 2010)

One of the most enthusiastic believers in the hope promised by urban renewal is well-known *Sabah* columnist Hıncal Uluç. In his columns he frequently refers to the other transformations in Beyoğlu as miracles ("the Emek cinema miracle"), but in January 2016 he declared Tarlabaşı to be the most amazing of all. He is worth quoting at length, as the story he tells seems to encapsulate the way the government is trying to sell the project (line breaks and punctuation are his own):

You live in a house like a carcass..
But a carcass in the literal sense of the word.. Everywhere is filled with holes..
The storm outside rips through the holes in the worn out walls.. The ceiling leaks.
When you enter the room and turn on the light, enormous sewer rats jump out of the holes in the floor and scurry away.. Your street is even more vile..
Forgotten, abandoned, full of holes.. Let alone driving, you can't even bike there.. At night you can't walk.
And if you do walk you're scared.. There are glue sniffers, potheads, junkies, drunks.
Filth.. Darkness.. Danger..
Then one day you find a lamp..
When you rub it a genie comes out.. "your wish is my command" he says.. "This neighborhood.. This house.. One upon a time it was Istanbul's most beautiful, most luxurious, most respected place. Make it like that again" you say.. ..and poof!..
No, I'm not telling fairy tales, I'm not selling dreams..
I went.. I saw.. I walked around..
I saw an "Urban Renewal Miracle" in Tarlabaşı..
You know those billboards that you see all along that boulevard, the ones that say "Tarlabaşı 360.." That's it..
The genie that came out of the lamp, I'll write it with a capital letter, Genie, is Beyoğlu Municipality Mayor Ahmet Misbah Demircan..
[…]
Go inside.. You'll see a model the size of the room..[29]
This is the model of the new Tarlabaşı.. And you won't believe your eyes.. You'll see with your own eyes what I meant when I said "the genie of the lamp.." Tarlabaşı's appearance from 1870 to 1960 is protected and restored.
History appears, glistening, not a thing has changed.. The miracle is inside..
From the outside you see the existing 278, skinny, two-meters wide buildings, united on the inside..
Get in a helicopter, look, count, there are 278 buildings there.. Go inside.. 9.. literally nine modern blocks..
On the inside they have become 9 buildings, on the outside 278 tiny, useless buildings..
[…]
Modern.. Glistening and descend, go out to the street..
Beyoğlu!..

[29] He is referring to the model in the sales office. It is indeed an enormous, impressive, and highly detailed model that lights up when you press buttons, shows the acres of parking under the buildings, and is filled with people shopping, shopping, and shopping. Every ground floor window seems to have a boutique in it. There are also some people relaxing on rooftop terraces. Photography is not allowed.

> Under the buildings, floors and floors of parking.. So much that there's room for every car.. An indoor pool.. A fitness center and spa.. Pilates and Yoga studios.. Even a sauna and a steam room.. Every kind of service.. Central heating and air conditioning..
> Among today's ruined streets, Paris..
> On the sidewalks tables.. Boulevard cafes, coffee shops.. And like Paris, art galleries behind them..
> Those who are living in this filth, for whom there seems to be no solution, will shortly find themselves living in the world's most modern quality of life, almost like Paris.
> Tell me, if this isn't a "miracle" what is it?
> Did I exaggerate when I called Ahmet Misbah Demircan "the genie of the lamp?" (Uluç, 2016)

He sees no hope in the neighborhood itself – the only way things can improve is through an almost literal miracle, an urban savior from outside who appears like a genie. In the next chapter we will see what this genie has wrought.

CHAPTER 4

THE WEBSITE

The Tarlabaşı 360 marketing team has created three short videos about the project, each available in both (and only) [30] Turkish and English. One of them, called the "introduction film" is a short two and a half minute video providing details of the project, and emphasizing the perks that the new neighborhood is projected to provide. It consists almost entirely of animated renderings of the completed project populated by moving white silhouettes of people. The video is accompanied by upbeat accordion music of the style one often hears in stereotypical depictions of Paris, likely aiming to draw comparisons to the romantic bohemian charm of Montmartre (itself a gentrified neighborhood of artisans), and reinforcing Demircan's vision of Tarlabaşı Boulevard as the Champs-Elysées of Istanbul. In lieu of narration short phrases appear at the bottom of the screen. These phrases provide descriptions of the project, their tone ranging from strictly informative ("63m^2 to 630m^2 Offices") to grandiosely vague ("The Project by Which The History Revive [sic]").

One series of phrases (it is sometimes unclear whether we are to read subsequent phrases as part of the same sentence or as individual labels) promises that the project will be a "secure living concept" that will "bring together chic restaurants, cafes, concept streets, art galleries, and different cultures." The video, or the website for that matter, doesn't explain exactly what is meant by "concept streets," but the phrase appears numerous times in the marketing material. In the video it appears over a rendering of a

[30] Interestingly, the website is available in three languages, Turkish, English, and Arabic, but only the Turkish and English versions include the "yesterday" and "today" sections – the Arabic-language version only gives descriptions of the future properties, and information on how to buy them. Additionally, it only has one option for the text in the central black circle, which is the text about promising the future. I'm curious if this simply reflects a lack of desire or ability to translate the whole website, or if the designers of the website simply felt that Arabic-speaking consumers would not care as much about the historical details.

narrow traffic-free (perhaps pedestrian?) lane lined by three- to four-story buildings and populated by white silhouette people strolling along or sitting at café tables while their silhouette waiters bring them silhouette wine glasses. What exactly is the concept? And who exactly are these angelic forms?

