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Assembling 'Cosmopolitan' Pera:
An Infrastructural History of Late Ottoman Istanbul

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Abstract

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In the nineteenth century, the Pera (Beyoğlu) district of Istanbul, the capital of the Ottoman Empire, became an internationally recognized center of commerce, finance, culture, art, and recreation, in the context of the empire’s rapid integration into world capitalism. The district’s built environment changed radically, manifested in the newly erected apartment buildings, arcades, gardens, and monumental hotels and embassies. This transformation was dependent on largescale destruction of the previous spatial order of the district, as well as on environmental connections to distant and nearby peripheries of Pera, such as Terkos and Kasımpaşa. This dissertation examines this process by locating infrastructure as an integral part of ‘assembling’ Pera in the late nineteenth century.

Pera’s rise to prominence has been studied as an experiment in municipal governance, modernization in urban space, and cosmopolitan sociability. This dissertation shows that it was

first and foremost a material process, which remade a complex and extended geography within and beyond Pera's boundaries in fundamentally unequal ways. The critical study of infrastructures reveals the complex encounters forged in this process between different regions, humans and animals, the past and the present, and the living and the dead. More specifically, under two parts respectively titled "Creative Destruction in the Making of Modern Pera" and "Provincializing Pera," this dissertation focuses on four infrastructural projects and issues that proved to be crucial, especially from the foundation of the Sixth District Municipality (Altıncı Daire-i Belediye) in 1857, into the start of the twentieth century. The destruction of the medieval Genoese Walls; the construction of the Tünel (*Tunnel*, 'the world's second oldest subway') and the connected transformation of a Muslim cemetery (the Petits-Champs des Morts or Küçük Kabristan) into a garden (the Jardin des Petits-Champs or Tepebaşı Bahçesi); the establishment of a centralized waterworks from Terkos to Pera; and sewage connections between Pera and Kasımpaşa are studied in this dissertation not as manifestations of cosmopolitan urbanism but rather as enablers of Pera's making as a material as well as a discursive unfolding. This undertaking challenges the frame of cosmopolitanism under which the district's and other Mediterranean port-cities' stories have been conventionally told. Rather than taking Pera's 'cosmopolitan' identity as a given, this work uses the history of infrastructures to explore the material conditions of possibility of the district's claim to such fame. As such, it also explores the role of nonhuman actors, as well as the networks of policymaking, finance, and expertise, in assembling 'cosmopolitan' Pera, which entailed rewriting its history, recreating its sensory borders, and transforming urban and environmental topographies.

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Abbreviations

AK – Atatürk Kitaplığı (Atatürk Library, Istanbul)

AKP – Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi (Justice and Development Party)

ANAMED – Koç University’s Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations

BCA – Başbakanlık Cumhuriyet Arşivleri (Prime Ministerial Republican Archives, Ankara)

BOA – Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri (Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives, Istanbul)

TNA – The National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew

OBA – Osmanlı Bankası Arşivi (Imperial Ottoman Bank Archives, Istanbul)

A Note on Transliteration

In this dissertation, I have followed the transliteration conventions of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies* and the spellings found in the Merriam-Webster Dictionary. For Ottoman Turkish words that are still used in modern Turkish, I have followed the spelling of the modern Turkish alphabet, as long as they do not have an established spelling in English.

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I know that I have been very privileged for the intellectually stimulating environment created by my parents during my upbringing. My mother, Münevver Eminoğlu, has been a source of endless inspiration. I practically grew up in exhibition galleries where she used to organize breathtaking historical and thematic exhibitions. She instilled in me a curiosity towards urban history, which probably began when I was a little kid as she had granted me the ‘task’ of taking photographs of the city plans of ancient sites that we were so fond of visiting. Her resilience has given me power, as her support in all forms has kept us on track. I always knew that my interests in historical research had a lot to do with her, but I only very recently found out that she left her master’s degree on the urban planning of Galata and Pera unfinished because she was pregnant with me. I hope she accepts this dissertation as a long overdue gift and a partial closure for her

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Seattle

Introduction

*And now, you must
Reveal your ancestry. You were not born
From rocks or trees, as in a fairy tale.*

Homer (The Odyssey, 19:163)¹

In the spring of 1866, Gustave Flourens, a French biologist and a militant republican, published the first and only issue of *L'Avenir: Feuille Quotidienne Cosmopolite* (the Future: Daily Cosmopolitan Newspaper), a French-language newspaper in the Pera district of the Ottoman capital, Istanbul. This first issue was a manifesto for the paper and the larger project of “cosmopolitanism.” Flourens identified the potential cooperators of his newspaper as “all those who suffer from the current insecurity of relations among peoples and individuals; all those who are revolted by the present misery and deep degradation of such a vast portion of humanity; all those who wish to prevent the dangers of the future by wise reforms.”²

As he wrote down these words, the material world around him was rapidly changing. This was manifested in railroads, telegraph lines, steamships connecting distant localities around the globe; in national and international press forming new reading communities and temporal regimes across regions; in capitalist/colonialist expansion aggressively reaching out to raw materials and new markets, for which Pera served as one of the productive gateways to the rest of the Ottoman geography. “Thanks to science,” Flourens proclaimed, “communications have become extremely

¹ Emily Wilson, trans., *The Odyssey* by Homer (New York; London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2018), 429.

² Gustave Flourens, “Notre Programme,” *L'Avenir: feuille cosmopolite quotidienne* 1, May 1866. Unless otherwise noted, all translations to English are my own.

easy. Breaking the barriers of mutual ignorance and enmities that separated them, all peoples are fused together (*tous les peuples se fusionnent*).”

Pera was one of the exemplary places where people were *fused together*. Deemed as “the European quarter” of the Ottoman capital, this district on the northern banks of the Golden Horn had attracted the attention of foreigners for several centuries (fig. 1). It rose to prominence as a Genoese trade colony in the thirteenth century when the city was still under Byzantine rule and gained an additional “foreign” quality during the Ottoman reign when it started hosting European embassies from the sixteenth century onwards, a trend inaugurated by the establishment of the French Embassy in the region in 1536.³ In the nineteenth century, with the Ottoman Empire’s rapid integration into world capitalism, the district exploited its existing connections across the Mediterranean, and rapidly grew, attracting further interest from merchants, migrants, intellectuals, artists, and diplomats from all around the world.⁴

The moment in which Flourens wrote his cosmopolitan manifesto, Pera was in the midst of a more immediate *fusion*. It became a hub of relations between not only individuals and peoples across the globe, but also materials that connected Pera to other localities in the wider Istanbul,

³ During the Byzantine period, the northern bank of the Golden Horn was called “Sycae,” one of the thirteen administrative regions of Byzantine Constantinople, and the only one outside the walled city, what is now known as the Historic Peninsula. The Genoese, who were given semi-autonomy to rule over this part of larger Constantinople in the twelfth century, called it “Pera” or “Peyra.” Over two centuries, they constructed an extensive system of fortifications in this region (see chapter 1). When the Ottoman Empire captured the city in 1453, the semi-autonomy of the district was kept intact until the seventeenth century, after the peaceful handover of the town to the conquerors by the Genoese, in return for sustaining their privileges. See Edhem Eldem, “Istanbul: From Imperial to Peripheralized Capital,” in *The Ottoman City between East and West: Aleppo, Izmir and Istanbul*, ed. Edhem Eldem, Daniel Goffman, and Bruce Masters (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 144-152.

⁴ On the Ottoman Empire’s integration to world economy, see Reşat Kasaba, *The Ottoman Empire and the World Economy: The Nineteenth Century* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1988).

and its past to its contemporary fabric. From the mid-1850s to the end of the nineteenth century, policymakers, engineers, workers, and even self-made historians, worked often in contradictory ways to unleash a set of new material formations among ancient walls, inscriptions, corpses, waters, trees, fish, quails, and waste, all of which will receive their share of attention in this dissertation.

At the root of this material reconfiguration were several infrastructural projects that targeted the early modern urban fabric of Pera and officially aimed to create a more modern, efficient, and sanitary city. Istanbul's historical formation, from Byzantine times onward, had been dependent on infrastructural connections between center and periphery, urban and rural, city and nature.⁵ But the second half of the nineteenth century marked an especially heightened period of infrastructural activity, the primary target of which was Pera, as the construction of infrastructure was intensified, geographically expanded, materially diversified, while the invested capital and expertise became transnational. From the foundation of the empire's first municipality in the district in 1857, the foreign and domestic capital, entrepreneurs, and experts rushed to the district with countless projects, from the replacement of its medieval walls with regular streets and apartment buildings, to the installation of subways, tramways, bridges, waterworks, docks, and sewers. These initiatives were realized with mixed success but with significant degrees of confusion, contestation, and controversy. What they certainly achieved was a total uprooting of the existing spatial arrangements in the district and its multitude of hinterlands, converging multiple layers of histories, which were signified by the alignment of Latin inscriptions on the medieval walls of Pera with mud of the northern riparian villages of Terkos in unexpected ways.

⁵ For an early exploration of these connections for the Byzantine period, see Cyril Mango, Gilbert Dagron, with Geoffrey Greatrex, eds. *Constantinople and its hinterland: papers from the Twenty-seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, April 1993* (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995).

What was also achieved, according to the conventional histories of the district, was a ‘cosmopolitan’ urban setting that enabled a possibility for the fusion of people from around the world, to come together in the celebrated gardens, hotels, cafés, arcades, and social clubs that flourished in Pera in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The identity of Pera as a special place within Istanbul, with its modern amenities and diverse population, was to some extent self-fashioned and propagated by the contemporary residents of Pera. One year prior to the sole issue of *L’Avenir* was published, *Journal de Constantinople*, a prominent newspaper of the district, praised the “industrial, commercial, financial, and luxury establishments” that had opened up in the district in the previous years, which included “rich stores, casinos, theaters, clubs, institutions belonging to different nationalities.” All these “diverse creations [in Pera],” the article proclaimed, “affirmed the [level of] civilization” and the “immense progress” achieved by the municipal organization.⁶ Another popular paper, *La Turquie*, listed the reasons that made Pera an increasingly “aristocratic” town, which included the existence of “superb hotels and cafés,” embassies, consulates, new postal services, companies, French and Italian theaters, department stores, printing presses and newspapers; and the multitude of European notables, bankers, proprietors, lawyers, doctors, and tourists... “Pera today,” wrote the paper, “is what the contact of civilization can make, and what the progress of the century requires.”⁷

This emphasis on cosmopolitan diversity, civilization, and progress obscures material diversities that were formed through this process. To unearth these assemblages, this dissertation locates infrastructure as a critical means to explore the making of modern Pera that would go

⁶ “Chronique,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4584, January 24, 1865.

⁷ “Péra,” *La Turquie* 162, August 14, 1866.

beyond the celebratory urban histories of sociability and the stylistic narratives of architectural history. Through an examination of several infrastructural interventions in the city's built and natural environments in the second half of the nineteenth century, it maps the unequal geographies that were made and remade during Pera's emergence as one of the quintessential cosmopolitan spaces of the late Ottoman period. The making of these geographies depended upon and triggered multifaceted encounters between different regions, humans and animals, the living and the dead. Through the excavation of hidden actors and spatial layers, I show that fin-de-siècle cosmopolitanism did not only rely upon but also reinforced spatial inequalities, which more often than not manifested through the material histories of infrastructure.

The fundamental issue being challenged here is the conventional treatment of the history of Pera as an already finished, static end product, as a symptom of nineteenth-century Ottoman modernity and cosmopolitanism. This undertaking does not necessarily refute such associations with the district, but it rather seeks to analyze the conditions of their possibility, to make the constitutive processes behind the built environment visible, to "spatialize their history," in contrast to a mere "history of spaces."⁸

Literature Review

In this dissertation, I propose to study infrastructures of Pera at the analytical nexus provided by urban environmental history, critical geography, and Actor-Network Theory. As developed further in the following, these strands of scholarship enable new insights into the Eastern Mediterranean urban history and a reevaluation of the frame of cosmopolitanism, which for so long has left its imprint on the attempts to locate the experience of late nineteenth-century

⁸ Stuart Elden, *Mapping the Present: Heidegger, Foucault and the Project of a Spatial History* (London: Continuum, 2001), 6-7.

urbanities. In the following, I begin by mapping out the existing literature on urban history in the region, as well as on Istanbul and more particularly, Pera. As I explore this literature, I also provide some background historical information for the study of modern urban governance of Istanbul and the nineteenth-century Pera. There are important recent works in the field of urban history that challenge the long-lasting tropes on Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cities, and analyze the production of space as a dynamic unfolding. While these accounts are beneficial and inspiring for this work in different ways, the history of Pera has barely been subjected to such critical reevaluation. Furthermore, these accounts usually fall short of exploring the environmental and material making of past urban experience. A new materialist methodology, which would treat environmental and urban spaces as parts of a complex and unequally formed assemblage, has the potential to open new grounds for the study of city and nature, urban and countryside.

In Search of a Frame: Eastern Mediterranean Urban History

This dissertation benefits to a great extent from the recent studies on Ottoman and Middle Eastern urban and architectural histories. The literature has come a long way since the discussions on ‘Islamic city,’⁹ and scholars have distanced themselves from an architectural writing that is solely interested in the monographs of giants.¹⁰ This recent critical trend is especially strong for the later period. Architectural and urban historians wrote histories of Ottoman and post-Ottoman

⁹ Janet L Abu-Lughod, “The Islamic City—Historic Myth, Islamic Essence, and Contemporary Relevance,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19, no. 2 (1987): 155-76.

¹⁰ Gülru Necipoğlu’s work on the architect Sinan, for example, is a *tour de force* on Ottoman architectural practices and institutional infrastructure in the sixteenth century. Gülru Necipoğlu, *The Age of Sinan: Architectural Culture in the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

cities that emphasized connections and coexistence, struggle over space and competing urban visions, disrupting the linear narratives of modernization.¹¹

Particular attention has been given to the rise of Eastern Mediterranean port-cities, relying heavily upon the world-system approach that rose to prominence in the 1980s. The Ottoman Empire's gradual incorporation into the capitalist world system from the early nineteenth century onwards has provided a very fruitful framework to situate individual or comparative histories of Eastern Mediterranean cities. It can be argued that the world-systems approach was the first to introduce the keywords of connections, networks, and interdependency between transnational spaces into the study of Ottoman and Middle Eastern histories, which continue to benefit from the heuristic potentials opened up by these concepts, as also manifested in this dissertation.¹² In Reşat Kasaba's analysis, "Incorporation refers to a twofold establishment of the links between the production processes of an external arena and the loci of production and consumption in the capitalist world economy; the other, is the integration of the political structures of this area in to

¹¹ Apart from the works that are mentioned in detail in the following, see Sibel Bozdoğan, *Modernism and Nation Building: Turkish Architectural Culture in the Early Republic* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001); Stefan Weber, *Damascus: Ottoman Modernity and Urban Transformation (1808-1918)* (Aarhus University Press: 2009); Peter Sluglett, *The Urban Social History of the Middle East: 1750-1950* (Syracuse University Press, 2008); Zeynep Çelik, *Empire, Architecture, and the City: French-Ottoman Encounters, 1830-1914* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008); Ebru Boyar and Kate Fleet, *A Social History of Ottoman Istanbul* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Ulrike Freitag et al., eds., *The City in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the Making of Urban Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2011); James A. Reilly, *The Ottoman Cities of Lebanon: Historical Legacy and Identity in the Modern Middle East* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2016), among others.