"Concept streets" is the website's own English translation of the Turkish "konsept sokakları," a phrase which doesn't seem to have much real meaning in Turkish either.[31] An alternative and perhaps more appropriate translation would be "themed streets," but calling them "concept streets" has a ring of the theoretical, as if the website is dealing with a sort of Platonic ideal of a street which is to be reflected here on earth by the actual completed development. In this spirit I examine the images, promotional videos, and other visual advertising materials for the project presented on the website to explore what exactly the "concept streets" are perceived to look like, what sort of activities take place in them, who gets to use them, and what role history has to play.[32]

My understanding of a "concept street" goes beyond this understanding somewhat, as I argue that the developers and the popular discourse have created three different sets of concept streets in the same place; a historical set of concept streets, a contemporary set, and a projected (and soon to be implemented) future set. Each of these sets of concept streets provides space to perform a certain set of values and ideals; each limits the people using the streets to a prescribed set of lifestyles, activities, and uses. I argue that some features are posited as being appropriate for Tarlabaşı, while other features are not. These features are related both to the architecture (the style and scale of buildings, architectural details, colors, etc.) and the uses of the streets (modes of consumption, professions, public vs. private activities, etc.). Moreover, their appropriateness, or lack thereof, is portrayed as timeless, since at one time in the past the streets were correctly inhabited, and at another time they were not. Because the streets in question are currently inaccessible due to construction, it is clear that none of these concept neighborhoods currently exist in the physical world. Moreover, since these three sets of concept streets are effectively

[31] Judging from other sources, it seems that what they mean by a concept street is one in which artists, musicians, street performers, and other similar features are sponsored by the state or the developer to "enliven" the street.
[32] After I started working on this chapter the website was completely changed, and the images and videos analyzed are no longer available online except through archiving sites like the Internet Archive's Wayback Machine, which unfortunately has not captured the embedded videos.

theoretical moments representing specific times (labeled with appropriate vagueness "yesterday," "today," and "tomorrow" by the website, a practice which I continue here) it seems equally clear that none of them ever really existed at all. The only sense in which they exist is through a carefully curated set of images that give visual form to prescribed ways of living.

Another reason that I focus on streets is that almost all of the urban renewal project's visual materials focus on the public areas of the neighborhood, including restaurants, cafes, and most frequently streets. These street images show the facades of buildings, various activities that take place (or are projected to take place) in the street, and the people who perform these activities. The street, therefore, seems to form the primary way in which the neighborhood is encountered and understood. Since the website is essentially a marketing tool oriented towards selling the project, I examine the images and graphics as tools that have been purposefully chosen to convey the essence of the project to a potential buyer. Because the private spaces within the buildings are usually not shown (except in the "tomorrow" section, where they serve to emphasize the exclusivity of the interior space), it seems that the role of the public in the streets around the development is of primary interest to the developer, and the primary marketing tool to brand the development.

We have seen in chapter 2 that the feelings of reflective nostalgia for the city's past felt by many old Istanbullu residents are a mixture of sadness for those who departed, and animosity for the newcomers. While these residents don't see any possibility of returning to the city of the past, their reflective nostalgic sentiment informs the restorative renewal projects and gentrification in Istanbul. "French Street" (Fransız Sokağı), for example, a completed state-sponsored urban renewal project on a much smaller scale in a nearby neighborhood, proclaimed itself to be "reviving" the forgotten (but actually completely invented) "French" history of the street. The marketing materials employed the familiar narrative of rural migrants destroying the former Europeanness of the neighborhood and dragging down its fortunes until, of course, the municipality intervened to return it to its "true" form (Mills, 2005; 453). French Street thus, in a way, draws its inspiration from the reflective nostalgia of old Istanbul residents while promising to be a restorative project. Tarlabaşı 360, I argue, like French Street and the Demirören shopping center, offers an

interpretation of the Ottoman past which utilizes that past's malleability and the dominant feelings of nostalgia to create highly profitable spaces of global capitalism.

Figure 1. Tarlabaşı 360 Website Main Page (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

4.1 Bringing Yesterday to Tomorrow

The first words that appear on a black circle in the center of the screen when you access the website for Tarlabaşı 360 are: "In Istanbul, a scene of history comes to life: Tarlabaşı Renewal Project" (figure 1). In the background is a rendering of an imagined future street scene from the redevelopment project, showing a number of preserved facades over a modern café. The historical (or faux-historical) aspects of the architecture, such as the protruding bays, 19th century details, and the foreground arching streetlight, are emphasized, while the modern changes are shown further back and less prominently. The street scene and café, however, are clearly shown to be contemporary, with large red umbrellas, men in suits, and neatly potted plants. On the street walking towards us is a very modern-looking woman in a professional jacket and a dress that stops at the knee, her dyed-blonde hair is uncovered and swings to the side as she walks purposefully down the street, briefcase in hand. The umbrellas, people, and ground-level potted plants are shown

in color, while the buildings above are shown in black and white, further emphasizing the mix of past and present, and the idea of the past "coming to life." This image brings into sharp focus the concept of street life that the project is aiming to enact, a vision of black-and-white historic charm as a backdrop for a modern upscale present. Surrounding the image are three numbered white circles leading to the three primary divisions of the website, labeled: I. Tarlabaşı Yesterday, II. Tarlabaşı Today, and III. Tarlabaşı Tomorrow. These white circles are all the same size, providing a sense of equal importance to each of them and suggesting that past, present, and future all come together to create the new project.

I. Tarlabaşı Yesterday

The "Tarlabaşı Yesterday" section (figures 2-5) is a celebration of the late Ottoman and early Republican neighborhood. To emphasize the historical nature of this section, the old photos of the neighborhood and retro graphics are all in black and white (even those background photos that are actually of the neighborhood today have been given a filter to make them look like old photographs.) The text in this section provides us with a history of the neighborhood that emphasizes the European style of the buildings and the cosmopolitan nature of the people. Mention is made of the great fire, the various European embassies, Levantine families, and the fact that the cosmopolitan shop owners would "leave their houses in Tarlabaşı and walk five minutes to Pera" (note the use of the name Pera).

The retro drawings that accompany these texts (figures 2 and 3) show a number of signifiers of the contemporary global nostalgic culture of consumption: an old sewing machine, a pocket watch, a gramophone, a well-dressed mustachioed man wielding a clunky wooden camera, etc. Alongside these images are the names of craftsmen and merchants that correspond to the objects: Paul Giammalva, music studio; Konstantin Yoanidis, furniture seller; Gomidas Değirmenciyan, tailor[33]; Adolf Gelsollen and Jules

[33] No mention is made, of course, to any brothel this tailor may have had a hand in managing.