¹² For a recent reevaluation of the benefits and shortcomings of this approach, see Sebastian Conrad, *What Is Global History?* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016), 50-52. A strong interest in Mediterranean urbanism and its interactions with environmental conditions were already evident in Fernand Braudel's writings, see Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, trans. Siân Reynolds, vol.1 (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 312-352. For the debt of the Wallerstein school to Braudel, but also other way around, see Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School, 1929-2014*, 2nd ed. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2015), 57-58.

the interstate network of the world system.”¹³ Incorporation, in the case of the Ottoman Empire especially from the mid-nineteenth century onwards, meant “peripheralization,”¹⁴ “the main beneficiaries” of which were “no longer the bureaucratic elite” of the empire but private financiers and their local, as well as international networks.¹⁵ Most—but not all—of these actors were non-Muslim, which benefited not only from their connections in the global markets but also from the Tanzimat legislations that, at least on paper, guaranteed the security of property.¹⁶ They also profited from legal extraterritoriality provided by the capitulations, which resulted in thousands of Ottoman non-Muslims receiving European passports,¹⁷ making it very complicated for the Ottoman state—but European states, too—to deal with the legal obligations of these subjects.¹⁸ As Çağlar Keyder, another pioneer name in the school of world-systems, notes, “In this context [of incorporation] port-cities emerged as concrete spaces within which these new rights, institutions,

¹³ Kasaba, *Ottoman Empire and the World Economy*, 4.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 35-49, 85.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 100. Here I do not imply a situation where the local actors did not possess any agency or autonomy vis a vis Western capitalist interests. What is significant here is the connectivity of these actors to Ottoman institutions and Western economic powers. For a discussion of the “Ottoman bourgeoisie,” see Edhem Eldem, “(A quest for) the bourgeoisie of Istanbul: Identities, roles, and conflicts,” in *Urban Governance Under the Ottomans. Between Cosmopolitanism and Conflict*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2014), 159-186.

¹⁷ Çağlar Keyder, “Europe and the Ottoman Empire in Mid-Nineteenth Century: Development of a Bourgeoisie in the European Mirror,” in *East Meets West—Banking, Commerce and Investment in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Philip L. Cottrell, co-ed. Iain L. Fraser and Monica Pohle Fraser (Taylor and Francis, 2016), 54.

¹⁸ See Will Hanley, *Identifying with Nationality: Europeans, Ottomans, and Egyptians in Alexandria* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017) for a brilliant mapping of the complicated terrain of nationality and extraterritoriality in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

and practices, found homes. As extensions of the world system and its liberalism, they constituted an accommodating environment for peripheral bourgeoisies to be nourished.”¹⁹

Urban historians combined the framework of incorporation/integration to capitalism with the critical tools of urban theory to the study of Middle Eastern urbanities and port-cities in the nineteenth century. Applying a Lefebvrian analysis to his narrative of the nineteenth-century Beirut, Jens Hanssen showed “that modern Beirut is the outcome of persistent social struggles over the production of space.”²⁰ These struggles, Hanssen contended, involved the Ottoman Empire’s orientalist and centralist visions concerning its provinces, representatives of foreign capital, the intermediaries discussed by world-system scholars, and local subaltern subjects.

Among the Eastern Mediterranean cities in the nineteenth century, Beirut was arguably overshadowed only by the glitters of Izmir/Smyrna. And in accordance with its prominent status among other Ottoman cities, Izmir has received the greatest attention of historians working on the empire’s last century. Sibel Zandi-Sayek’s work on late nineteenth century Izmir, for example, can be seen as a successful attempt to overcome the insular studies of architecture or urban ‘cosmopolitan’ sociabilities through “[investigating] the complex interrelatedness of urban space, institutional practices, and civic culture in the context of multiethnic and multinational imperial politics.”²¹ Zandi-Sayek utilizes “urban space and spatial practices as a lens to investigate the dynamic nature of identity and belonging in a rapidly modernizing and centralizing, multinational

¹⁹ Keyder, “Europe and the Ottoman Empire,” 57. For a review of the more recent literature on port-cities, see Nurçin İleri, “Rewriting the History of Port Cities in the Light of Contemporary Global Capitalism,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, no. 47 (2012): 185-209.

²⁰ Jens Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut: The Making of an Ottoman Provincial Capital* (Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2005), 3-4

²¹ Sibel Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir: The Rise of a Cosmopolitan Port 1840/1880* (Minneapolis; London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 3-4.

and multireligious state.”²² Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, in her study of Cairo, Alexandria, and Beirut as loci of Eastern Mediterranean radicalism, shows how working and middle classes made sense of this emerging new world, and the importance of early capitalist spaces of ports, railroads and tramways, textile and tobacco factories, but also theaters, for the development of the networks of radicalism.²³ The work of Hanssen, Zandi-Sayek, and Khuri-Makdisi, in their unique ways, exemplifies a more recent and critical brand of scholarship that dissects the nineteenth-century urban experience in the Eastern Mediterranean against the backdrop of the growth of port-cities as gateways to incorporation to global capitalism.

Istanbul within Urban History

Similar issues and concerns are evident in the study of Istanbul, though the city has its own complications due to its imperial history. As Murat Gül argues in his latest treatment of Istanbul’s urban history, the city’s modernization was not unique, and “contrary to mainstream Turkish historiography.... [the] problems faced by Istanbul were very much the same as the challenges confronted by other major European cities.”²⁴ Yet, whereas the transformed concerns about urban order, hygiene, and security were shared among many urban centers, Istanbul, unlike many European cities, was subject to a gradual “peripheralization,”²⁵ through which the power to intervene in city spaces was increasingly shared with foreign powerholders, i.e. companies, diplomatic legations, and experts; as well as district municipalities that were formed with the

²² Ibid., *Ottoman Izmir*, 6.

²³ Ilham Khuri-Makdisi, *The Eastern Mediterranean and the Making of Global Radicalism, 1860–1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010), 142.

²⁴ Murat Gül, *Architecture and the Turkish City: An Urban History of Istanbul since the Ottomans* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2017), 9.

²⁵ Eldem, “From Imperial to Peripheralized,” esp. 179-206.

uneven participation of the aforementioned financial intermediaries.²⁶ Zeynep Çelik's *Remaking of Istanbul* is a groundbreaking analysis of how modern Istanbul was made in the nineteenth-century, and more than thirty years after its publication, it continues to be one of the most important sources of inspiration for urban histories of the Middle East. Çelik was especially successful and pioneering in showing that "the institutional reforms set in motion by the declaration of the Tanzimat Charter [1838] found their extensions in the built forms—in the urban fabric on a larger scale, in architecture on a smaller scale."²⁷ In Çelik's account, it becomes clear that Istanbul's modernization was "piecemeal," marred with unrealistic projects, insufficient funds, and bureaucratic/municipal incompetency and deficiency. Narrow, dirty streets and a lack of transportation infrastructure were the ultimate proofs of the problematic nature of urban modernization in the capital of the Ottoman Empire. Indeed, incompetency and deficiency characterize much of the scholarship on nineteenth-century urban experience in large Ottoman cities, principally in Istanbul.

However, as Christoph Neumann lays out in his study on the Sixth District Municipality of Pera (Altıncı Daire-i Belediye), the "leitmotif of deficiency" was itself shaped within the modernization paradigm of the twentieth-century academia, and has a rather linear preconception of urban development that insufficiently engages with complex local dynamics.²⁸ One of the very

²⁶ For foreign companies and financial institutions in the late Ottoman Empire, see Haydar Kazgan, *Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Şirketleşme* (Istanbul: Vakıfbank, 1999); V. Necla Geyikdağı, "French Direct Investments in the Ottoman Empire Before World War I," *Enterprise and Society* 12, no. 3 (2011): 525-61; Edhem Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000). There are also undeniable topographical peculiarities, the most obvious one being the central presence of the Bosphorus. See Murat Güvenç, "Murat Güvenç ile İstanbul'un Son Yüzyılı Üzerine," Interview by Alim Arlı, Yunus Uğur, and Nurullah Ardıç, *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 8, no. 16 (2010): 419.

²⁷ Çelik, *Remaking of Istanbul*, 42.

²⁸ Christoph K. Neumann, "Modernitelerin Çatışması Altıncı Daire-i Belediye, 1857-1912," in *İstanbul: İmparatorluk Başkentinden Megakente*, ed. Yavuz Köse (Istanbul: Kitap, 2011), 426-

recent works that challenge this established narrative is Eda Güçlü's dissertation on the urban restructuring of Istanbul's Hocapaşa neighborhood after the fire of 1866, which shows the development of an "ideology of services" that shaped the organization of municipal institutions, and argues that "divergence from the European model" did not necessarily mean a failure.²⁹ Güçlü's critique is especially welcome with respect to her critical engagement with one of the foundational figures of the modern historiography of Istanbul: Osman Nuri (Ergin, 1883-1961).

As a young bureaucrat at the early twentieth-century Şehremaneti (the Prefecture of Istanbul), Osman Nuri directed a municipal commission that classified the documents of the Şehremaneti and several other state bodies that had municipal functions, creating an archive while "disposing of the unnecessary documents."³⁰ Furthermore, he published—under the aegis of the Şehremaneti—an annotated collection of these documents in five volumes, *Mecelle-i Umur-i Belediye*, first published between 1912 and 1922, which is still an unrivaled source for the historians of Istanbul. This dissertation, like many other histories of modern Istanbul, makes ample use of the documents gathered together by Osman Nuri. However, one needs to be careful in differentiating Osman Nuri's zealously modernist and *municipalist* commentary from the historical information put together in his collection, especially because the work of Osman Nuri is intellectually and institutionally a direct outcome of the nineteenth-century municipal experience. Uncritical reliance on the documents assembled by Osman Nuri and on the narrative through which

427. For a recent analysis of the modernization school/theory, see Reşat Kasaba, "Middle East in Sociology, Sociology in the Middle East," in *Middle East Studies for the New Millenium: Infrastructures of Knowledge*, ed. Seteney Khalid Shami and Cynthia Miller-Idriss (New York: NYU Press, 2016), 91.

²⁹ Eda Güçlü, "Urban Tanzîmât, Morality, and Property in Nineteenth-Century Istanbul" (PhD diss., Central European University, 2018), 34.

³⁰ Hakan Anameriç and Fatih Rukancı, "Evrak-ı Atıkanın Suret-i Tasfiyesine Dair Rapor (22 belge ile birlikte)," *Belgeler* 27, no. 31 (2006): 91-111.

he presents them, is thus prone to be highly influenced by a particular narrative of modernization with orientalist tones, written from a top-down approach, with almost no room for resistance to the municipal projects, contestation of the obsession with order, or of the “ideology of services.”³¹

A critical stance on this “ideology of services” and the concepts utilized by authorities to justify their intervention in urban space has only very recently begun to take shape in historiography. Göksun Akyürek’s work on the architectural discourse during the Tanzimat period, for example, reveals that Istanbul’s “urban disorder” was a discursive formation that the intellectuals and policymakers of the era strongly invested in, and not an objective reality of the city’s physical conditions.³² Discourses of order and disorder, and mechanisms to maintain security in the Ottoman capital were closely studied by Noémi Lévy-Aksu, who showed the various ways in which the technologies of urban control and surveillance were employed in late Ottoman Istanbul.³³ From a different angle but in line with the critical reevaluation of the modernization paradigm, Lorans Baruh’s dissertation locates the formation of municipal services and development of the urban spaces in the “Taksim – Sirkeci axis” in the central role played by networks and material interests of landed bourgeoisie and foreign capital.³⁴ All of these studies showed that the restructuring of urban spaces in the nineteenth century was a more complicated

³¹ Considering Mecelle’s centrality to modern urban studies of Istanbul, we are in dire need of a critical study of Osman Nuri’s ideological and historiographical premises. In this dissertation, I approach all archival material with a similar critical distance. The first chapter, in particular, is a reevaluation of how a certain archival assemblage and historiographical leitmotif on Pera was initially formed during the second half of the nineteenth century following an infrastructural intervention in urban space.

³² Göksun Akyürek, *Bilgiyi Yeniden İnşa Etmek: Tanzimat Dönemi'nde Mimarlık, Bilgi ve İktidar* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2011), 168.

³³ Noémi Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Asayiş, 1879-1909* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 2017).

³⁴ Lorans İzabel Baruh, “The Transformation of the “Modern” Axis of Nineteenth-Century Istanbul Property, Investments and Elites from Taksim Square to Sirkeci Station,” (PhD diss., Boğaziçi University, 2009).

process, shaped by power relations and vested interests rather than a strict adherence to—or a failure to follow—the objective necessities of modern urbanism.

Histories and Historiographies of Pera

Baruh's work takes us to the particular spaces of Pera that I study in this dissertation. Pera had proved to be an "accommodating environment for peripheral bourgeoisie to develop"³⁵ from the eighteenth century onwards, as the intensification of the "capitulatory regime," marked by the 1740 agreement between the Ottoman Empire and France, turning the table very much in favor of the latter, strengthening the French presence in the Istanbul market and its impact on the city's spatial development.³⁶ The increasing number of the European merchants and residents in Pera

³⁵ Keyder, "Europe and the Ottoman Empire," 57.

³⁶ Eldem, "Istanbul: From Imperial to Peripheralized," 191-193. As a reflection of the French influence on the process of urbanization in the region, *extra muros* part of Galata gradually came to be known as "vignes de Péra," a toponym referring to the vineyards in the district. While the Greek word "Pera" (*beyond*) had been the preferred name by the Genoese for the walled city, as the center of urban development shifted outside the walls into the north, this toponym moved northward as well. By the nineteenth century, following this shift and the established Ottoman practice of calling the walled city "Galata," Pera and Galata emerged as two distinct but increasingly connected regions. To complicate things even further, the Ottoman official documents did not use Pera and rather preferred Beyoğlu. In the local press and most of the extra-state documents, however, reflecting the increasing spatial and administrative connection of Galata and Pera—which constitutes one of the overarching themes of this dissertation—both areas came to be identified under the shorthand of "Pera." Thus, *the Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople from Galata to Pera* (see chapter 2) operated within a district that was administrated by the *Pera Municipality*. In this dissertation I use this rather subtle distinction. If my narrative pertains to the entire district, or in parts when I do not feel the requirement to differentiate between different parts of the district, I use "Pera" as a general, inclusive name. If I need to specify between the historical regions, then I use "Galata" and "Pera" to indicate two geographically distinct but very much connected toponyms. In short, I prefer to be historically accurate with respect to the preferred usage in the nineteenth century, even if that would occasionally mean I would contradict the way these names were used in earlier centuries or other contexts. Needless to say, this choice also provides a better writing—and hopefully, reading—experience than filling the pages with the frequent mouthful pairings of "Galata and Pera." I must also add that this is not a universally agreed solution. Zeynep Çelik, for example, uses Galata in a very similar way I use Pera. After all, as J. F. Packard wrote in 1880, it was "somewhat puzzling to know where Galata ends or Pera begins." Quoted in John Miller and Kirsten Miller, eds., *Chronicles Abroad: Istanbul* (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1995), 163.

also attracted the attention of non-Muslim Ottomans, who moved there from other parts of the Ottoman capital, exemplified in the mass movement of Greeks from Phenar (*Fener*) and the Armenian Catholics in the early nineteenth century. What was especially appealing for these non-Muslims, similar to the other port-cities in the Ottoman Eastern Mediterranean, was the opportunity to be granted protections and extra-territoriality by foreign legations under the capitulatory system. By the end of the eighteenth century Pera “symbolized the conquest of a new and alternative center around which the Istanbul of the nineteenth century would be re-defined.”³⁷ The nineteenth century saw the intensification of the several trends initiated in the previous one, including the increasing power of European merchants and legations in the city’s urban development, and its interconnected expansion towards the northern axis and outside Istanbul proper. Fittingly, the imperial court moved to the newly built palace in Dolmabahçe, in the vicinity of Pera in 1855, taking part in a process that already began in the eighteenth century, with state officials moving to mansions along the northern villages of Bosphorus, as well as the establishment of summer residencies of foreign legations.³⁸

Pera’s place in urban historiography is disproportionate to its larger-than-life representation in popular literature and popular history-writing. Apart from the very important study of the real-estate development by Baruh that expansively utilizes the archives of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, there is only a handful of academic research that devote special interest in the district’s modern history. Steven Rosenthal’s *The Politics of Dependency* is a study of the

³⁷ Eldem, “From Imperial to Peripheralized,” 196.

³⁸ Afife Batur, “Kentsel Tasarım Bağlamında ‘Dolmabahçe Sarayı,’” in *Dolmabahçe: Mekânın Hafızası* ed. Bahar Kaya (Istanbul: İstanbul Bilgi Üniversitesi Yayınları, 2016), 64-69; Paolo Girardelli, “Power or leisure? Remarks on the architecture of the European summer embassies on the Bosphorus shore,” *New Perspectives on Turkey*, 50 (2014): 29–58; Tülay Artan, “Architecture As A Theatre of Life: Profile of the Eighteenth-Century Bosphorus” (PhD diss., Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1989).

formation of the municipal organization in Pera, in light of the dependency theories of the 1970s. Published in 1980, it can be situated as a precursor of urban histories that benefited from the world-systems approach, but unlike the latter, it pays very little attention to urban form and social life in Pera in the second half of the nineteenth century.³⁹ Rosenthal's work on the Sixth District Municipality paved the way for other studies on the institution, which, as the first district municipality in the entire Ottoman Empire, was promoted as a model organization for the modern restructuring of local governance in its time,⁴⁰ and found relatively higher interest in modern scholarship.⁴¹ The establishment of the Sixth District was preceded by the foundation of the Şehremaneti, the Istanbul Prefecture in 1855. According to Neumann, the most important reason for the foundation of the Şehremaneti was the awareness on the part of the authorities that urban services were proving to be increasingly difficult in the absence of local participation.⁴²

While the municipal organization and the urban restructuring of Istanbul, and especially Pera, have been conventionally narrated as a case of modernization strictly following the Western model, Neumann rightly intervenes by pointing out that an established Western model of urban modernization did not really exist prior to this period. When the Order of the City (İntizam-ı Şehir) commission was formed in 1856 to devise a guideline for the restructuring of urban governance in Istanbul, "it did not have money, [executive] power, or a model to emulate."⁴³ The commission

³⁹ T. Steven Rosenthal, *The Politics of Dependency: Urban Reform in Istanbul* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1980).

⁴⁰ Indeed, Izmir and Beirut followed Pera's suit soon. Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 92; Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut*, 115.

⁴¹ Neumann, "Modernitelerin Çatışması"; N. Işık Demirakın, "A Study of the Ottoman Modernisation on the City: The Sixth Municipal District of İstanbul (1856-1877)" (master's thesis, Bilkent University, 2006).

⁴² Neumann, "Modernitelerin Çatışması," 429.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 431.

was composed mostly of the wealthy landowners of Pera.⁴⁴ The document crafted by the commission urged the Ottoman state to be granted full responsibility and complete financial autonomy regarding several urban matters, prioritizing sewers and sanitation. It also suggested the inclusion of the representatives of European legations to the commission for the oversight of urban services.⁴⁵ While the autonomy demanded from the state could be seen as antithetical to the Tanzimat project of bureaucratic centralization, the antagonism was not that great, for the Tanzimat also entailed the aim of efficiency in governance,⁴⁶ which the commission promised. In the words of the historian Zafer Toprak, the Sixth District could be seen as an urban “balance sheet of the Tanzimat.”⁴⁷ Furthermore, as Neumann notes, the actors involved in these initial steps of municipal organization were all members of the elites of Istanbul and the networks that ran the empire, most importantly, the bankers of Galata—and former moneylenders (*sarraflar*) of the Porte—who increasingly financed the expansion of the bureaucracy and state services.⁴⁸

The recommendations of the commission were not put into action for the Ottoman capital at large, but rather a new municipal organization was established in 1857 that would include Galata and Pera in its administrative borders, as a model municipality that would undertake the principles laid out by the commission in this restricted geography. Selection of the northern bank of the Golden Horn for such a municipal experiment was not random. As has already been stated, the members of the commission had mostly relied on the power they built in the district, and they were

⁴⁴ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediye* (Istanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1995), 1278.

⁴⁵ Neumann, “Modernitelerin Çatışması,” 432.

⁴⁶ Carter V. Findley, *Bureaucratic Reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), 290.

⁴⁷ Zafer Toprak, “Altıncı Daire-i Belediye,” *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, vol.1 (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1992), 222.

⁴⁸ Neumann, “Modernitelerin Çatışması,” 432; Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası*, 73.

the ones to benefit most from the improvement of urban conditions. Furthermore, the concentration of European legations in Pera gave the district a further importance in the eyes of the Ottoman state. The municipality was called the Sixth District as its foundation was accompanied with the division of the city into fourteen municipal districts, and the reformers saw the sixth district (*sixième arrondissement*) of Paris, the wealthy central neighborhood of the city, a worthy object of their urban aspirations. The municipal commission consisted of wealthy proprietors of the district. It would have budgetary autonomy, hire its own staff of architects, engineers, and physicians, and rather than serving in a minor role under the Şehremaneti, it was to be supervised directly by the central state, signifying the lopsided importance given to the experiment in Pera.⁴⁹ This autonomy was from the outset a contested one, however, and the municipality resorted to various techniques, including rewriting the history of the district, in order to claim more autonomy from the central authority, as we will see in chapter 1.

The agenda of the municipality was packed with urgent matters. The first grand-scale projects it undertook were the reorganization of Galata Square, the construction of a new stock-exchange building, and the initiation of a detailed cadastral survey.⁵⁰ Road enlargements, street cleaning, lighting, and sewage amelioration were also in the initial program of the municipality, which increased its staff to seventy-seven people by 1860.⁵¹ Budgetary constraints, however, became apparent from very early on, as the municipality found it very difficult to collect taxes from the residents of the district in return for its services, especially because an equivalent tax was not collected from the inhabitants of Istanbul residing in other parts of the city.⁵² In line with the

⁴⁹ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle*, 1307-1308.

⁵⁰ Baruh, "Modern Axis," 92.

⁵¹ Neumann, "Modernitelerin Çatışması," 437.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 439.

state's financial burdens in the 1860s and 1870s, the Sixth District's fortunes were under constant pressure of bankruptcy, and its projects on the urban space largely aimed at increasing the municipal revenues. The first radical measure and the most spatially transformative act came in 1864 when the municipality, backed by the central state, decided to demolish the medieval Genoese Walls of the district, which constitutes the subject of chapter 1. The decision was given during the term of the Director Server Efendi, a young bureaucrat of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Hariciye Nezareti) and an ardent supporter of the Tanzimat reforms.⁵³

The municipality was finally put under the authority of the Şehremaneti in 1868, with the establishment of the rest of the district municipalities, but the relative autonomy of the Sixth District continued until the late 1870s, when most of its special authorities were taken over by the Şehremaneti. Even then, it kept its prestige among other district municipalities, and prestigious bureaucrats of the late Ottoman state, such as Blacque Bey—the first Ottoman ambassador to the United States of America—were appointed as its directors. After the Young Turk Revolution of 1908, when the central authority tried to implement an even more radical effort of centralization, the Sixth District was further stripped of its special privileges and local autonomy, and its municipal council was abolished, in face of the increased powers of the Şehremaneti under the mayorship of Cemil Bey (Topuzlu). Nevertheless, the early years of the Sixth District served as a model of an independent, autonomous municipal organization for this new, all-powerful municipal organization, as the writings of Osman Nuri attest.⁵⁴

⁵³ Ibid., 442. Server Efendi was appointed as the head of the Reform of Streets (Islahat-ı Turuk) commission after the Hocapaşa fire in the Historic Peninsula in 1865, and then the director of the Şehremaneti in 1868, underlining the role of the Sixth District as a model for the rest of the urban governance practices in Istanbul as well as the rest of the empire.

⁵⁴ Ergin, *Mecelle*, 1336.

A particular point of interest and a useful supply for primary sources for historians is the lively publishing scene of Pera. Indeed, in the nineteenth century, Pera became one of the two centers of publishing in Istanbul. In 1873, there were forty-three periodical papers published in the entire capital, some of which reaching more than ten thousand circulation numbers.⁵⁵ Publishing houses in Pera printed numerous newspapers and journals, some for only one issue, others for decades, in the many languages used in the Ottoman Empire, but especially in French. Newspapers such as *Journal de Constantinople*, *La Turquie*, *Stamboul*, and *Levant Herald*, and journals like *L'Univers: Revue Orientale*, *La Revue de Constantinople*, became important venues for the formation of public opinion on urban matters among the members of middle classes of the city who had literacy and language proficiency to access them.⁵⁶ As Sibel Zandi-Sayek puts it in the context of Izmir, “Especially after the 1840s, the periodical press became an integral part of [the] changing urban consciousness, simultaneously shaping how people perceived their city and expanding the ways they engaged with it and what lay beyond it.”⁵⁷ This press, at least in its inspirations, was local and global at the same time. The same page of a newspaper could contain a news piece about a man falling into a hole in the poorly constructed road in the midst of the district, next to an in-depth review of a distant country. Technological advancements, scientific progress, true to the spirit of the nineteenth century, were especially favored as topics to cover. In the hopeful words of Gustave Flourens, “The new press is learned. It examines every fact in the light of science. It puts [on its papers] only ideas, beneficent and fertile ideas.”⁵⁸ For the press in

⁵⁵ Orhan Koloğlu, “Basın,” *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1992), 69.

⁵⁶ Gérard Groc and Ibrahim Çağlar, *La Presse Française de Turquie de 1795 à nos Jours: Histoire et Catalogue* (Istanbul: Editions ISIS).

⁵⁷ Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 32.

⁵⁸ Flourens, “Notre Programme,” 4.

Pera—and other port-cities of the late Ottoman Empire—the French language served as the most common ground for the representatives of different ethnolinguistic communities and foreigners residing in the district. In that, Flourens was justified in granting the agency to his newspaper in ‘making cosmopolitanism,’ but this also marked the limits of such a project, as only those who were literate in French—and to a lesser extent, English—could participate in this cosmopolitan public space. The district press, despite this limit and censorship,⁵⁹ constitutes one of the most crucial sources utilized in this dissertation, for it provides an essential glimpse into how the urban matters were discussed in the—limited—public, with contributions from policymakers, experts, and rarely the individuals who managed to make their voice heard in the “disembodied public subject.”⁶⁰ As Lévy-Aksu notes, while it was hardly possible to criticize the Ottoman government, and even less so the sultan, in these newspapers, “intermediary” actors, such as municipalities and in some cases certain bureaucrats, were legitimate targets for the critical discourse of the authors, especially in matters pertaining to the urban problems.⁶¹ The fact that news and opinion pieces were recycled widely among other papers, with frequent translations between newspapers in other languages—including the Ottoman Turkish—makes it possible to give them a larger representative quality than their limited original circulation would have it.⁶² As Hanssen puts it for the case of fin-de-siècle Beirut, “it was the journalistic institution of al-akhbār al-baladiyyāt (‘city news’) or al-mahalliyyāt (‘domestic news’), the local sections on pages 1, 2, and often 4—that structured the

⁵⁹ The district press that published in European languages was certainly targeted by censors, as the examples of *Stamboul* and especially *Levant Herald*, which was banned many times, show. For the Hamidian censorship regime, see Fatmagül Demirel, *II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Sansür* (Istanbul: Bağlam Yayıncılık, 2007), esp. 60-88, for the censorship on the local press.

⁶⁰ Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 127.

⁶¹ Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Asayiş*, 156-157.

⁶² Khuri-Makdisi also points out to the recycling of news pieces and articles in the press of the same period in a global scale. See Khuri-Makdisi, *Eastern Mediterranean*, 50.

imagined public sphere most immediately and fundamentally.”⁶³ In the case of Pera newspapers, it was the sections of “Chronicle” (*chronique*), “Small News” (*nouvelles et faits divers*), and “Local News” (*nouvelles locales*) that recorded the city’s pulse and shaped the contours of debate about all urban matters.

Nur Akın’s study of the social life of Galata and Pera in the second half of the nineteenth century should especially be commended for highlighting the value of French and English language newspapers published in the district as fruitful primary sources.⁶⁴ However, Akın’s work is also emblematic of a less useful trend in the historiography pertaining to the district, namely, the easy association of Pera with cosmopolitanism, often used with the adjectives of “Mediterranean” or “Levantine.”⁶⁵ The literature that narrates the social life in Pera in the second half of the nineteenth century often alludes to the trope of cosmopolitanism, accompanying the straightforward narratives of modernization and Westernization, which account for the change in the built environment and urban culture in this period.⁶⁶ Those who defend this view find it easy to locate ‘kernels’ of this process back in fifteenth-century Galata. This early difference has been sufficient for many scholars to argue that what happened in the late nineteenth century was just another manifestation of the peculiar character of the district, which has been coined as “cosmopolitan.”⁶⁷

⁶³ Hanssen, *Fin de Siècle Beirut*, 6.

⁶⁴ Nur Akın, *19. Yüzyılın İkinci Yarısında Galata ve Pera* (Istanbul: Literatür, 1998).

⁶⁵ For the complicated roots of this term and its varied usages in the Mediterranean history, see E. Natalie Rothman, *Brokering Empire: Trans-Imperial Subjects between Venice and Istanbul* (Cornell University Press, 2011), 211-247.

⁶⁶ Afife Batur, “19. Yüzyıl İstanbul Mimarlığında Bir Stilistik Karşılaştırma Denemesi: A. Vallaury & R. D’Aronco,” in *Osman Hamdi Bey ve Dönemi*, ed. Zeynep Rona (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1993), 146-158.

⁶⁷ Akın, *Galata ve Pera*, 7, 37; Semayî Eyice, *Galata ve Kulesi – Galata and Its Tower* (Istanbul: Türkiye Turing ve Otomobil Kurumu, 1969), 15. At the same time, the Istanbul proper was left out of this ‘fetish’ for cosmopolitan diversity and was rather designated as the ‘Muslim space par

In these accounts, the built environment is approached only as a sign of grand narratives rather than the manifestation of a complex set of power relations, making straightforward links of causality without any interpretive attempts. This conventional image reifies the orientalist tropes of the nineteenth century, identifying Pera with being “European,” “modern,” and “cosmopolitan,” while Istanbul proper is described as “Muslim,” “Oriental,” “backward,” and “historic”—hence, the widespread nomenclature, the Historic Peninsula (*Tarihi Yarımada*). Even though the architectural historian Paolo Girardelli contends that “the often emphasized gap between the two shores of the Golden Horn—traditional, “Oriental” Stamboul as opposed to modern, Europeanized Galata and Pera (present-day Beyoğlu)—was far from displaying a precise architectural connotation,”⁶⁸ the image persists. However, the premises of this duality, embedded in the physical and discursive cityscape of Istanbul in the late nineteenth century, are rarely questioned.⁶⁹

Spatializing Cosmopolitanism

The dominance of the cosmopolitan imagery on the historiography of Istanbul requires us to engage with the literature on the concept.⁷⁰ Since the 1990s, cosmopolitanism has received

excellence,’ ignoring neighborhoods where various communities of the empire lived side by side. Similarly, many modern urban projects in this side of the Golden Horn were overlooked in order to underline the duality between two sides. In fact, Baruh shows that Sirkeci and Eminönü, two neighborhoods in Istanbul proper, fed on the same flows of capital that contributed to the growth of Pera and Galata. Baruh, “Modern Axis,” 4. For the developments in Istanbul proper in the nineteenth-century, see Güçlü, “Urban Tanzîmât”; Gözde Çelik, “Tanzimat Döneminde Tarihi Yarımada: Tercihler, Yaklaşımlar, Görünümler,” *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 8, no. 16 (2010), 227-258; Maurice Cerasi, “The Urban and Architectural Evolution of the Istanbul Divanyolu: Urban Aesthetics and Ideology in Ottoman Town Building,” *Muqarnas Online* 22, no. 1 (2005): 189-232.