Figure 2. Tarlabaşı Yesterday 1 (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

Figure 3. Tarlabaşı Yesterday 2 (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

Loeffler, architecture and engineering office. None of these names is Turkish, nor even Muslim, although this is never explicitly pointed out (compare Boyar and Fleet's listing of non-Muslim businesses in chapter 2). The mix of non-Muslim names of various origin and modern/European trades and styles connects the perceived modernity of the neighborhood to its perceived cosmopolitanism or multiculturalism. The nostalgia generated for the once-

prosperous, classy, and European-style neighborhood is directly tied to its non-Muslim population.

These nostalgic products and names are given a specifically local context by the image they are floating in front of: an aged black and white photo of a local street scene. The photograph is not labeled, but judging from the style of the buildings and the meandering street it is very likely that it is from Beyoğlu, and could conceivably be from Tarlabaşı. These figures, modern (that is: European) for their times by dint of their fashion, names, professions, and technologies, are shown in front of buildings that are also modern/European for their time. The two seem to fit naturally with each other. Putting these names and trades above a background of a historical Beyoğlu street allows viewers of the website to imagine the suave mustachioed photographer operating a studio on this street, or the German-named architects designing European-style apartment buildings in a projecting second-floor bay. Indeed another page of the "Tarlabaşı Yesterday" section provides information about the "first apartments" in the area, which are illustrated with a sketch of a neo-classical corner façade and a black and white image of İstiklal Avenue. The website calls them the "skyscrapers of their time," emphasizing their modernity.

Other images from the website reinforce this combination of diversity and modernity. One page is titled "Little Pera: Neighborhood of Sincere and Warm Relations" and shows photos of smiling, uncovered women. The videos in this section, with names like "Tarlabaşı was a Mosaic" and "Tarlabaşı: Little Beyoğlu" (note the shift back to the name Beyoğlu) show a barrage of images emphasizing the European/modern nature of the neighborhood: cars, billboard advertisements, apartment buildings, and lines of smiling, western-attired women (figure 4). The net effect of all these images, particularly in combination with the text around them, is to establish a cosmopolitan, European/modern identity as the ideal state for the neighborhood's streets and inhabitants. This plays to the nostalgia of those who miss the civility and culture of the departed minorities and lays the groundwork for the possibility of a return to this time. It also answers to the first of Beauregards's two criteria for a gentrifiable neighborhood, the "creation of gentrifiable housing" (Islam, 2015, p. 124).

Figure 4. Tarlabaşı Yesterday Video Still (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

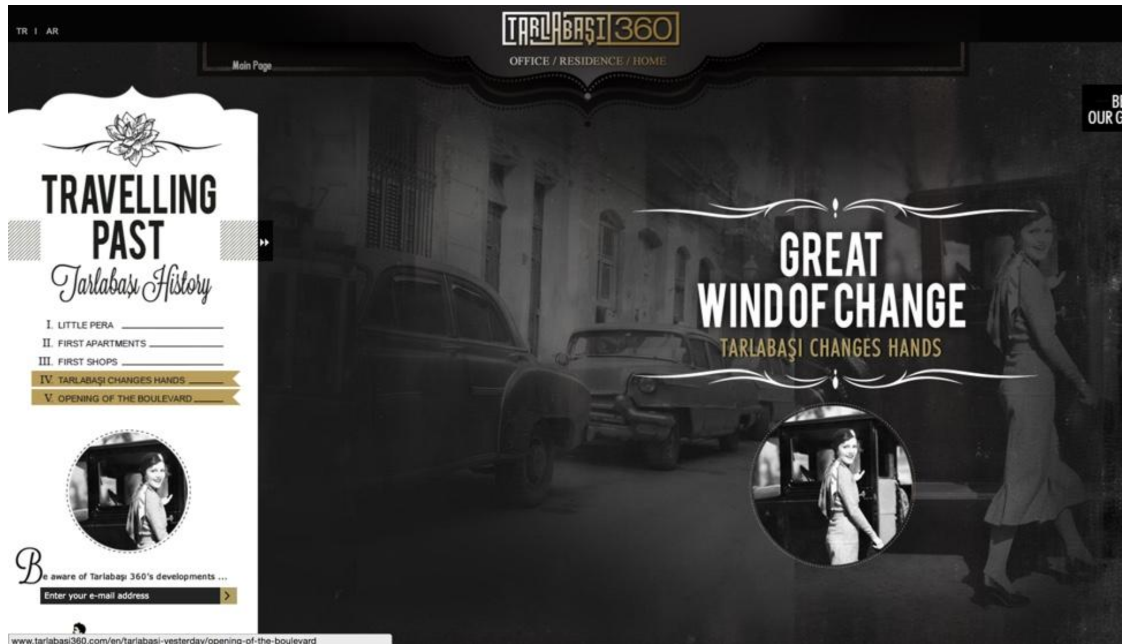

Figure 5. Tarlabaşı Changes Hands (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

After the section glorifying Tarlabaşı's past, however, the tone changes. The textual narrative centers on the removal of the non-Muslim groups, and like the *Sabah* articles mentioned in chapter 3 the reasons for their departure are relatively explicit in this telling (the website specifically mentions the 6-7 September 1955 events and the Wealth Tax).

This departure of minorities is visually represented by a well-dressed, Western-attired woman smiling as she enters a car, perhaps to depart from the neighborhood (figure 5). Her clothes and the cars behind her indicate that this photo is from the 1930s or 40s, just before the events mentioned in the text took place. She smiles as she enters the car, but with the text "Tarlabaşı changes hands" written in a box beside her we understand that she, and the elegance and culture she represents, are departing from the neighborhood.

In the website's narrative this departure is predictably followed by the influx of "the poorest of Anatolia," who subdivide the apartments and show no appreciation for the architecture or history of the neighborhood. The last page in the Tarlabaşı Yesterday section is about the opening of Tarlabaşı Boulevard, which the website notes required the demolition of 350 "historic" buildings, and which forever cut off the neighborhood from the bright lights of Beyoğlu. Tarlabaşı today is a "dark" neighborhood, the "most depressed neighborhood in Istanbul." Most of the population of the blocks to be redeveloped, according to the website, "have come from various cities of the Anatolia such as Mardin, Siirt, Batman, Erzincan, Diyarbakır, Rize," and they "mostly perform unqualified works with low income such as solid waste collector – street hawker – mussel seller."