⁶⁸ Paolo Girardelli, “Sheltering Diversity: Levantine Architecture in Late Ottoman Istanbul,” in *Beiruter Texte Und Studien 102: Multicultural Urban Fabric and Types in the South and Eastern Mediterranean*, ed. Munir Maurice Cerasi et al. (Beirut: Ergon Verlag Würzburg in Kommission, 2007), 114.

⁶⁹ In the second section of chapter 2, I investigate a particular manifestation of this duality.

⁷⁰ The following discussion of the literature on cosmopolitanism is largely taken from another piece I recently published. See K. Mehmet Kentel, “Caricaturizing ‘Cosmopolitan’ Pera: Play,

periodical waves of attention by philosophers, social scientists, literary critics, and historians. This interest has situated cosmopolitanism in different, interrelated registers, including a “socio-cultural condition, a kind of philosophy or world-view, a political project towards building transnational institutions, a political project for recognizing multiple identities, an attitudinal or dispositional orientation, a mode of practice or competence.”⁷¹ Proponents and opponents of the concept alike acknowledge the limited nature of historical cases of cosmopolitanism, which implies forms of mobility available only to elites. Its class-based formation was already predicated in the writings of John Stuart Mill as well as Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, who attached the adjective “cosmopolitan” to capital and the bourgeoisie.⁷²

Outside the field of Ottoman studies, the Ottoman Empire serves as an easy, offhand example of historical cosmopolitanisms.⁷³ Within the field, as well, there is a widespread uncritical use of the term as an explanatory frame to identify an accepted sociological reality especially of the nineteenth-century urban diversities and Westernized lifestyles. Such widespread use does not help produce any analytical clarity for the term that, in the words of Khuri-Makdisi, “probably obscures more than it explains.”⁷⁴ Biray Kolluoğlu and Meltem Toksöz suggest to move beyond

Critique, and Absence in Yusuf Franko’s Caricatures, 1884-1896.” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 10-11, n. 2.

⁷¹ Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen, “Introduction: Conceiving Cosmopolitanism,” in *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism: Theory, Context and Practice*, ed. Steven Vertovec and Robin Cohen (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 9.

⁷² Craig Calhoun, “The Class Consciousness of Frequent Travellers: Towards a Critique of Actually Existing Cosmopolitanism,” in *Conceiving Cosmopolitanism*, 103.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 88.

⁷⁴ Khuri-Makdisi, *Eastern Mediterranean*, 161.

aesthetic concerns and quantitative diversities and conceptualize the term as a “spatial phenomenon” to denote “relatively autonomous spaces that mediated between different worlds.”⁷⁵

In Middle Eastern, Mediterranean, and Ottoman studies, widespread use of the term is also predicated within different registers of contemporary imperial nostalgia. As Naor Ben-Yehoyada asserts, “the image of cosmopolitan port cities became an object of paradoxical nostalgia for a moment that emblemized a certain image of non-national modernity—urbaneness, refinement, and intercultural coexistence and conviviality.”⁷⁶ Kasaba’s account of the ‘end’ of cosmopolitanism in Western Anatolia vividly shows the precarious conditions that made that “moment” possible in the first place.⁷⁷ One of the most powerful challenges to the dominant narrative of cosmopolitanism came from Hala Halim, who dissected the literary canonization of Alexandria’s cosmopolitanism as a colonial discourse.⁷⁸ Will Hanley’s critique of the prevalent use of the term in Middle Eastern Studies shows that urban historians do not engage with the theoretical underpinnings and issues of cosmopolitanism, whereas intellectual historians or philosophers use the mythical past experience of Middle Eastern urbanities as an easy example of lived cosmopolitanism, “engendering historiographic conformity.”⁷⁹ One of the rare examples that try to move beyond such conformity is the group of essays brought together by Ulrike Freitag and

⁷⁵ Biray Kolluoğlu and Meltem Toksöz, “Mapping Out the Eastern Mediterranean: Toward a Cartography of Cities of Commerce,” in *Cities of the Mediterranean: From the Ottomans to the Present Day*, ed. Biray Kolluoğlu and Meltem Toksöz (London: I.B. Tauris, 2010), 8.

⁷⁶ Naor Ben-Yehoyada, *The Mediterranean Incarnate: Region Formation between Sicily and Tunisia since World War II* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2017), 206-7.

⁷⁷ Reşat Kasaba, “İzmir 1922: A Port City Unravels,” in *Modernity and Culture from the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean, 1890-1920*, ed. Fawaz Leila Tarazi and Christopher Alan Bayly (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 204-29.

⁷⁸ Hala Halim, *Alexandrian Cosmopolitanism: An Archive* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2013), 3.

⁷⁹ Will Hanley, “Grieving Cosmopolitanism in Middle East Studies,” *History Compass* 5 (2008): 1355.

Nora Lafi, whose collection explores Ottoman cosmopolitanism “as a social and institutional construction, which was often based on the tradition of the Islamic ideals of protection, coexistence, and tolerance, but was not limited to them.”⁸⁰ In their discussion, violence is presented as an integral tension within Ottoman cosmopolitanism, and contributors integrate the experience of lower class or ordinary people into the conversation about diversity.

Pera is one of the geographies of the larger Mediterranean and Middle Eastern world that is especially marked by a nostalgia for its cosmopolitan past. A thorough critique of this nostalgia was given by Edhem Eldem, who argues that the “rediscovery” of the district, “with a strange mix of scholarship, curiosity, exoticism, fantasy,” took place in the 1980s, when Turkey adopted liberalization in its economic policy; and especially in the 1990s, when economic liberalization was increasingly attached to ascendant ideas about multiculturalism.⁸¹ This nostalgic discourse, which almost exclusively concentrates on the second half of the nineteenth century, situates Pera as a “hybrid, Westernized, Cosmopolitan, modern, and to a large extent, foreign district of Istanbul.”⁸²

The stereotypical image of Pera was fueled by the translation of Said-Naum Duhanî’s memoirs of Pera’s “times that will not come back” into Turkish,⁸³ shaping at the same time what

⁸⁰ Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi, “Introduction: cosmopolitanism and conflicts: changes and challenges in Ottoman urban governance,” in *Urban Governance Under the Ottomans. Between Cosmopolitanism and Conflict*, ed. Ulrike Freitag and Nora Lafi (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2014), 9.

⁸¹ Edhem Eldem, “Ottoman Galata and Pera between Myth and Reality,” in *From ‘milieu de mémoire’ to ‘lieu de mémoire’: The Cultural Memory of Istanbul in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Ulrike Tischler (Munich: Meidenbauer, 2006), 20.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 21-22.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 22. Said-Naum Duhanî, *Eski İnsanlar Eski Evler: 19. Yüzyıl Sonunda Beyoğlu'nun Sosyal Topografisi*, trans. Ahmet Parman (Istanbul: Türkiye Turing ve Otomobil Kurumu, 1984) and Duhanî, *Beyoğlu'nun Adı Pera iken: Geri Dönemeyecek Zamanlar*, trans. Nihal Önel (Istanbul: İstanbul Kütüphanesi, 1990).

can be called as “Pera/Beyoğlu” genre in Turkish literature. Following Duhanî’s literary style, many works have been published in Turkish that are extremely descriptive, repetitive, and biographical—either of buildings or the characters that occupied them.⁸⁴ This genre, as noted by Eldem, has an undeniable upper-class bias, which underscores the existence of embassies, hotels, banks, restaurants, passages/arcades, show venues, and gardens at the expense of everything else that was present in Pera, especially on its back streets.⁸⁵ Similar to what On Barak writes for Alexandria, “the existence of a large and active European community during the nineteenth century, and the dwindling of this community [in the twentieth century] de-concretized the city, transformed [it] into an intangible idea.”⁸⁶ This idea, which for both cases of Alexandria and Pera was associated with a nostalgia for a lost cosmopolitan belle-époque, gave way to isolated treatments of the urban space, which has shown itself with an overemphasis of the façade of the built environment.

An Emerging Field: Urban Environmental History

While urban histories of the Ottoman Empire and the Eastern Mediterranean, drawing on the paradigm provided by the world-systems approach and susceptible to critical engagement with cosmopolitan nostalgia, provides one particular source of inspiration and pathway for this dissertation, this literature, however, has not sufficiently benefited from a fruitful dialogue with environmental history. Environmental history is a growing subfield in the historiography of the

⁸⁴ Behzat Üsdiken, *Pera’dan Beyoğlu’na 1840-1855* (Istanbul: Akbank Yayınları, 1999); Jak Deleon, *Bir Beyoğlu Gezisi* (Istanbul: Remzi, 2002); Çelik Gülersoy, *Beyoğlu’nda Gezerken* (Istanbul: Çelik Gülersoy Vakfı, 2003); Turan Akıncı, *Beyoğlu: Yapılar, mekânlar, insanlar (1831-1923)* (Istanbul: Remzi Kitabevi, 2018).

⁸⁵ Eldem, “Ottoman Galata and Pera,” 25.

⁸⁶ On Barak, “Scraping the Surface: The Techno-politics of Modern Streets in Turn-of-twentieth-century Alexandria.” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 188.

Middle East,⁸⁷ which increasingly accounts for “the role of nonhuman factors, from climate and geological processes to animals and microbes, in historical events and why they matter for the history of the Ottoman and post-Ottoman worlds.”⁸⁸ This growing literature, which embarked upon the challenge of treating “seriously [the] connection between nature and power,”⁸⁹ produced very fruitful debates and linked Middle Eastern historiography to global discussions around the histories of plague, “Little Ice Age,” and “the rise of the West,” among others.⁹⁰ However, the literature has so far largely ignored one of the major contributions of environmental history, i.e. the co-constitutive connections between the city and nature, urban and rural. Onur İnal’s observation from 2011, that “there is still a lack of information about the environmental history of Ottoman cities and towns,” still holds true at the end of 2018.⁹¹ The study of cities, of course, has never been impervious to the questions related to the environment, from the control of water to food provision; and such questions were not avoided in Ottoman and Middle Eastern

⁸⁷ For overviews, see Onur İnal, “Ottoman and Turkish Environmental History: An Overview of the Field.” *Environment and History* 24 (2018): 297–299; İnal, “Environmental History as an Emerging Field in Ottoman Studies: An Historiographical Overview,” *Osmanlı Araştırmaları-The Journal of Ottoman Studies*, no. 38 (2011): 15; Chris Gratien, “Ottoman Environmental History: A New Area of Middle East Studies,” *Arab Studies Journal* 20, no. 1 (Spring 2012), 246-254; Alan Mikhail, “The Middle East in Global Environmental History,” in *A Companion to Global Environmental History*, ed. John Robert McNeill and Erin Stewart Mauldin (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 167-181.

⁸⁸ Chris Gratien, “The Ottoman Quagmire: Malaria, Swamps, and the Settlement in the Late Ottoman Mediterranean,” *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 49, no. 04 (2017): 584.

⁸⁹ Alan Mikhail, *Under Osman's Tree: The Ottoman Empire, Egypt, and Environmental History* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 2017), xii.

⁹⁰ Nükhet Varlık, *Plague and Empire in the Early Modern Mediterranean World: The Ottoman Experience, 1347-1600* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015); Sam White, *The Climate of Rebellion in the Early Modern Ottoman Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011); Alan Mikhail, “Ottoman Iceland: A Climate History,” *Environmental History* 20, no. 2 (2015): 262-84; Edmund Burke, “Toward a Comparative History of the Modern Mediterranean, 1750–1919,” *Journal of World History* 23, no. 4 (2012): 907-39.

⁹¹ İnal, “Environmental History,” 15.

historiography either.⁹² But, as İnal notes, these were fundamentally in the domain of socio-economic history and ignored the production of the environment.⁹³

The critical perspectives of urban environmental history ask researchers to move beyond such tangential treatments of natural resources and rather deal with complex environmental entanglements produced in relation to urban centers. William Cronon's *Nature's Metropolis*, which is a major inspiration especially for the second part of this dissertation, is a pioneer text that integrates the study of environmental spaces into urban history, by showing how the making of Chicago was possible only via the making of spaces outside the conventional borders of the city, and through a material network that included the flows of meat, wood, and grain, among others.⁹⁴ Cronon's work has been very influential in the fields of urban and environmental history in the last couple of decades, as scholars wrote histories of cities that are responsive to the impact of nonhuman actors.⁹⁵ This has not been necessarily the case for Ottoman historiography, and Onur İnal's work, which discusses "the role and significance of social, economic, and ecological changes that took place in the Western Anatolian countryside for the drastic urban transformations [Izmir] underwent in the late nineteenth century," provides a rare example of Cronon's influence.⁹⁶

⁹² For example, Lütfi Güçer, "XVII. Yüzyıl Ortalarında İstanbul'un İaşesi İçin Lüzumlu Hububatın Temini Meselesi," *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 11, no.1-4 (1949-1950): 397-416; Antony Greenwood, "İstanbul's Meat Provisioning: A Study of the Celepkeşan System," (PhD diss., University of Chicago, 1988); Ahmet Uzun, "Osmanlı Devleti'nde Şehir Ekonomisi ve İaşe," *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 3, no. 6 (2005): 211-235; Mehmet Aydın, "Mütareke Döneminde İstanbul'un İaşesi (1918-1922)" (PhD diss., Marmara Üniversitesi, 2002).

⁹³ İnal, "Environmental History," 15.

⁹⁴ William Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis: Chicago and the Great West* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1991).

⁹⁵ Matthew Klinger, *Emerald City: An Environmental History of Seattle* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

⁹⁶ Onur İnal, "The Making of an Eastern Mediterranean Gateway City: Izmir in the Nineteenth Century," *Journal of Urban History* (2018): 1.

Bringing the Materialism Back: Geography, Networks, and the Study of Infrastructures

The work of these urban environmental historians benefited from and was paralleled by critical geographers and the students of Actor-Network Theory or new historical materialism. Among the first group, David Harvey and Neil Smith have the most profound impact on this dissertation as well as on other fields. Critical geography, following a Marxist trajectory and extending the analysis of “the production of space” by Henri Lefebvre, underscores the role of political-economic processes in the shaping of urban and environmental spaces that are sometimes overlooked by environmental historians.⁹⁷ The basic premise of these scholars is to show, in the words of Harvey, that “spatial and ecological differences are not only constituted by but constitutive of ...socio-ecological and political-economic processes.”⁹⁸ Central to the work of Harvey and Smith is the concept of “uneven development,” which, as Edward Said noted, “formulates how capitalism historically has produced a particular kind of nature and space, an unequally developed landscape that integrates poverty with wealth, industrial urbanization with agricultural diminishment.”⁹⁹ While uneven development, in its more classical Marxist sense, has been utilized to account for levels of development in a more global scale—and hence is attuned to the theses of dependency theory and world systems approach¹⁰⁰—critical geographers have used it to explore unequal geographic relations in different scales, and urbanization in this framework is understood to be “a manifestation of uneven geographical development at a certain scale.”¹⁰¹ In this view, the particular forms in which urbanization take shape in various places are inherently

⁹⁷ David Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1996), 184-185.

⁹⁸ Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography*, 6.

⁹⁹ Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), viii.

¹⁰⁰ Neil Smith, *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital, and the Production of Space 3rd ed.* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 6.

¹⁰¹ Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography*, 429-430.

connected through the flows of capital that link them, and the “uneven development” is not only a “gap” between these different places but rather a “systematic product” and “fundamental premise” of capitalism.¹⁰²

The second group of scholars, whose work can be identified under the headings of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) or new historical materialism, pushes forward a more epistemological critique in order to bring the materiality of the relations among humans and nonhumans into the open. This critique owes most to the writings of Bruno Latour. Latour argues that social constructivism’s and critical social theory’s challenges to deterministic and positivistic approaches, while valuable in themselves, contributed to the formation of a new deterministic given in the elusive shape of “the social,” without critically analyzing its components. Furthermore, this ‘social’ is thought to be comprised only by humans, ignoring the role played by nonhumans, including animals, plants, and the nonliving, in “assembling” the numerous ties that extend all around our existence on the earth. In contrast, Latour defines social “not as a special domain, a specific realm, or a particular sort of thing, but only as a very peculiar movement of re-association and reassembling.”¹⁰³ He proposes “to follow the actors themselves,”¹⁰⁴ in order to make “the social visible.”¹⁰⁵ In his work on Paris, he tries to “link up the very particular traces running through [the social],” because in fact, “Paris, the City of Light, is weaved by them: Paris, the invisible city, consists of them.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Smith, *Uneven Development*, 207.