II. Tarlabaşı Today

The text of the Tarlabaşı Today section describes the state of the neighborhood just before the demolitions started, and details the development of the project. The images in the background serve to reinforce the sense of the "dark" and "depressed" neighborhood (fig. 6-9). Their color palate is subdued, and despite the often-colorful buildings, clothes, and details visible in the images, the streets have been given a cool tint so they feel grey, dark, and gloomy. The ever-present laundry hanging overhead, the bags of garbage laying around, and the emptiness of the street all serve to emphasize the poor condition of the neighborhood, and remind us of the popular conception that these people who live here now don't understand how to live in these types of buildings (see chapter 3). Nobody smiles, no storefronts or restaurants or other social areas are shown, and no building is entered; as usual the neighborhood is seen purely as a series of streetscapes.

Figure 6. Tarlabaşı Today Streets 1 (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

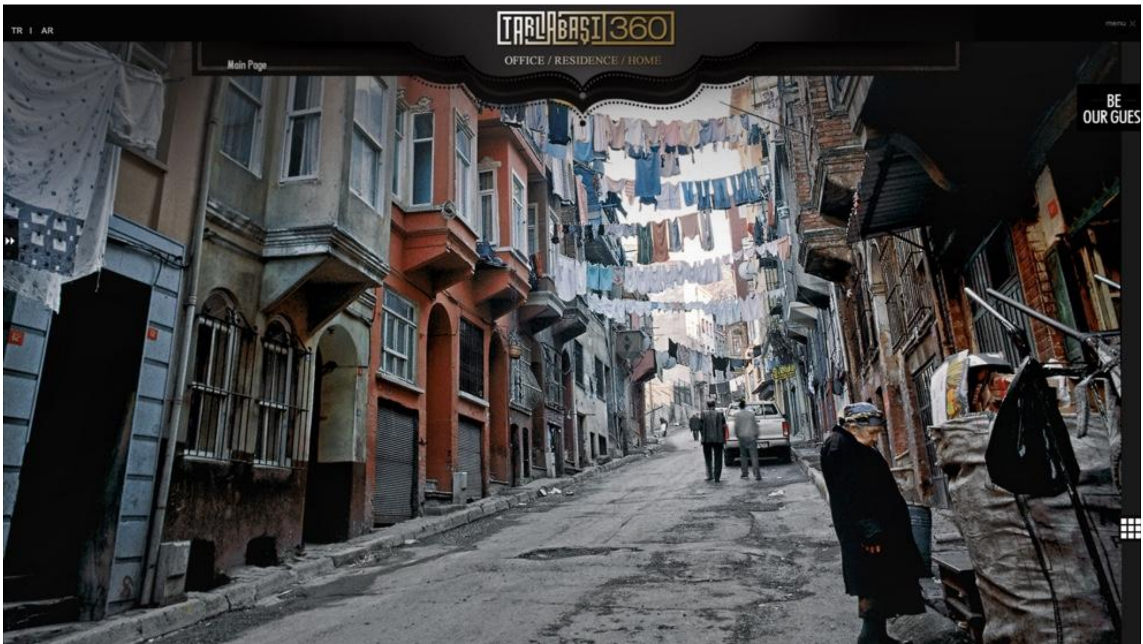

Figure 7. Tarlabaşı Today Streets 2 (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

Figure 6 is a heavily symmetrical photo, with buildings rising beyond the top of the frame to the left and the right. At the end of the road is the grey façade of an apartment building which, though clearly on the other side of a perpendicular street, nevertheless functions like a third wall enclosing the scene. On the right side of the frame and

effectively blocking half of the street stand three or four overflowing bags of garbage, their enormous size reinforced by the two figures standing next to them. Those figures, who appear to be young men with black hair and dark skin, stand idly on the curb; on close inspection they appear to be smiling and chatting to each other, but seen on a small screen the details are obscured, and at first glance it seems one of them may in fact be looking at the viewer. The scene presents a feeling of claustrophobia and danger – in order to pass to the street ahead, one has no choice but to walk very close to the two young men, a risky proposition in a dark and otherwise abandoned street. Even though it is a sunny day the street is grey, the doorways on either side are dark, and the bay windows that push into the frame from the left and right darken the edges of the shot. All of these elements serve to reinforce the sense of enclosure, of danger lurking unseen.

Figure 7 is somewhat better lit, but it still feels dark and foreboding. An old woman stands on the right side of the frame wearing a long black coat and a grey scarf. She appears to be asleep standing up; her head is resting on her chest and her eyes are closed. The fingers of her right hand protrude slightly from the long sleeve of her badly-fitting coat. The garbage bag that she stands next to, which again is overflowing, is significantly larger than her. Her narcoleptic posture and position facing away from the street and towards a bag of garbage give the photo a surreal and dreamy quality. The street is potholed, uneven, damp, and dirty. Farther up the hill two men, again in drab colors, walk away from the viewer. In the distance is a figure who appears to be holding a large bag and picking something up off the street – more garbage collection perhaps. On a balcony to the upper right a woman in a pinkish headscarf is standing, perhaps collecting laundry, perhaps just looking at the street. Although there are at least six people visible in the photo they are all at the margins of the frame or of the street, which itself feels empty and unused. The many clothes hanging from the lines strung between buildings obscure the sky. In front of the reddish house on the left and the greyish house on the right buckets hang on strings, the kind housewives use to raise or lower small objects. Like the woman standing strangely by the garbage, the buildings seem to be worn down, asleep on their feet, their beauty hidden under a veil of misuse.

Figures 8 and 9 show three young boys sitting in a doorway. 8 is the version in the “gallery” section of the website, while 9 shows how the photo is used in the context of the

Figure 8. Tarlabaşı Today’s Future 1 (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

Figure 9. Tarlabaşı Today’s Future 2 (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

interactive menu. I’ve included both versions here because they show different amounts of the image, showing the way the gallery version was cropped to focus more clearly on the children. It is significant that this image forms the background to the “multi-directional approach” section of the website, in which the supposed involvement of the community is

discussed. It is also interesting to see that a somewhat retro flower design has been superimposed over the walls of the building in figure 9, perhaps referencing the currently hip and non-threatening style of street art popular in trendy gentrified neighborhoods worldwide. It might also function as a means to hint at future possibilities for this building and these boys, who might flower if given the right opportunity (the opportunity implied, of course, being wholesale redevelopment and gentrification).