¹⁰³ Bruno Latour, *Reassembling the Social: An Introduction to Actor-Network-Theory* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 7.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁰⁵ Bruno Latour, *Paris: The Invisible City*, 1998, accessed October 31, 2018. <http://www.bruno-latour.fr/virtual/EN/index.html>.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

In the work of Latour and others that followed, the agency is spread among human and nonhuman networks, highlighting their connections, and bringing nonhumans from being mere props in the background to the fore of analysis.¹⁰⁷ These connections make the power moving, which is “always in motion, circulating, rippling, meandering.”¹⁰⁸ Overall, this line of thinking argues that separating social from material, human from nonhuman, living from nonliving, as well as urban and nature, city and country, obfuscate our understanding of the present and the past. In fact, it is this separation itself, which is more than anything a product of Enlightenment thinking and industrial capitalism,¹⁰⁹ should be put under scrutiny, not only as a discursive product but also as a material unfolding.¹¹⁰

The most fruitful terrain to explore the productivity of these approaches has been the study of material infrastructures. Transportation, communication, energy, waste, and water infrastructures have been put under scrutiny by scholars working at the intersection(s) of ANT, new historical materialism, critical geography, and environmental history. Infrastructures are particularly rewarding for such critical scrutiny because, as Timothy Mitchell suggests, they “arrange the interaction of human lives with nature.”¹¹¹ Infrastructures provide services to populations in unequal ways through exploiting “natural” reserves; while at the same time they produce “nature,” as in the case of a huge dam construction recreating a water basin, changing the

¹⁰⁷ Phillip Drake, “Marxism and the Nonhuman Turn: Animating Nonhumans, Exploitation, and Politics with ANT and Animal Studies,” *Rethinking Marxism* 27, no. 1 (2015): 109.

¹⁰⁸ Christopher Otter, “Locating Matter: The Place of Materiality in Urban History,” in *Material Powers: Cultural Studies, History and the Material Turn*, ed. Tony Bennett and Patrick Joyce (Abingdon: Routledge, 2010), 46.

¹⁰⁹ Erik Swyngedouw, *Social Power and the Urbanization of Water: Flows of Power* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2004), 12.

¹¹⁰ Timothy Mitchell, *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-politics, Modernity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 42-43.

¹¹¹ Mitchell, “Introduction: Life of Infrastructure,” *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 34, no. 3 (2014): 438.

way in which insects and the disease they carry interact with humans.¹¹² And infrastructures, created consciously—but almost never in perfect accordance with the initial plans—by humans, “are themselves partly human,” since they carry the expertise and labor of those who create and maintain them, and the experience of those who use them.¹¹³ Furthermore, as geographer Sinan Erensü shows, infrastructures carry ideology, too, not only because the decision to build them—or not to build them/destroy them—is inherently political, but also because they are used to produce consent among parts of the population, while at the same time being resisted by others.¹¹⁴

Whereas they connect human and nonhuman actors across unequal geographies often in subtle, barely visible ways—as in the case of sewers, for example—the material infrastructures also work to produce the very effect of separation. By bringing water or oil from a distant locality to a city, a pipeline connects the fates of millions of people living in a city to underground reserves from afar, but through a set of arrangements that govern the distribution, use, and control of the reserve, it also highlights the distinction between the city and the nature, marking the latter as the source of the reserve, and the former as where that reserve is consumed. The fact that this separation was the product of the modern age was already observed by the prominent Marxist cultural critic Raymond Williams, who wanted to show that “two apparently opposite and separate projections—country and city—were in fact indissolubly linked, within the general and crisis-ridden development of a capitalist economy which had itself produced this division in its modern forms.”¹¹⁵ Studying infrastructures closely, not merely as manifestations of existing social

¹¹² Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 19-53.

¹¹³ Mitchell, “Life of Infrastructure,” 439.

¹¹⁴ Sinan Erensü, “Fragile Energy: Power, Nature, and the Politics of Infrastructure in the 'New Turkey” (PhD diss., University of Minnesota, 2016), 86.

¹¹⁵ Raymond Williams, *Resources of Hope: Culture, Democracy, Socialism*, ed. Robin Gable (London; New York: Verso, 1989), 227.

systems, but as enablers of such systems in the first place, allows us to circumvent the separation, and rather see these “assemblages” in their hybrid, heterogeneous, scattered totality.¹¹⁶

Middle Eastern Studies has been a very productive site for the study of infrastructures that follows the trajectory of “material turn” outlined above. This was in part due to the very visible role played by infrastructure in the modern history of the region, as oil and water, and the infrastructures that produced and distributed them, were arguably the most contentious nonhuman actors in shaping social and political events. The pioneering impact of Timothy Mitchell, a leading figure of the field, in theorizing and applying this materialist epistemology for the study of the region, also needs to be mentioned. This impact is the most manifest in the work of a new generation of scholars whose research is concentrated on the twentieth-century or contemporary infrastructural and/or ecological issues.¹¹⁷ Recent work on histories of infrastructure and technology in the late Ottoman cities, too, has shown a much-needed curiosity about the materiality of infrastructures. Building upon the findings of a more descriptive tradition of writing on Ottoman material infrastructures,¹¹⁸ this literature is theoretically rich and inspired by the global shifts in critical scholarship, exploring diverse topics such as the sensory experiences engendered by

¹¹⁶ “We are learning to think of democracy not in terms of the history of an idea or the emergence of a social movement, but as the assembling of machines.” Timothy Mitchell, *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil* (London: Verso, 2013), 108.

¹¹⁷ Erensü, “Fragile Energy”; Esra Bakkalbaşıoğlu, “Negotiating Illegality: Bypassed Minorities’ Access to Infrastructure in Middle Eastern Democracies” (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2019, forthcoming); Begüm Adalet, *Hotels and Highways: The Construction of Modernization Theory in Cold War Turkey* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2018); Dale J. Stahl, “The Two Rivers: Water, Development and Politics in the Tigris-Euphrates Basin, 1920-1975” (PhD diss., Columbia University, 2014).

¹¹⁸ Kazım Çeçen, *İstanbul’da Osmanlı Devrindeki Su Tesisleri* (İstanbul: İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 1984); Vahdettin Engin, *Tünel* (İstanbul: Simurg, 2000); Sertaç Kayserilioğlu, *Dersaadet’ten İstanbul’a Tramvay* (İstanbul: İETT, 2006); İlhami Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su: Dersaadet (İstanbul) Su Şirketi, 1873-1933* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2010).

Western Anatolian railroads, illumination of Istanbul's streets, water infrastructures of Hijaz, and changing temporal regimes in Ottoman society, among others.¹¹⁹

This dissertation follows the footsteps of and contributes to these recent interventions as it engages with Pera's modern history. It argues that the perspectives provided by environmental history, critical geography, and Actor-Network Theory, which are attentive to the production of unequal geographies and nonhuman entanglements in the process of urbanization, promise to create a rupture in the study of 'cosmopolitan' urbanism. Rather than taking Pera's perceived identities, as in the case of cosmopolitanism, as prefixed givens, or merely as social constructions, here I deal with their 'assembling,' as physical constructions, and the role of infrastructural 'things' in their making, locating the material assemblages upon which the urban spaces and multitudes, framed as 'cosmopolitan,' depended. In a nutshell, this dissertation aims to de-mythologize Pera, making its history and its associated qualities of modernity and cosmopolitanism less *natural* for the eyes of the modern readers, and more about *nature*, in its myriad manifestations.

A large selection of primary sources constitutes the basis of this dissertation. My primary site of archival research has been the Ottoman state archives (Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri,

¹¹⁹ Elvan Cobb, "Railway Crossings: Encounters in Ottoman Lands" (PhD diss., Cornell University, 2018); Nurçin İleri, "Allure of the Light, Fear of the Dark: Nighttime Illumination, Spectacle, and Order in Fin-de-Siècle Istanbul," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 37, no. 2 (2017): 280-98; Michael Christopher Low, "Ottoman Infrastructures of the Saudi Hydro-State: The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage and Potable Water in the Hijaz," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 57, no.4 (2015): 942-974; On Barak, *On time: Technology and Temporality in Modern Egypt*. Berkeley (University of California Press, 2013); Avner Wishnitzer, *Reading Clocks, Alla Turca: Time and Society in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015). One should also mention Murat Güvenç's contributions to Istanbul's urban history, informed by critical theories of geography, city-planning, and creative uses of Geographic Information Systems (GIS). See Güvenç, "İstanbul'un Son Yüzyılı"; and Güvenç, "İstanbul 2010: Beyoğlu Yakasının İşyeri-Konut İlişkileri," *Toplumsal Tarih* 159 (March 2007): 28-33.

BOA).¹²⁰ I have benefited from a wide array of documents, with a larger concentration of documents from the Ministry of Interior Affairs (Dahiliye Nezareti) and the Grand Vizierate (Sadaret) collections. Special attention has been paid to the documents that underlined grievances addressed around the issues related to infrastructure—their presence or lack thereof—in order to highlight the voices of the public. This research has utilized the maps created by the engineers of the Ottoman state and private companies. In that regard, Atatürk Library (Atatürk Kitaplığı, AK) was particularly useful. The United Kingdom National Archives (TNA) provided the documents of the British Embassy located in Pera, as well as the records of the Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople, the company behind the Tünel project, tackled in chapter 2. Another source for primary documents was the archives of the Imperial Ottoman Bank (OBA), located at SALT Research in Istanbul, which also provided access to the district press. I have systematically surveyed issues of *Journal de Constantinople* and *La Turquie* from the early 1860s to the late 1880s.¹²¹

In addition, printed materials on infrastructure and urban life including books and reports have been consulted in various libraries in Istanbul, Paris, London, Berlin, New York, and from many other digital repositories. Finally, the project has also benefited from travel literature and occasionally from twentieth-century memoirs.

¹²⁰ During the final stages of writing this dissertation, due to Turkey's move from parliamentary democracy to presidential system in 2018, the archive's official name was changed to the Presidential State Archives (*Cumhurbaşkanlığı Devlet Arşivleri*), but the official abbreviation is still BOA.

¹²¹ I am aware that a major absence in this study is the exploration of a potentially alternative vision about Pera that could have been laid out in the contemporary Ottoman Turkish press. As much as I approach the discourse of the local Pera press critically, the way they define Pera, its geographic boundaries, and history, plays an important part in this dissertation. A study of the visions of Pera that were manifest in the contemporary Ottoman Turkish press would be essential to counterbalance the picture I rely on in this dissertation.

Plan of Dissertation

Chronological boundaries of this dissertation are dictated by the infrastructural projects it deals with. Reflecting the diverse theoretical and historiographical inspirations behind this work, as it investigates the nature of various infrastructural projects, the dissertation is divided into two parts, namely (I) Creative Destruction in the Making of Modern Pera; and (II) Provincializing Pera. While first part explores the spaces of Pera destroyed in the process of building the modern city in the nineteenth century, the second part takes this exploration out of Pera's boundaries and scrutinize the environmental connections produced by the city's modernization. While the influence of bodies of literature it engages is spread throughout the work, these two parts manifest my dialogue with these literatures in distinct ways. The four chapters in these two parts are thematically organized, yet they also follow a loose chronological order: It opens up with the destruction of the Genoese Walls of Pera in the 1860s, and continues with the construction of an underground funicular in 1875 and the related transformation of a cemetery into a garden in 1880, followed by the establishment of a centralized waterworks from Terkos to Pera in 1885, and the decades long struggle to fix the district's sewers, which peaked in the 1880s and the 1890s—in part reflecting the fact that infrastructural issues and solutions often contributed to other infrastructural issues.

Part I – Creative Destruction in the Making of Modern Pera

The first part of the dissertation deals with several episodes of destruction embedded in the construction of modern Pera. The term “creative destruction” was introduced into the general lexicon of economics by Joseph Schumpeter in order to show the destructive premise of capitalism as economic structures change from within—eradicating the older forms while simultaneously

engendering new ones.¹²² David Harvey, on the other hand, is responsible for making the term central to contemporary urban studies, by using it to indicate the severity of spatial destruction in the process of urbanization—which, according to Harvey, is central to development of capitalism, so Harvey’s argument could be seen as a logical extension of Schumpeter’s.¹²³ The overall purpose of the first part of the dissertation is to challenge the linear histories of Pera’s modernization, which have presented the emergence of Pera’s modern spaces (in this case, apartment buildings and gardens) and modern infrastructure (a regular street pattern and a subway) in a straightforward narrative devoid of any complications and conflicts, and with a complete avoidance of the district’s spatial organization prior to modernization. Both of the chapters in this part closely scrutinize the writings and actions of two engineers played important roles in the district’s crucial moments of creative destruction. Here engineers are not treated as the sole creative intellects behind their projects, but rather as central figures situated at the critical nodes of the networks of humans, animals, plants, and nonliving materials, out of which the ‘cosmopolitan’ Pera was built. They were connected to power, capital, expertise, and technology; to logistics and raw materials; to local notables and international actors; to channels of knowledge production and dispersion; and following them, without taking their perspective as the only legitimate ones, promises to unravel such connections.

¹²² Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, introduction by Richard Swedberg (Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2003), 81-86.

¹²³ David Harvey, “Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 610 (March 2007): 22-44. Harvey also shows that the term was in circulation in the nineteenth century primarily to refer to the dynamics of urban growth and renewal. See Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 254.

The first chapter, “Ruin and Knowledge: Writing the History of Genoese Pera in the Moment of Its Destruction,” explores the demolition of the district’s medieval Genoese Walls in the 1860s firstly as a founding act of the formation of a material network of elites, through investing in the demolitions and acquiring extensive land plots in return. As the first major intervention of the Sixth District Municipality in the existing urban fabric of Pera, the destruction of the medieval walls was supported by several prominent landowner families and financial institutions of the district, who had close ties with the municipal council. Through the loans they provided to the municipality, they became influential in the decision-making process and benefited from it by acquiring newly created land plots. Several of these actors continue to appear in the dissertation, for the spatial and financial power they generated from this act of creative destruction enabled them to play similar roles in other infrastructure projects. The destruction was also crucial for future infrastructure projects in a more general way as it allowed the district to devour its physical barriers and increased the pace of its urban sprawl.

However, as the title chosen for the chapter, i.e. “Ruin and Knowledge,” implies, the emphasis of the chapter lies in a more intellectual/discursive form of creative destruction. Whereas this destruction has been criticized by later observers as a careless eradication of the district’s cultural heritage, I argue that it was actually used by its elites, from very early on, in order to reclaim Pera’s Genoese roots for their own presentist goals. This is shown this through a close examination of the writings of a French-Ottoman engineer, Victor-Marie de Launay (1823?-?), who was appointed in the Sixth District and took the responsibility of recording the walls’ history and physical features at the moment of their destruction. Engaging with the nascent field of Ottoman history of archaeology, as well as critical studies of cultural heritage, this chapter maps out the elite network of expertise and policymaking that turned this intervention in the district’s

material fabric into an experiment in history writing and heritage politics to appropriate the district's medieval past as a 'European' town, categorically different than the rest of Istanbul. This was possible through salvaging the Latin inscriptions on the demolished walls and writing a history of Pera based on the information provided by these relics, while the walls themselves, as testaments not only to the Genoese but also to the Ottoman past, with settlements and shops built around them, were completely eradicated from the district's built environment. I contend that this initial act of writing a specific version of Pera's history had a lasting impact on modern scholarship, which, as explained above, tends to overlook the district's centuries of Ottoman rule and ahistorically connects the late nineteenth-century experience with the early Genoese settlement.