The building around the three boys shows traces of former beauty obscured by neglect: the professionally carved wooden door behind them seems to have been covered by haphazard layers of blue and pink paint, while the rounded trim delineating the building's ground floor is chipped and crumbling. From just these small bits one gets the sense that the building was once a handsome row house which is no longer being given the attention that it deserves, reminding us yet again of the common claim that the people who live here now don't appreciate the building's form and history. The leftmost third of the frame shows a hint of the street, or perhaps an empty lot beside the building, which is dirty and uneven, with garbage scattered here and there. Broken chunks of shaped stone lie on the ground next to the building's steps like ancient ruins; their original purpose is unclear but they emphasize the destruction of the once more prosperous neighborhood. In the background a doorway in a bare concrete wall is bricked in, although the wall ends abruptly just next to the doorway. Paint that has been thrown at the grey wall and allowed to drip colorfully down adds to the sense of disrespect for the buildings.

Within this crumbling setting sit the three boys. They have dark complexions, their clothes are dirty, and they sit very closely together on the steps of the main entrance. Their heads continue the line of trim that extends to the left and the right but is broken by the doorway; their bent knees parallel the step they sit on. In this way they fit naturally into the physical space and appear to be visually integrated into the architecture. The blues and greys of their clothing match the color scheme of the surroundings. The two boys on the right are looking above the viewer, perhaps at the photographer or his friend, with furrowed brows indicating that they are reacting to something being said. The boy on the right grips a silver toy gun in both hands, which he points absent-mindedly just a bit below the camera. The fact that they fit so well in the architecture seems to imply an intimate connection between the physical space and the poverty and violence of the inhabitants; in

front of a run-down building like this, the natural fit is a life of guns and grimy clothes. Indeed the boy on the left, whose bright face and pursed lips mark the visual center of the image, seems unfazed by all that surrounds him. He gazes impassively at the camera, his dark eyes trained directly at the viewer (outside of the historical photos, it is the only image on the website that looks back at us). The meaning behind his gaze is unknown; he might be posing for the photo, or he might just not care. In the context of the other images on the website and the text surrounding him, however, it seems we are to read him as we read the buildings: as objects/lives that risk squandering their potential, and that are pleading for help that can only come from outside the neighborhood, from outside these streets.

The fact that this boy is the only image on the website that seems to challenge the documentary focus of the images is important. As European Orientalism claimed for itself the power to represent the Orient as a place frozen in the past and impenetrable (Said, 1978), and positioned itself as best able to save these areas from themselves, so the website gives the municipality and developer the ability to represent the neighborhood as they see fit, and ascribe to themselves the power to save it from its current inhabitants. The people in the images have no power to show their own lives or their own thoughts; in neither the photos nor the accompanying text is space provided for the current inhabitants of Tarlabaşı to speak for themselves. Like many other understandings of the neighborhood we have seen, the website looks at the ruins of the Ottoman neighborhood and sees a disconnect between the past glory and the present inhabitants.

III. Tarlabaşı Tomorrow

In all of the renderings in the "Tarlabaşı Tomorrow" section, the formerly multi-colored houses have been refaced in subdued browns and whites more suitable to the refined taste of the new inhabitants (fig. 10-19). Despite this, the renderings are considerably brighter and more cheerfully colored than the photographs of Tarlabaşı today. The sun seems perpetually aligned at just the right angle to illuminate the street (and even, amazingly, the underside of the projecting bays), flowers and plants decorate every balcony and doorway, and the stone walls of the "restored" facades glow warmly. Nobody

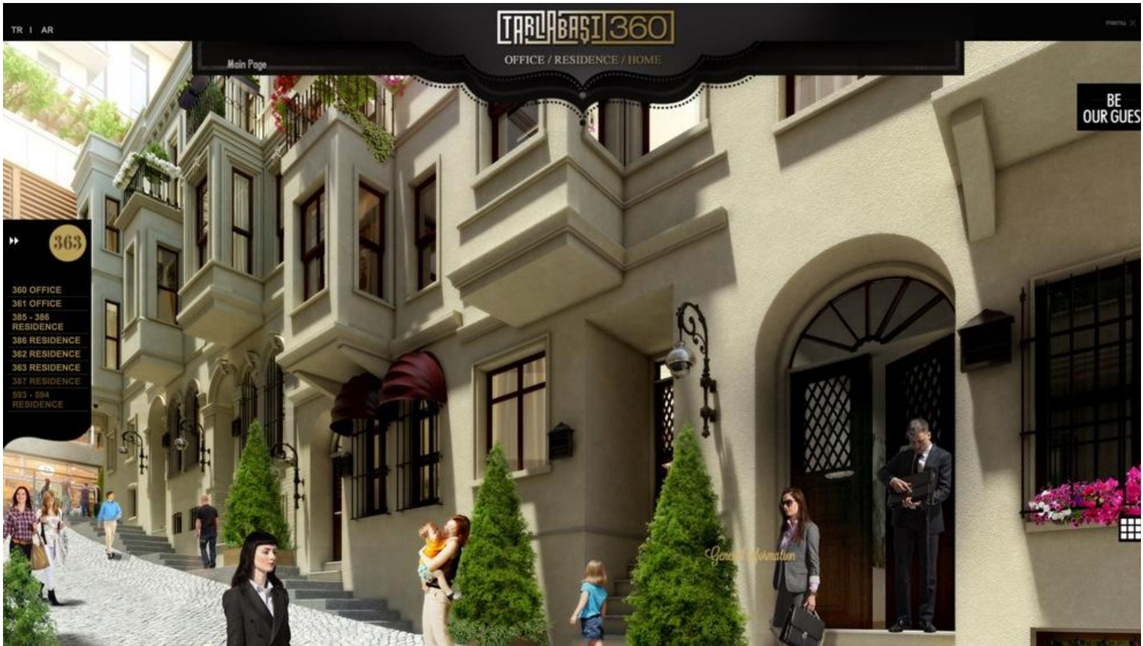

Figure 10. Tarlabaşı Tomorrow Residential Street (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

Figure 11. Tarlabaşı Tomorrow Concept Street (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

sits in doorways or stands idly on street corners. Everybody is either walking purposefully along, or engaged in leisure consumption with their friends. In contrast to the "today" photos' lack of social spaces, the new Tarlabaşı positively overflows with cafes and restaurants with names like "Cafe de Sentrope" (Saint-Tropez) and "Coffee 386".