The destruction of the medieval walls and the decision to listen to the voice of the salvaged inscriptions instead of other human or nonhuman actors, both material processes, were constitutive for the history of Pera—and for the rest of the dissertation—in three distinct ways: It opened up crucial spaces for further land development and new necessities for infrastructure; it mobilized and solidified a network of investors by strengthening their hold on the spaces of Pera, and it initiated the modern scholarship of Pera with a fundamentally flawed vision of an imagined connection between its Genoese past and 'cosmopolitan' present.

The second chapter, "Cosmopolitanism over the Fields of the Dead: Cemetery, Subway, Garden" looks at the construction of the world's second oldest subway route in 1875 and the urban transformation it triggered, embodied in the replacement of a Muslim cemetery by an elite garden. Analyzing this episode, it traces how elite leisure spaces, celebrated as cosmopolitan sanctuaries, were built at the expense of the social spaces inhabited by the marginal members of Ottoman society, including by its dead. Within the Ottoman domains, Pera was a fertile ground for experimenting with new technologies meant to facilitate communication, transportation, and

circulation. Indeed, it can be safely argued that the ideal of efficient circulation was the prime mover for the decisions made to re-organize Pera's urban space in the second half of the nineteenth century. Circulation was never equally distributed, and one's more efficient circulation usually came at the expense of another's.

Designed by a French engineer, Eugène-Henri Gavand (1836-1889), constructed with British, French, and Ottoman capital, and—still—operating between Galata and Pera, this short subterranean funicular, Tünel, was hailed as a symbol of progress and civilization. Further intensifying the links between the financial and port sector of Galata and the commercial and residential sector of Pera, Tünel was an embodiment of what modern technology offered to accelerate circulation. However, it was also a microcosm of what a fixation with circulation meant for the masses. The construction uprooted Pera's topography, displacing tens of shops and households, making the investors of the project further benefit from the changing property relations in the area. But most significantly, through the dumping of the construction debris over a cemetery ground, Petits-Champs des Morts, or Küçük Kabristan, Tünel also initiated the transformation of the cemetery into a municipal garden, one of the symbolic places of 'cosmopolitan' Pera.

What was so telling about this transformation was the fact that the cemetery used to serve the lower classes of the district not only as a graveyard but also as a social space, where men and women, Muslims and non-Muslims, humans and animals, as well as the living and the dead, co-existed. It had also provided an easy passage between Pera and its neighboring working-class district Kasımpaşa. The opening of the garden in lieu of the cemetery meant that the physical, discursive, and ontological liminality of the fields of the dead was replaced by more rigid borders between upper and lower classes, between the spaces of the living and the dead, between

Kasımpaşa and Pera. This chapter's introduction to the discussion of the borders of Kasımpaşa provides an appropriate segue to the second part of the dissertation, which takes the story of Pera outside its limited geographic confines.

Part II – Provincializing Pera

The second part of the dissertation aims to “provincialize” Pera’s place in the history of Istanbul by showing how the rise of Pera was dependent on natural and urban resources beyond the district’s borders, and how this dependence, in turn, produced spaces and reconfigured human and nonhuman relations outside Pera. The term “provincializing” comes from the famous work of Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*. Chakrabarty “seek[s] to provincialize or decenter [Europe] as an imaginary figure that remains deeply embedded in *clichéd* and *shorthand forms* in some everyday habits of thought that invariably subtend attempts in the social sciences to address questions of political modernity in South Asia.”¹²⁴ Admittedly, Chakrabarty’s aim, historical material, and methodology are very different than those of this dissertation.¹²⁵ Nevertheless, they share a similar premise to “decenter” their objects of study from their “*clichéd*” and “*shorthand forms*” entrenched for so long in scholarly and popular literatures. Here, I attempt to show how Pera’s modern history “was always and already modified by particular histories,” of other geographies, “whether or not we could excavate such pasts fully.”¹²⁶

¹²⁴ Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), 3-4.

¹²⁵ There are several theoretical concepts that I utilize in this dissertation that do not necessarily belong to same intellectual trajectories, and more purist critics may find the work at fault for these potential disparities between the concepts such as assemblage, provincializing, creative destruction; or scholars such as Bruno Latour, Dipesh Chakrabarty, David Harvey, and Walter Benjamin. Here I find refuge in Michel Foucault’s dictum to use theories as “toolboxes,” without ignoring the warnings given by E. P. Thompson about over-reliance on theory. See Clare O’Farrell, *Michel Foucault* (London; Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, 2005), 51; E. P. Thompson, *The Poverty of Theory, or An Orrery of Errors*, new ed. (London: Merlin Press, 1995).

¹²⁶ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, xiv.

The obsession with circulation in the period was not limited to people and commercial goods. Rapid urbanization, growing population, and changing mentalities and sanitary concerns made the efficient circulation of clean water and dirty sewage an essential necessity of public and individual life. In Pera, this meant a growing dependence on, and intensified biopolitical connections with other geographies of Istanbul. Accordingly, Part II trails the journey of water from Terkos to Pera, where it turned into bodily fluids via the sewers as they flowed through Kasımpaşa and reached the sea. It situates Pera in a nexus of circulating liquids, putrid as well as clean, over an extended geography of “operational landscapes,”¹²⁷ stretching from the Black Sea to the Golden Horn. Rejecting the treatment of Pera’s modernization as an isolated story, and through an analysis of maps, plans, projects, reports, and complaints, it shows how infrastructure, its presence as well as its absence, created unequal relations between different localities in Ottoman Istanbul in the second half of the nineteenth century. Tracing the infrastructural and environmental connections formed by waterworks and sewers, this project makes the case for an integrated history of Istanbul that includes distinct regions linked through material ties. These connections, unraveled by my close study of infrastructure, raised disputes concerning public health, security, access to natural resources, class inequalities, and human-animal relations.

In this vein, the third chapter, “Nature’s Cosmopolis: Villagers, Engineers, Soldiers, and Animals along Terkos Waterworks” situates the waterworks between Pera and Lake Terkos, located forty kilometers north of Pera, opened in 1885 by a French-Ottoman enterprise called *Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople*, as a critical environmental link between the city and the country. The first subscription-based water provision in the history of the Ottoman Empire, Terkos

¹²⁷ Neil Brenner, “Introduction: Urban Theory without an Outside,” in *Implosions/explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, ed. Neil Brenner (Berlin: JOVIS, 2014), 17-18.

Waterworks fed Pera's gardens and new apartment buildings. What it also did was transforme the human and nonhuman geographies of Terkos. With engineers and company officials, who had good ties with the foreign legations located in Pera, flowing into the region, Terkos quickly became a place of interest for the community of Pera. Leisure hunters and picnickers turned Terkos into a site of attraction, which made the birds populating the area part of the flows generated by the water infrastructure. This growing interest coincided with the local villagers' decreasing access to, and use of, their surroundings. One way in which this was manifested was the transfer of their fishing rights to the French company. But more drastically, while many villagers lost their access to the local water sources vital for their needs, others were adversely affected by the changing flows of the surrounding waterways, resulting in periodical floods that damaged their villages and fields. The water's flow also brought hundreds of Ottoman soldiers to the lake's vicinity in order to protect, first, the engineers working in the project, second, Istanbul's defense lines from ill-willed engineers who were suspected of mapping the area, and most importantly, the Ottoman capital from biological attacks. The water that was needed to make Pera modern, its gardens cosmopolitan, its apartment buildings clean and well-provided, also made Terkos, as different things: a source of life, a leisurely wilderness, and a region of risks—unevenly, affecting different groups of humans and animals in fundamentally unequal ways.

The fourth chapter, "By the Waters of Kasımpaşa: An Archival Archaeology of Pera's Excremental Hinterland," continues to follow the liquid connections, this time through the sewage infrastructure between Pera and the adjacent Kasımpaşa. The inequality embedded in the operation of the waterworks continued when the water of Terkos reached Pera and its vicinity. The water network was concentrated in the wealthy parts of the municipal district, and almost completely avoided its poorer areas, as in the case of Kasımpaşa. The Terkos water created a burden on the

residents of Kasımpaşa not only through its absence in their neighborhood but also its presence in the uphill wealthy neighborhoods of Pera, as the weight on the existing early modern sewers and cesspools had largely augmented. The relocation or complete erasure of cemeteries between Pera and Kasımpaşa, which had done a lot to absorb the rain and wastewaters coming from the uphill neighborhoods, only increased Kasımpaşa's problems, as the latter had to carry the burden of Pera's increasing urban consumption by way of topography and infrastructural class politics. This created a sewage crisis for Kasımpaşa at the intersection of hygienic, public health, and aesthetic concerns, and further marked the region as a hotbed of disease and social deprivation, which still has resonance in present-day Istanbul.

This chapter is the only one in this dissertation that deals with a complex array of infrastructural pieces, rather than one big project. During the second half of the nineteenth century, experts and policymakers devised various plans and projects to fix Pera's sewage connections to Kasımpaşa, but no major plan could be put into action until the second decade of the twentieth century. This makes the nineteenth-century sewage connections very difficult to trace, hence this chapter utilizes various methods to perform an archival archaeology in order to unearth hidden infrastructural and environmental links between two neighboring districts. This inquiry does not only present the adverse effects of Pera's waste had on Kasımpaşa, but actually explores the constitutive role played by the waste in producing Kasımpaşa's ecology, from its diseases to orchards.

Overall, both of the chapters in Part II highlight the infrastructural and environmental interdependencies Pera's modernization created and relied upon. Whereas I argue that both Terkos and Kasımpaşa, as marginal spaces in relation to Pera's geographical confines, had utmost importance in the making of Pera, and in this capacity they provide the potential to demythologize

the insular histories of Pera; again taking my cue from Chakrabarty, I also contend that they are among the many different locations “from which one could provincialize” Pera.¹²⁸

Through these case studies, this dissertation proposes a materialist critique of the dominant paradigm of Eastern Mediterranean cosmopolitanism often employed to explore the late nineteenth-century Ottoman cities. It takes the presumed difference of Pera not as a celebrated or vilified given, but rather as a problem, and asks how that difference, translated to uneven development, was produced through different material and discursive processes. Concentrating on one district rather than the entire city allows it to follow the spatial change and investigate the infrastructural connections in a much more detailed way. Because the aim is to explore the links provided by infrastructure, anchoring on the shifting geographic location of Pera enables this dissertation to firmly highlight those connections without losing its center of gravity. In this exploration, Terkos and Kasımpaşa become part of the wider, infrastructural geographies of Istanbul uncovered in the following chapters (fig. 2). Naturally, Terkos and Kasımpaşa were not unique in this regard, nor were the infrastructures selected as case studies the only worthy subjects for research. One could—and should—write the histories of tramways, for example, or more crucially, the planning and building programs implemented after the fires of 1831 and especially 1870, a turning point in the district’s history,¹²⁹ with a new attendance to the multitude of human and nonhuman connections they generated or ruptured.

¹²⁸ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, xviii.

¹²⁹ The 1870 Fire was a great catastrophe for Pera, which affected most of the upper part of Grand Rue de Péra. As this dissertation studies the impact of infrastructural interventions to the spaces of Pera, I do not deal with the impact of the fire, but it certainly was a very important factor in the district’s transformation, as it opened up a large area for development, as well as impacting the lives of Pera’s community in various ways. See Le Dr. Brunetti, *Souvenir du 5 Juin 1870 – Épisode de la Catastrophe de Péra* (Istanbul: Typographie et Lithographies Centrales, 1870).

This work contends that the dominant narrative of ‘cosmopolitan Pera’ underplays the role of spatial and environmental violence and domination in the making of ‘cosmopolitan’ spaces, and obscures the diverse material arrangements, and spatial layers on which the modern city was built. The critical study of infrastructures reveals that non-human elements were essential in making the district ‘cosmopolitan’ by providing vital natural sources and spaces appropriated for the development of ‘cosmopolitan’ leisurely cultures, including hunting grounds and gardens. To modify the Homeric epigraph that opened this dissertation, I show that Pera *was* born out of rocks, trees, and other materials—but it was *not* a fairy tale.

PART I: Creative Destruction in the Making of Modern Pera

Chapter 1—Ruin and Knowledge: Writing the History of Genoese Pera in the Moment of Its Destruction

The disappearance of antiquities, which are destined to be ruined by falling in between the lines drawn by the brutal scale rulers of the engineers, not only in our nation but in the entire world, is surely a loss for a city whose complete history has yet to be written.

Celal Esad (Arseven)¹³⁰

The narrow Kule (*tower*) Alley descended from the Galata Tower to Karaköy along the few remains of the almost completely demolished Galata Walls. Mehmed Ali Nurettin Bey owned the number forty-five, where his mother Fatma Hanım, and his sister Sabiha Hanım lived, in October 1882. Not that there had been much calm in the neighborhood in the preceding decades, which were marked by devastating fires and rigorous construction activities above and underground. The residents and their neighbors witnessed an unusual level of commotion in the garden of the number forty-five. Workers were digging the soil, men in suits were buzzing around the property, engineers of the Sixth District Municipality, officials of the Imperial Museum (Müze-i Humayun), and the diplomats of the British mission in Pera were seen engaging in heated discussions in and around the house. The rumor had it even the British Consul visited the premises.

A central figure in this entire maelstrom was a certain Artin Bey, who had requested a permission to carry out archaeological excavations in the garden of Nurettin Bey's property. After deliberations between the Şehremaneti, the Sixth District, and the landlord, he was granted the permission for the duration of one month, with the conditions that officials from the museum would oversee the excavations and take a portion of the excavated antiquities to the museum, and the

¹³⁰ Celal Esad, *Eski Galata ve Binaları* (Istanbul: Ahmed İhsan ve Şürekası, 1911), 4. "Yalnız bizde değil, bütün dünyada mühendislerin gaddar cedvellerinin çizdiği hatlar dahilinde bulunmakta mahv ve na-bedid olmaya mahkumiyyetten kurtulamayan asar-ı atıkanın bu suretle ortadan gaib oluşları bittabi henüz mükemmel bir tarihi yapılmamış bir şehir için bir ziyadır."

residents, along with their neighbors, would not be bothered too much.¹³¹ It is not clear what prompted Artin Bey's interest in this specific site and what he was hoping to find there, but the district newspaper *La Turquie* reported that diggers uncovered several vases, amphorae, and two bas-reliefs.¹³² Neither the official documentation in the Ottoman archives nor the article in *La Turquie* identified the period(s) these finds belonged to. Additionally, some organic remains accompanied these unidentified, inorganic finds, which determined the fate of this small-scale excavation: human corpses.

As a recurring theme in this dissertation, the *funerary infrastructure* of Pera was central to the urban development of the district in the second half of the nineteenth century. The region's historical profusion of multi-denominational cemeteries, and layers of spaces for the dead since the Byzantine times onwards (discussed in length in chapter 2), made Pera's daily life and urban sprawl thoroughly intertwined with the organic (corpses) and inorganic (tombs) remains of the previous residents of the city.

If the excavations carried out by Artin Bey had unearthed graves from a distant past, he could have deemed himself lucky, as those antiquities would be worthy of display in the Imperial Museum, or they might have found some buyers in the burgeoning international market of antiquities in the late nineteenth century. What the diggers stumbled upon, however, were not old graves but rather relatively recent—around two centuries old, according to the experts (*ehl-i vukuf*) of the museum—corpses.¹³³ This was not only a mere misfortunate find they could have ignored. The neighbors, including the officials of the nearby British Consulate, had raised their concerns

¹³¹ BOA, MF.MKT. 77/54 (24 Zilkade 1299 [October 7, 1882]).

¹³² "Fouilles Archéologique," *La Turquie. Journal politique, commercial, industriel et financier* 236, November 2, 1882.

¹³³ BOA, MF.MKT. 78/37 (24 Muharrem 1300 [December 5, 1882]).

about the putrid odors emanating from this newly found burial ground in the garden of Nurettin Bey's property, resulting in consul's reported visit. Smells from decaying organic matters were demonized and seen as grave hazards for the public health of the nineteenth-century city, which had and would have its successive shares of devastating epidemics.¹³⁴ Such fears, in the end, forced the authorities to take action and cease the excavations, under the heavy influence of the British Consulate, according to *La Turquie*.

While the excavations brought only minor success to Artin Bey, and had to be abruptly abandoned, this brief episode in the history of archaeology invites us into the world of heritage-making in Pera and lays out the actors and issues involved in the two decades following the destruction of the Genoese Walls. As it will be explored in this chapter, Artin Bey's interest in the archaeological riches of Galata was not isolated. Even though the district never attracted the level of archaeological attention comparable to what Istanbul proper, with its most coveted wealth of Byzantine past, received, there was nevertheless a considerable amount of interest in Galata and Pera's history from the 1860s onwards. This interest manifested itself in various ways, ranging from articles in district papers that detailed the history of the region to more scientific treatises in international journals, and small-scale excavations, like the one conducted by Artin Bey. While it never took a leading role in the district, the gradually maturing and professionalizing Imperial Museum was also involved with the scene, especially through the intellectual networks that supported the museum and invested in the archaeological space of Galata. All of these manifestations, I argue, were connected to—if not directly resulted from—the destruction of the Genoese Walls in 1864, by the newly established municipality of Pera, the Sixth District.

¹³⁴ Discussed in chapters 2 and 4.

This episode in the history of Istanbul has conventionally been narrated as a careless—albeit necessary—case of urban modernization, often in relation to the similar and roughly contemporary destruction of city walls in European cities, most notably Vienna and Paris.¹³⁵ It has usually been treated as one of the first cases where the historic urban heritage was sacrificed for the sake of development and modernization, an operation that gave the district, in the words of *Journal de Constantinople*, a “*physionomie modern.*”¹³⁶ This sacrifice was later regretted by the Ottoman authorities, the story goes, as a decree issued in 1884 by the state prohibited any further damage to the walls of Istanbul and Galata. Only by then, twenty years after the initial decision to tear down the walls, that they began to be considered as antiquities.¹³⁷

The attempt here is to complicate this story. By concentrating on the discursive space opened in the district’s periodicals but also in the European popular and academic press on the history of Pera around this time, I argue that rather than being a careless eradication of the city’s heritage, the destruction of the city walls was actually framed as a project of heritage and knowledge production. Thus, the concern for the cultural heritage was not only a repentant afterthought on the part of the Ottoman authorities, but it was also present from the moment of the demolitions. The curiosity regarding the district’s history was predicated within the municipality’s decision to tear down the walls. It aligned conversely with the Sixth District’s ideological goal of gaining an autonomous agency in the city’s governance by showing its difference from the rest of the city through an appropriation of its Genoese past.

¹³⁵ Emre Madran, *Tanzimat'tan Cumhuriyet'e kültür varlıklarının korunmasına ilişkin tutumlar ve düzenlemeler: 1800- 1950* (Ankara: ODTÜ Mimarlık Fakültesi Yayınları 2002), 60.

¹³⁶ “Chronique,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4516, November 5, 1864; first quoted in Çelik, *The Remaking*, 70.

¹³⁷ BOA, DH.MKT. 1940/18 (12 Ramazan 1309 [April 10, 1892]).

This chapter will trace how the history of the Genoese Pera was produced in the popular and scientific circles, especially via the central role played by the municipal engineer and archivist Victor-Marie de Launay. The co-author of *Usul-i Mimari-i Osmani* and *Elbise-yi Osmaniye*, Launay's later collaborations with the famous painter, archaeologist, and museum director Osman Hamdi Bey (1842-1910) are well-known, but his contributions to the history of the district and an early discourse on urban heritage and archaeology are underappreciated and critical to understanding how the ruins of the district's past were instrumental in making of a space for historical expertise. Relying on the recent critical opening provided by the studies on archaeology and cultural heritage, which explore how these scholarly practices have been used to form politically-motivated historical narratives and to appropriate the past for various kinds of identity formations,¹³⁸ this chapter will show how Pera's Genoese past was made part of the late nineteenth century self-image of the district its municipality tried to craft.

The following will first offer an overview of the formation of Genoese Galata and its historical topography that was defined by medieval walls, and how this topography was transformed in the second half of the nineteenth century due to the demolitions—a drastic intervention in the urban space that entailed dispossession of many of the district's residents, and accumulation of urban surplus by its elites. This will be proceeded by an analysis of the demolitions from the perspective of heritage-making, that is, not as a retrospective critique from

¹³⁸ See Zeinab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik, Edhem Eldem, eds., *Scramble for the Past: A Story of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire, 1753-1914* (Istanbul: SALT, 2011); Bruce Trigger, *A History of Archaeological Thought* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010); Yannis Hamilakis, *The Nation and Its Ruins: Antiquity, Archaeology, and National Imagination in Greece* (Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), Laurajane Smith, *Archaeological Theory and the Politics of Cultural Heritage* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004); Jacques Revel and Giovanni Levi, ed., *Political Uses of the past: The Recent Mediterranean Experience* (London: Routledge, 2002).

the present day of the damage given to the city's heritage, but rather as a critical exploration of how the Sixth District Municipality and the experts organized around it proposed an alternative historical vision regarding the Genoese heritage of Pera at the very moment they destroyed its largest physical manifestation.

The Making of a Medieval Walled City

The Genoese presence in the region dates back to the thirteenth century, in the wake of the Byzantine takeover of Constantinople back from the Latin Empire. During the Latin occupation and its aftermath, several Italian-speaking peoples, including the Genoese, Venetians, and Pisans, had already settled in Galata. Official Genoese establishment, however, began in 1267, as the city of Genoa was granted a special autonomy by the Byzantines for its help to the latter during its recapture of Constantinople, turning the town effectively into a trade colony of Genoa. The city of Genoa appointed a podesta (*mayor-governor*) to the colony, who was placed as a minister in the Byzantine court.¹³⁹

The walls of Galata were built by this Genoese colony, but they did not comprise a monolithic structure but rather consisted of a complex series of edifices connected to each other, which shaped the medieval and early modern town's topography in myriad ways. The first set of fortifications were constructed in 1304, and expanded in successive stages of construction, signifying not only an increasing necessity of defense, but also a show of force against, and growing autonomy from, the Byzantine overlords, reaching its widest extent in 1446 in accordance with the strong Genoese presence in the Eastern Mediterranean, right before the Ottoman capture

¹³⁹ Louis Mitler, "The Genoese in Galata: 1453–1682," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 10, no. 1 (1979): 73. For Byzantine-Genoese relations, see Deno John Geanakoplos, *Byzantium: Church, Society, and Civilization Seen through Contemporary Eyes* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 288-292.

of the city. Consisting of twenty-four watchtowers (one of them being *the* Galata Tower/Tower of Christ), around forty gates, an approximate width of 2.25 meters, and surrounding ditches, the medieval fortifications of Galata comprised a complex urban system.¹⁴⁰

Genoese *intra muros* autonomy was sustained to some extent in the immediate aftermath of the Ottoman capture of Constantinople in 1453, though the Ottoman army destroyed some walls and towers as a symbolic gesture that marked the new authority over the wider city. The office of *podesta* was turned into the Council of Magnifica Communita di Peyra (it. Magnificent Community of Pera), which was placed under the authority of the Voyvoda (sl. commander) and the qadi of Galata, while Genoa kept sending a representative to the Ottoman court. In the meantime, the district was gradually Ottomanized, with various groups from different corners of the empire being settled within and around the walled city. Finally, in the 1640s Magnifica Communita lost its administrative privileges,¹⁴¹ around when Italian merchants lost their dominant position in the Ottoman trade to English, Dutch, and increasingly French merchants.¹⁴²

During the later centuries of the Ottoman rule, the Galata Walls continued to be essential and dynamic parts of the city's daily life. Ottoman authorities adhered to maintain most of the structures, with occasional interventions to meet the changing needs of urban life, such as opening up new gates or demolishing certain parts. As Galata was now completely under the Ottoman sovereignty and within the safe domains of the empire, the walls' function was transformed from that of military defense to urban security. As late as the mid-nineteenth century their gates were

¹⁴⁰ Marie de Launay, "Notice sur les fortifications de Galata," *Journal de Constantinople* 4538, December 1, 1864.

¹⁴¹ Mitler, "The Genoese in Galata," 75-78.

¹⁴² Eldem, "Istanbul," 180. For the early modern city, see also Fariba Zarinebaf, *Mediterranean Encounters: Trade and Pluralism in Early Modern Galata* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018); and for the city's Ottomanization as well as Islamization, see esp. 49-56.

shut down at midnight, to be re-opened in the mornings to prevent illicit nocturnal activities.¹⁴³ The maintenance and safeguarding of the walls of Galata and Istanbul, like many other urban functions before the advent of municipal organizations in the second half of the nineteenth century, were left to the responsibility of the Janissary corps.¹⁴⁴ Thus the abolishment of the corps in 1823¹⁴⁵ left the walls largely vulnerable to the effects of urban development, which accelerated into the mid-nineteenth century, especially as the empire's integration with global capitalism was deepened and widened. The frequent fires, earthquakes, and appropriation of the stones from the walls for other constructions also damaged large sections of the walls, making it ever more expensive to maintain them, especially in the absence of a regular agency with manpower that was responsible for maintenance.

Creative Destruction as Urban Governance

The regions that were most effected by urban development in the nineteenth century were located in the northern bank of the Golden Horn. European embassies had been established on the outskirts of Galata since the sixteenth century, but grew in number and size in the nineteenth, creating a demand for a budding service sector. The increasing financial and commercial activity within the port region of Galata initiated a growing desire on the part of the emergent elites to continue "reinvestment"¹⁴⁶ in land and improve circulation between these newly growing regions. Galata's steep topography meant that it was very difficult for the region to expand, but the

¹⁴³ E. Flandin, *L'Orient, par Eugène Flandin* (Paris: Gide Et J. Baudry, 1853). Quoted in B. Burhan Erdoğan, "Galata Kent Surları ve Koruma Önerileri" (A. Thesis, Istanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 2011), 26.

¹⁴⁴ Necdet Sakaloğlu, "Surlar, Osmanlı Dönemi Onarımları," in *Karasurlarının Korunması İçin Uygun Yaklaşım ve Yöntemler Sempozyumu* (Istanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2007), 35.

¹⁴⁵ For a general synthesis of the impact of the abolishment of the janissary corps on urban order and politics, see Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Asayiş*, 99-110.

¹⁴⁶ David Harvey, "The Right to the City," *New Left Review* 53 (Sept-Oct 2008): 24.

fortification system, with a complex set of walls and ditches that encumbered this densely populated area, made it even more challenging to open arteries for circulation and new land plots for development.

The urban renewal at Pera paralleled developments in many global cities during the nineteenth century. Two particular loci of inspiration for the policymakers in Pera were Paris and Vienna, which dismantled their medieval fortification systems during the 1850s, when wide avenues replaced walls and ditches, on which modern apartment buildings and public landmarks were gradually erected.¹⁴⁷ The impetus to realize in Pera what was being done in other walled cities around the world came with the establishment of the Sixth District Municipality in 1857. After the reorganization of the port region and initiation of a cadastral survey, the demolition of the Genoese Walls was among the first major projects of the municipality, and also its most ambitious. The municipality did not act alone, and even though there were important policy differences and disputes between various government branches, increasing circulation towards the northward expansion of was a shared priority, manifested in the construction of the new bridge on the Golden Horn suitable for vehicle traffic only one year before the demolitions began, in 1863.¹⁴⁸

The official decision to demolish the Galata Walls had an economic impetus. The official documents listed the aims of increasing the municipal revenues through selling land plots, getting rid of an antiquated, useless fortification system that was already in a ruinous state, and opening

¹⁴⁷ Donald J. Olsen, *The City as a Work of Art: London, Paris, Vienna* (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1986), 58; David Bruce and Oliver Creighton, “Contested Identities: The Dissonant Heritage of European Town Walls and Walled Towns,” *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 12, no. 3 (2006): 239.

¹⁴⁸ İlhan Tekeli, “19. Yüzyılda İstanbul Metropol Alanının Dönüşümü,” in *Tanzimat: Değişim Sürecinde Osmanlı İmparatorluğu*, ed. Halil Inalcık and Mehmet Seyitdanlıoğlu (Istanbul: Phoenix Yayınevi, 2006), 369.

up new arteries to increase circulation, as justifications for the decision.¹⁴⁹ The organization of land use around the fortifications had been administered by a special code called “Kule-i Zemin,” which aimed to control such use and providing revenues for the waqfs (pious foundations) through the payments received from the tenants who built houses or shops by utilizing the fortifications in one way or another. The decision to demolish the fortifications also required taking drastic decisions regarding the fate of these settlements. In order to determine the value of the land plots, to resolve the issues regarding the rights of the current tenants, and to organize the land use after the demolitions, a special commission was founded under the Ministry of Public Works (Nafia Nezareti).¹⁵⁰ The work of this commission was extremely controversial, especially as it was marred with accusations of corruption and embezzlement.¹⁵¹

This operation was not only based on a mere economic logic of increasing the municipality’s direct revenues and the district’s general commercial activity. The policymakers, as Ayhan Han shows in his study, targeted certain groups who were thought to be at odds with the image that the newly established Sixth District was trying to cultivate for itself and Pera. Ropers, who used the ditches of the fortifications to exercise their craft, were the primary group displaced from the district through the operations, and even though the commission was tasked to find a new location for them outside of Galata, there is no indication in the documents that such a place was

¹⁴⁹ BOA, İ.MVL. 497/22492 (18 Cemazeyilahir 1280 [November 30, 1863]).

¹⁵⁰ In 1864, it was estimated that the demolitions would open up a nine thousand square meters new terrain for development and traffic. See Victor-Marie de Launay, “Constantinople au moyen age: L’enceinte Génoise de Péra (Galata Actuel),” *L’Ami des Monuments et des Arts Parisiens et Français. Excursions d’érudits-d’artistes, d’amateurs* 21 (1890): 264

¹⁵¹ Han, “İstanbul ve Galata Hendeklerinde,” 7, 29.

in reality provided.¹⁵² Similarly, a *Journal de Constantinople* piece published after the demolitions on Mumhane Street celebrated the “expulsion of prostitutes” from the streets.¹⁵³

One of the most important results of the demolitions was the effect they had on the elite network that was instrumental in the formation of the Sixth District. The municipality borrowed large sums of money from the leading businessmen, bankers, and landowners of the period, including the Baltazzi, Tubini, Camondo, and Zarifi families, as well as one of the most important firms working in the city’s infrastructure, l’Administratoin du Gaz.¹⁵⁴ The leading figures of these families also acted as members of the municipal council in various times; hence they already had important leverages within the municipal system. When the municipality was not able to pay its debts to these families, the Ottoman Bank, which only recently acquired its “imperial” title,¹⁵⁵ became part of the scene, as the municipality this time borrowed from the bank in order to pay its previous loans. In fact, Alp Yücel Kaya and Yücel Terzibaşoğlu suggest that the investors who were active in the district’s municipal administration might have hindered the municipality’s ability to increase tax revenues, so that its dependence on their private funds would continue.¹⁵⁶

The land plots opened in the newly created streets of Yenikapı, Şişhane, Büyük Hendek, Küçük Hendek, Boğazkesen Streets, and in the widened Yorgancılar Street and Grand Rue de Galata (fig. 4),¹⁵⁷ were increasingly sold in order to cover these debts, which made these families and the Imperial Ottoman Bank ever-more powerful on Pera’s urban spaces, as they acquired

¹⁵² Ibid., 29.