Figure 10 shows a renovated residential street and the people who will presumably inhabit it. A woman with uncovered light brown hair and wearing a sleeveless shirt holds

her blonde laughing baby in her arms. A young girl walking on the street behind them can be plausibly connected to them, through hair color and the direction of movement. Assuming that she belongs to the sleeveless mother, there are no unattended children and no signs of toy guns. On the right, a man and a woman dressed in business clothes and holding briefcases are leaving their house; through the closing door we can see a large artwork hanging on the wall. On the far left two women are walking, one of them holding a shopping bag. Off to work and back from the mall – these are some of the pastimes of the new residents of the neighborhood.

In figure 11 a man walks down the steps of his building to the right chatting on his phone, while to the left a woman searches in her bag, perhaps to begin her own phone call. A café takes up much of the street, essentially privatizing it and limiting the uses of what used to be public space. Sitting at one of the tables of the café are two attractive young businesspeople, a man and a woman, who ignore each other to look down at their smartphones. They appear to be black or mixed-race; perhaps they are checking in with their office back in London or New York. Or maybe they have just taken selfies in their "authentic" Istanbul backstreet brunch spot, and they have to post them on facebook before their friends in America wake up. Next to them a woman finds herself essentially eating alone as her friend casually ignores her to play with her tablet. Instead of playing with plastic guns and collecting garbage, the people in the future Tarlabaşı will be playing with iPhones and collecting information. Instead of communicating with the street through baskets lowered on strings, they are communicating wirelessly with people who may be worlds away. In fact, despite being a fairly densely populated image, nobody in this image appears to be communicating or in any way interacting with anyone around them.

Figure 12 shows a view of an office block, the same one we saw in figure one. The evenly paved sidewalk (or perhaps a pedestrianized street, echoing Demircan's claim about Taksim belonging to pedestrians) is bustling with people, their overwhelmingly blonde hair luminous in the warm, late afternoon sunlight, which inexplicably illuminates them from multiple directions (compare the illumination of the three right-most figures to that of the two men exiting the office building). Although this is an office block, only one man seems dressed for the office; everyone else is strolling along, sometimes holding hands with their lovers. Light brown and artificial blonde are the dominant hair colors, and

Figure 12. Tarlabaşı Tomorrow's Alternative Families? (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

contemporary Western clothing trends are well represented. No women wear veils. Just as the late-Ottoman neighborhood represented an adoption of European forms of sociality, this image and the others in the "Tarlabaşı tomorrow" section show a deluge of Western consumption, work, and leisure lifestyles. This rendering could even be read to imply an allowance for "non-traditional" family structures that are now becoming more publically visible in the West – is that a lesbian couple pushing their son down the street in his stroller?[34]

But what is absent from this picture? Potential lesbian family aside, there is no diversity in these renderings. Even though the marketing materials make a point of describing the development as a multicultural environment, where are those multiple cultures? It's very possible that some of those pictured are European (a Turkish friend of mine, upon seeing the renderings, exclaimed "ah, there will be Swedish people living there!"), but the people shown are a far cry from those pictured in the section on Tarlabaşı today. Indeed, the only non-white people in any of the "tomorrow" renderings are the two

[34] Judging by the state discourse on homosexuality it seems unlikely that this state-affiliated project would be openly promoting "alternative" family structures here; still, the possibility is there to read this grouping of people that way, and it's not inconceivable that someone in the design team made it purposefully ambiguous.

light-skinned black people in figure 11. It's possible that these people are stock images aimed at an American or European audience – in America these people would fulfill the diversity quota. But in the context of Turkey these people read as Western, particularly since they are some of the best-dressed people shown in any of the renderings, as opposed to the African migrants who live in the neighborhood before the transformation. Completely absent from all renderings are the dark-complexioned people who make up the majority of the population of the "today" photographs. The mussel-seller from Mardin does not appear in any of the images.

4.2 Remembering/Imagining Cosmopolitanism

In much the same way that Turkish nationalism saw the foreigners and non-Muslims of Pera as a kind of colonial class, gentrification today is often described by analogy to colonialism. The people moving in often live lives that are segregated from the surrounding city, and may indeed have closer ties to people living in gentrified neighborhoods around the world than to people in the city around them (Atkinson and Bridge, 2005, p. 9). Despite the emphasis in the advertising materials on the centrality of the neighborhood within the city, the images presented on the website (such as the wirelessly connected restaurant customers in figure 11, the metal detectors in the video, and the social areas for "your exclusive use,") all point to this as a neighborhood detached from the city around it. Since in developing nations gentrification often takes place alongside market reforms, increased market permeability, and internal migration, the people who move into these neighborhoods are many times even "western ex-patriots employed by transnational corporations to open up the markets of the newly emerging economies" (ibid, p. 3). We know from the developer's claims that they intend for the neighborhood to be an "international" one; the people that my Turkish friend read as Swedish and the Western-looking black people in figure 11 work to advertise this intention, as does the fact that the website exists in nearly identical English and Turkish versions.

Figure 13. Tarlabaşı Tomorrow Video: Multicultural Facades (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

In the absence of any human local diversity, the video's claim to a "multicultural atmosphere" (figure 13) is supported solely by the memory of previous diversity; that is, by the preserved facades of the buildings themselves. Wendy Shaw, in her work on Sydney's gentrifying neighborhoods, discusses this phenomenon, which she refers to as façadism: "In this façadism compromise (between retaining a whole 'heritage' building and complete replacement), which seems to indicate that a little bit of heritage is better than none at all, it is the *purpose* of the factory, its business such as 'The Printery' and 'The Piano Factory', that is celebrated" (Shaw, 2005, p. 66). When it comes to working-class housing, however, retaining "authentic" interiors is not as important as keeping the street-wall of the building, and the value of the interior becomes not what was originally built, but what it can become. Figure 14 shows the interior of a block, illustrating the complete lack of historical references in the non-public areas of the project. In Tarlabaşı, then, the aesthetic choice to preserve merely the facades of buildings foregrounds the former purpose of the neighborhood - in the sense of recreating the type of socio-cultural and economic environment that these buildings are imagined to have first played host to.

Figure 14. Example of the Interior of a Tomorrow Block (Source: www.beyoglubuyukdonusum.com) Note that the windows on the right are the interior-facing side of a historical façade.

That is, they are to function in the future *as they are remembered to have done in the past*: as a part of the global economy, allowing locals to participate in global lifestyles and global consumption patterns. Since the original inhabitants of the neighborhood are seen to have been interested in participating in their contemporary "global" (that is, European) trends, the development seeks to return once again to this condition. The migrants, immigrants, and social outcasts who call the neighborhood home "today" are seen as historically inaccurate for the neighborhood.

Part of the concept of these streets appears to be their neighborhood scale. We've seen how the "yesterday" section of the website mentions the multi-story buildings that developed along Tarlabaşı Boulevard, but on the side streets the buildings are shown to be of a smaller scale. In the renderings for the "tomorrow" section, the modern upper stories of the buildings are consistently cropped out of the images, giving the impression of a

Figure 15. Plan of a Future Residential Block Showing Interior Open Space (Source: www.beyoglubuyukdonusum.com)

fairly low-rise neighborhood of three or four stories, similar to that which exists now. In reality the modern additions to the historical facades, while far short of fifteen stories, will stretch two or three stories above higher than the buildings in the neighborhood today.

None of the renderings on the website or anywhere else I've been able to find show the interiors of the blocks, except for some technical PDFs available to download from the municipality's urban renewal website (see figure 15). These documents show that the reimagined residential blocks consist of a circle of street-abutting buildings surrounding a hollow open-air center featuring trees, grass, and, of course, cafes. In contrast to the street-facing outer edges of the blocks there are no historical details here. Instead the donut-hole parks are surrounded by modern, glassy, high-walled facades. The heavily advertised

Figure 16. Tomorrow’s Metal Detectors (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

Figure 17. Tomorrow’s Exclusivity (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

historical “preservation,” the very thing that allows the developers to lay claim to a legacy of diversity and history, is revealed to be nothing but a wall separating the nostalgic

"public" spaces of the development from the isolated and international interior of clean lines and placeless luxury.

The border between this external historical place and the interior modernity is clearly marked in renderings for the new project. In the video, the image behind a text describing the amount of office space available shows the entrance to an office block, with two large metal detectors featured prominently in the foreground (figure 16). Metal detectors are not uncommon in centrally located office buildings in Istanbul, but their presence here also emphasizes the buildings' isolation from the neighborhood around them, and suggests that the people who will be working inside these buildings need to be protected. The apartment buildings are often accessed via the interior courtyard, which itself may have only one street entrance, rather than directly from the street as they are today. This follows a general trend towards gated communities in Istanbul (Bartu Candan and Kolluoğlu, 2008) and highlights the insular and private nature of the planned apartments. In another shot (figure 17), the contemporary balconies of the top-floor modern additions features the text "social areas for your exclusive use" and shows silhouettes standing around. Non-consumption, or idleness, "today" an activity of the street, will "tomorrow" be safely ensconced in an exclusive and private interior world. The street will be a space for leisure consumption, as we've seen, and, in contrast to the narcolepsy and idleness seen in the "today" section, the text of the video promises an "active lifestyle" for the residents of "tomorrow." Private things like laundry, ubiquitous in the "today" photos, will likely be relegated to the interior too.

Shaw notes that in Sydney modifications and renovations of the historical houses are widely considered "anti-heritage," meaning that migrants are "blamed" for defacing "authentic" heritage, and they associate migrants with 'tasteless' renovation. During renovations "the layer of history added by these migrants is therefore unwanted, and usually removed" (Shaw, 2005, p. 65). The overwhelming beigeness of the buildings, bringing to mind the monochrome of Paris given a warmer Mediterranean tint, is a strong contrast to the multicolored neighborhood of today, where buildings are painted in vibrant reds, blues, greens, and yellows, or covered in multi-colored tiles. While certainly in line with contemporary upscale fashions, the lack of polychromality may also reference the lack of façade colors in old photographs (due, perhaps, to their being black and white). If

Figure 18. Future Respect for the Original Style (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

Figure 19. Future Revival (Source: www.tarlabasi360.com)

the historical neighborhood is understood (accurately or not) to have been monochrome, then the multicolored façades of today can be seen as part of the undesirable ahistorical modifications imposed by the migrant workers. By removing these modifications (the new facades are designed "in accordance with their original") we can see the importance placed on the historical value of the buildings rather than their age value (figure 18).

In fact, in the renderings every single physical trace of the changes wrought by the second half of the 20th century have been removed – it is as if we have skipped over the period of migrants completely, without the neighborhood changing at all in between. We are reminded of Hıncal Uluş's claim, while looking at the model, that "Tarlabaşı's appearance from 1870 to 1960 is protected and restored. History appears, glistening, not a thing has changed" (Uluş, 2016) All of the facades that don't have the desired *Belle Époque* style have been replaced with elaborate, postmodern, sometimes vaguely historicist infill. The project wants to create an architectural future in which the preceding half-century is erased from the face of the city (figure 19)

But for now, when we still remember what the neighborhood looks like today, it is necessary to emphasize the negative aspects of the first transition. The website does stress the actions taken that caused the rupture – not terribly strongly or in great detail, but still it admits to some of them, filling in to a small extent the separation between yesterday and today. The act of admitting a wrong by the state, however, serves here to obscure the upcoming separation between today and tomorrow – the people who exist "today" have simply vanished "tomorrow."

CHAPTER 5.

CONCLUSION

The presumed success of the Tarlabaşı 360 is already inspiring other gentrification projects around the city. Demircan says the project is going to be "like a hole in a sock," that is, once it starts it will just keep growing and growing. He claims that people come up to him on the street and ask him to renew their neighborhoods too (Taş, 2012). Coming up next in Beyoğlu are the Piyalepaşa urban renewal project (current status: "high earthquake risk and poor quality social life"), and of course the transformation of the hard-to-tame Okmeydanı neighborhood (another contender for Istanbul's future "Champs-Élysées" which today is most often associated with "terrorists"). And it might not just be Istanbul – in the same article he claims that people come from Arab countries and are so impressed by the transformations taking place in Istanbul that they want to repeat it in their country. The state is treating Tarlabaşı as a model, as a test case for other, similar projects that could be implemented around the country. It would be interesting to examine some of these projects, and the way their rhetoric and justifications compare to that of Tarlabaşı (the recently-initiated rebuilding of Diyarbakır comes to mind).

Parts of the development are starting to take physical shape behind the scaffolding, and in its present, under-construction shape the project's claims and contradictions are clearly displayed (figures 20-23). Figure 20 shows the advertisements on Tarlabaşı Boulevard, which include imitation projecting bays, to give a nostalgic physical form to even the scaffolding for the restoration project. The project as preservation is emphasized by the fact that some of the few facades preserved in place at the site are clearly visible from the boulevard (figure 21). At the same time, a sign that includes a photo of Erdoğan and Demircan holding an award proclaims that "the new Tarlabaşı is the future," which at

Figure 20. Advertising Signs at the Construction Site (Source: author's photograph)

Figure 21. Preserved Facades at the Construction Site (Source: author's photograph)

the moment has a clearly modern under-construction building behind it (figure 22). That building's advertisement (figure 23), featuring a sketch of the building so rough and without detail that the age or youth of the building is impossible to determine (although the

Figure 22. New Buildings and Advertising at the Construction Site 1 (Source: author's photograph)

Figure 23. New Buildings and Advertising at the Construction Site 2 (Source: author's photograph)

actual building taking shape behind it makes its modernity abundantly clear); the sign says "a modern future in the footsteps of the past."

How this new version of Tarlabaşı will be accepted and used remains to be seen. Perhaps people will reject the historicism as artificial. Maybe it will even be seen as a failure. One of my students, who lives in a gated community on the Asian side, told me that, while the grounds inside the compound's walls are very nice, she doesn't like where she lives because there are so many poor people surrounding the development. It's hard to say if wealthy people will really be happy to live and work in a neighborhood that, despite the renewal project, is nevertheless strongly associated with danger.

While many historians argue that Pera in the late Ottoman period had characteristics that resembled a colonial situation, they all argue that it was ultimately a mixed urban space where foreigners, Ottoman Muslims, and Ottoman non-Muslims of different socioeconomic levels shared the same streets and neighborhoods. The name of the project implies that the neighborhood will have come "360" degrees, and thus returned to its historical condition, and its possible that they may be more right than they know. While the state envisions both the past and the future of the neighborhood as a wealthy, Western, and secure place, it's possible that what will come into being will be more mixed, at least in its officially public streets.

While the concept streets of yesterday and today can be contrasted to the "actual" streets that existed there, those of tomorrow as yet exist only through architectural renderings. It would therefore be interesting, once the project is complete, to do an interview-based research about how people react to the buildings. It will also be interesting to see who actually uses the new spaces, and how. Yesterday and today we can see that local forces subverted the use of the neighborhood that is being presented by the state, and there's no reason to think that "tomorrow" will be any different. The new buildings will likely someday develop uses that are far from what they are today anticipated to be.

Açıkgöz (2014) notes that in the early republican period, the state engaged in two forms of appropriation of monuments. First, by changing the function of the monument, for example, turning Topkapı Palace into a museum "less than five months after the declaration of the republic… was a bold symbolic act seeking to relegate the recently demised Ottoman Empire into a distant past, and terminate its contemporary political

relevance." Secondly, by the "discursive appropriation of historical patrimony," meaning that monuments were collapsed into expressions of Turkish genius, rather than Ottoman or Seljuk, fitting them into the concept of the nation-state (p. 170). The current Tarlabaşı project, however, seems to be doing exactly the opposite on both points. First, by "reverting" the neighborhood to the imagined late-Ottoman lifestyle of global trends and cosmopolitanism, it seeks to forge a greater proximity to the Ottoman past, which the republican period had attempted to make distant. It also attempts to distance itself from the republican period, by specifically pointing to things that removed the non-Muslims from the city. Second, they are attempting to put into monumentalized form a broadening of the meaning of the Ottoman Empire from its preferred republican understanding, that is as a Turkish empire, to a multicultural melting pot.

At the same time I have argued that, in contrast to republican planning which declared itself to undertake "creative destruction," the Tarlabaşı project is less honest about its underlying motives. The project presents itself as respecting the past (and in fact, some people speak so enthusiastically about this that it's likely they actually believe that these projects are preservation), but in fact it is just as destructive as modernist planning. If one looks at satellite images of the neighborhood now nothing is left – even the streets have been erased. Walking through the neighborhood today one can find almost no trace of the historical urban fabric. Even though they actively employ the language of respecting the past, the actual construction shows incredibly little actual preservation.

The mayor's conception of what a municipality should do is rooted in the Kemalist state-dominated idea of public space. Ozil claims that in the Ottoman 6th district the municipality followed the people; she argues that the boundaries of the district were drawn based on a specific urban pattern that already existed there, and that it was chosen as the experimental urban planning site because of its already existing urban milieu. But even then, what was meant by experimental urban planning site (as Çelik describes) was not an effort to control the forces that were already there, but rather to better cater to them. There was no attempt at demographic engineering of the sort we see in Beyoğlu today. At the same time there are similarities: in the late Ottoman period the transformations were for foreigners, who had different standards for urban amenities. We have seen how this too

continued through the republican period and remains an important force facing development projects today (so much so that foreigners ask about it before investing).

In fact, another way of understanding the project might be as a bid to emphasize the Europeanness of Istanbul. This was suggested in the constant comparisons to Paris, which is after all the "capital of modernity" (Harvey, 2003). I noted earlier some of the conceptions of what it means to be European – to have Jews, a church and a city hall, modernity. The new Tarlabaşı will include a number of signifiers of European modernity, including sidewalk cafes, big shopping boulevards, small pedestrianized streets, historical architecture, multiculturalism, and respect for history.

Ozil (2015) notes that "the modern Istanbul that came into being in the nineteenth century was mostly the work of local Greek and Armenian architects," a fact which she asserts is "hardly known by current inhabitants of Istanbul using [these] buildings" (p. 145). It seems, however, that even if they aren't aware of the ethnicity of the architects, they are still aware of the buildings as signifiers of a vanished cosmopolitanism that certainly included non-Muslims.

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