¹⁵³ Quoted in Çelik, *The Remaking*, 70.

¹⁵⁴ Demirakın, “Sixth Municipal District,” 123.

¹⁵⁵ Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 83.

¹⁵⁶ Alp Yücel Kaya and Yücel Terzibaşoğlu, “Tahrir’den Kadastro’ya: 1874 İstanbul Emlak Tahriri ve Vergisi: ‘Kadastro tabir olunur tahrir-i emlak,’” *Tarih ve Toplum Yeni Yaklaşımlar* 9 (Güz 2009): 20.

¹⁵⁷ Han, “İstanbul ve Galata Hendeklerinde,” 70; Tekeli, “19. Yüzyılda İstanbul,” 369.

several plots in the newly opened streets, eventually building new, modern apartment buildings.¹⁵⁸ As a classic case of “debt-financed infrastructural urban development,”¹⁵⁹ the project escalated the power of the financial institutions that funded the transformation. Considering both the Ottoman Bank and these figures were influential in successive infrastructure projects and companies, such as Tünel, Société des Tramways de Constantinople, Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople,¹⁶⁰ and so on, the significance of the demolitions and successive land development would be better appreciated as constitutive interventions in the urbanity of Pera. These operations opened up a space that was filled by powerful stakeholders, who then used this new spatial terrain as a platform to increase their influence in urban governance, as well as their material gains from land development.

In the end, the growing financial capital of Galata that depended on the empire’s increasing integration to the world capitalism had overcome its literal, physical *barriers*, the walls and the ditches, which stood against its reinvestment in land. This was achieved by demolishing this significant part of the medieval fabric of the city. Following David Harvey, it would be appropriate to identify this process as “creative destruction,” which entailed “a process of displacement [and] accumulation by dispossession.”¹⁶¹ Relying on the municipal and central state authority, demolitions left a large segment of the people using these spaces in various ways displaced and dispossessed, allowing the large property owners to accumulate the urban surplus, to further use

¹⁵⁸ Baruh, “Modern Axis,” 212; Han, “İstanbul ve Galata Hendeklerinde,” 29. There were some concerns about the structural integrity of these buildings as they were built on filled earth. See Akın, *Galata ve Pera*, 112-114.

¹⁵⁹ Harvey, “Right to the City,” 29.

¹⁶⁰ See chapter 2 for Tünel, chapter 4 for Société des Tramways, and chapter 3 and 4 for Compagnie des Eaux.

¹⁶¹ Harvey, “Right to the City,” 34.

in land development projects.¹⁶² These projects, several of which are tackled in this dissertation, relied on this initial case of spatial creative destruction. The creation of modern Pera, in a sense, stood on the shoulders of this particular case of destruction. As we will see in the rest of this chapter, this was also true for the modern historiography of Pera, as the destruction became the basis for the creation of a particular vision towards the city's past.

Heritage Management and History of Archeology in Late Ottoman Empire

Whereas urban transformation with the aim of modernization had rarely found influential critiques in Istanbul in the last two centuries, it is possible to locate some traces of a critical discourse regarding the demolition of the Galata Walls from early on. The court chronicler Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi recorded this destruction in his *History* in a very critical tone in 1894:

One must enter a house through its gate. It is understood that there is no house without a gate. A city that is a country's seat of governance resembles a house; if there is no gate, then there is no house; if there is no house, then it would not be appropriate to live there. While all of this is so obvious, it would not be appropriate to remove the walls and gates of the city of all cities, Istanbul, and its Galata district. It was not befitting to remove those ancient towers and the gates, which had been there for centuries, in order to make the pettiest of profits...¹⁶³

Ahmed Lûtfî's critique came a decade after¹⁶⁴ the Ottoman state's 1884 prohibition of the destruction of the remaining of the Istanbul and Galata walls, and sales of its plots and debris, on

¹⁶² A comparison between the northern and southern banks of the Golden Horn is indicative of the significance of the demolitions for urban development. Whereas the former expanded rapidly towards a south-north axis after the destruction of the Genoese Walls, the latter was regarded of being stuck within the intramural, early modern organization, waiting for instances of fire to be transformed. Çelik, *The Remaking*, 42; Tekeli, "19. Yüzyılda İstanbul," 372.

¹⁶³ Quoted in Esra Okur, "Galata Surlarının Yıkım Süreci" (master's thesis, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 2011), 63.

¹⁶⁴ Münir Aktepe, "Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi'nin Târihciliği ve Vekâyi'-Nâmesi Hakkında Bâzı Bilgiler" in Vak'a-Nüvis Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi, ed. Münir Aktepe, vol. 9 (İstanbul: İstanbul Üniversitesi Edebiyat Fakültesi, 1984), XXV-XL.

the grounds that they were now accepted as “antiquities.”¹⁶⁵ As also emphasized by Firuzan Melike Sümertaş, it is not clear to what extent this prohibition was able to protect the walls.¹⁶⁶ Several documents in the Ottoman archives show that the Ministry of Interior Affairs found it difficult to protect and maintain some of the remaining walls, for it required huge sums of money. The ministry was requested to map the extant remains of the walls and indicate which parts were especially hard to maintain. But even the task of mapping was considered to be a heavy burden for the state’s tight finances, and it is not clear whether the issue between different parts of the bureaucracy was resolved, as the paper trails in the archives end here.¹⁶⁷

This rather incompetent and scattered attitude towards historical heritage was not restricted to the cases of the walls of Galata and Istanbul. In recent years, scholarly interest in the Ottoman politics of heritage and archaeology has grown considerably, and even though this nascent body of work has significantly challenged the orientalist scholarship that previously dominated the field, scholars have established the contradictory and often ineffective policies developed by Ottoman authorities with respect to the antiquities within the imperial domains. One of the leading figures in this burgeoning subfield, Edhem Eldem, identifies three distinct phases in how the empire managed its heritage in the nineteenth century: The first phase was characterized by an “indifference by the Ottoman elites and the state” towards the Europeans’ growing interest in antique remains that were within the vast territories of the Ottoman Empire. Many ancient objects were taken from their sites to the museums and private collections in Europe in the first half of the

¹⁶⁵ Osman Nuri Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediye* (Istanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, 1995), 1778.

¹⁶⁶ Firuzan Melike Sümertaş, “Dr. Aleksandros G. Paspatıs’ten Dersaadet Rum Cemiyet-i Edebiyesi’ne İstanbul’un Kara Surları Üzerine Bir Çalışma,” *Toplumsal Tarih* 272 (Ağustos 2016), 46.

¹⁶⁷ BOA, DH.MKT. 1940/18 (12 Ramazan 1309 [April 10, 1892]); BOA, DH.MKT. 1947/112 (14 Şevval 1309 [May 12, 1892]).

nineteenth century with considerable ease, without much interference of the Ottoman authorities, epitomized in the famous case of “Elgin Marbles,” taken from Parthenon in 1823.¹⁶⁸

The second, “reactive” phase, witnessed the “development of a concept of historical and cultural heritage” as the Ottomans responded to the increasing European presence and claims to the empire’s historical domains by adopting their techniques, most notably through archaeology and opening a state museum.¹⁶⁹ Accordingly, the Imperial Museum was originally founded in 1846 as “a collection of weapons and antiquities,” in the former Byzantine church of Hagia Eirene, within the confines of the Topkapı Palace. It gained its “imperial” title in 1869, as well as its first director, Edward Goold, an Englishman working as a teacher at the Imperial High School of Galatasaray.¹⁷⁰ This year also marked the first antiquities bylaw passed in the empire, which adopted a rather protective stance against European ambitions for expanding their archaeological domains. This, according to Eldem, could be seen as the end of the “reactive phase” of Ottomans’ complicated relationship to cultural heritage.

The “active phase” roughly began with the appointment of Philipp Anton Dethier (1804?-1881) as the director of the Imperial Museum in 1872, and the decision to the move of the antiquities collection to Çinili Kiosk (*köşk*), part of the Topkapı Palace complex—only to be realized in 1880.¹⁷¹ In the 1880s, when Artin Bey was experimenting with urban archaeology in the garden of Nurettin Bey under the supervision of the museum officials, the work of the museum

¹⁶⁸ Edhem Eldem, “Cultural Heritage in Turkey: An Eminently Political Domain,” in *Essays on Heritage, Tourism and Society in the Mena Region: Proceedings of the International Heritage Conference 2013 at Tangier, Morocco*, ed. Mihran Dabag et al. (Münich: Ferdinand Schöningh GmbH & Co. KG, 2015), 68.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 71.

¹⁷⁰ Zeynep Çelik, *About Antiquities: Politics of Archaeology in the Ottoman Empire* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2016), 33-34.

¹⁷¹ Eldem, “Cultural Heritage,” 75.

was much more systematized and publicized, with the undertaking of large-scale excavations under the new director Osman Hamdi Bey, and the publication of regular, methodical catalogs.¹⁷²

The motivations of the Ottoman authorities to pursue the agenda of heritage protection and establishing an increasingly ambitious museum were varied. Eldem, Çelik, and Wendy M. K. Shaw, in their separate works, connect the Imperial Museum to the necessity felt by the Ottoman elites to fulfill what they saw as a criterion for being a member of the civilized nations,¹⁷³ a necessity akin to having railroads, telegraphs, modern urban planning, and so on.¹⁷⁴ As Ahmet Ersoy points out, the Tanzimat's goal to foster a supra-identity under Ottomanism among different *millets* within the empire gave further ideological impetus to underline the rich and assorted historical heritage that the empire inherited.¹⁷⁵ In the words of Osman Hamdi, "The Chaldeans, the Assyrians, the Hittites, the Aramaeans, the Phoenicians, the Nabataeans, the Himyarites, the Carians, the Phrygians, the Ionians—in a word, all of these peoples who formerly inhabited the territories which now form the Turkish Empire—have left traces of their civilization buried in the soil. Any stroke of a pickaxe may bring to light some precious object or inscription full of historic or artistic interest, every one of which will take the road of the Imperial Museum."¹⁷⁶

These motivations and increasingly systematic efforts withstanding, heritage protection and archaeological research continued to be marred with irregularity and arbitrariness, resulting

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 77.

¹⁷³ Wendy M. K. Shaw, *Possessors and Possessed: Museums, Archaeology, and the Visualization of History in the Late Ottoman Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003); Edhem Eldem, "From *Blissful* Indifference to Anguished Concern: Ottoman Perception of Antiquities, 1799-1869," in *Scramble for the Past*, 281-329; Eldem, "Early Ottoman Archaeology: Rediscovering the Finds of Ascalon (Ashkelon), 1847," *Bulletin of American Schools of Oriental Research* (2017): 25–53.

¹⁷⁴ Çelik, *About Antiquities*, 4.

¹⁷⁵ Ahmet Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman Historical Imaginary: Reconfiguring the Architectural Past in a Modernizing Empire* (London: Routledge, 2016), 3.

¹⁷⁶ Quoted in Çelik, *About Antiquities*, 24.

mostly from constant bureaucratic reorganization, financial inefficiencies, and significant weakness relative to European interests that defined the late Ottoman governance. Furthermore, even though the protection of antiquities became part of the official agenda, and an imperial penal code was decreed as early as 1858 that penalized those harming a building with public significance or ornamentations,¹⁷⁷ a holistic approach to urban heritage was yet to be implemented.¹⁷⁸

“The Last and Only Trace to Remain”

The municipal destruction project of the Genoese Walls, in its most fundamental sense, was not completely oblivious to the district’s urban heritage. As the greatest testament to this, the central edifice of the medieval fortifications, the Galata Tower, one of the tallest buildings in the Ottoman capital, was kept intact. In Marie de Launay’s words, “the starting point of this entire fortification system, its last and only trace to remain,” the tower was originally the tallest of a series of towers that were part of the Galata Walls. With the demolitions, it became not only the primary, but also one of the only embodiments of Genoese heritage that survived in the city, and

¹⁷⁷ Madran, *Tanzimat’tan Cumhuriyete*, 185.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 26. Though, as Han notes, certain urban strategies had been implemented by the Ottoman state in order to protect certain parts of the built environment that were deemed important, including to provide the surrounding areas of the walls to a certain type of land use, such as forming orchards or giving to one particular group of craftsmen. See Han, “İstanbul ve Galata Hendeklerinde,” 4. One must also note, contrary to certain orientalist misconceptions, in this ‘failure’ the Ottoman Empire cannot be considered as a latecomer to heritage protection. After all, Haussmann’s celebrated Paris was created in the 1850s and 1860s through the destruction of its *ancien* built environment, at the very same time the interest in antiquities and protection of monuments was peaked in France. In fact, even the Romanticist writers, many of them were antiquarians and amateur archaeologists that were responsible for the popularization of the concept of heritage and ancient ruins, did not have a huge problem with the destruction of the old Paris on the grounds of modern principles of order, hygiene, and circulation. See Françoise Choay, *The Invention of the Historic Monument*, trans. Lauren O’Connell (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 117-118. For the centrality of destruction to the making of modern Paris, see also David Harvey, *Paris, Capital of Modernity* (New York: Routledge, 2003).

its newly acquired stand-alone status actually conformed to many of the early theories of urban heritage.

Spearheaded by the French architectural theorist Quatremère de Quincy and the preservationist architect Viollet-le-Duc, the majority of the nineteenth-century preservationists aimed to achieve an idealized state of built environment and implemented practices that ‘cleaned’ the surroundings of monuments that were deemed historically and artistically worthy of protection.¹⁷⁹ Aggressively applied by Haussmann in Paris, this mindset in the context of Turkey was most openly illustrated in the transformation of the Sultanahmet area in the late Ottoman and Republican periods,¹⁸⁰ which started with the opening of a square around Hagia Sophia, the clearance of the entrance of the Byzantine Hippodrome, and the destruction of the settlements around “Constantine’s Column.”¹⁸¹ But the erasure of “worn out and useless” fortifications that stretched out in Galata through several, irregular layers, was also intelligible for the contemporary approaches towards historic urban preservation.¹⁸² The landmark status of the tower was heightened with the increasing number of tourists coming to Istanbul and staying in the hotels located in Pera. Almost all guidebooks recommended their readers to visit the Galata Tower on their first day in the city, “for the sake of the view,” as a perfect introduction to the city’s topography and historic—and ‘oriental’—vistas.¹⁸³ Thanks to this, the tower became one of the most visited places in the entire Istanbul and got increasingly monumentalized.

¹⁷⁹ Shelley Rice, *Parisian Views* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1997), 123.

¹⁸⁰ Pınar Aykaç, “Musealisation as an Urban Process: The Transformation of the Sultanahmet District in Istanbul’s Historic Peninsula,” (PhD diss., University College London, 2017), 110

¹⁸¹ Zeinab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik, and Edhem Eldem, “Introduction: Archaeology and Empire,” in *Scramble for the Past*, 32-33.

¹⁸² There were influential critiques of this approach. See John Ruskin, *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* (New York: John Wiley, 1886); Carl Sitte, *City Planning According to Artistic Principles* (New York: Random House, 1965[1889]).

¹⁸³ Sir Charles William Wilson, *Handbook for Travelers in Constantinople, Brûsa and the Troad*,

Following Choay's seminal work on the genealogy of the concept of historical monument, it could be argued that the Galata Tower, stripped of its actual context after the wake of the destruction of the fortifications, commanded the topography of Galata and Pera through "[imposing] itself.... without context or preparation and called for instantaneous reaction."¹⁸⁴ The tower was built for defensive purposes and used historically for various ends (as a storage space, a fire tower, restaurant, etc.), but its physical de-contextualization helped its monumentalization as these functions were either completely lost or relegated to the background. Choay, following Riegl, points out that "the historic monument is not initially desired and created as such; it is constituted a posteriori by the converging gazes of the historian and the amateur, who choose it from the mass of existing edifices..."¹⁸⁵ This was physically true in the case of the Galata Tower, whose "mass of existing edifices" were not only ignored by the interested parties but were actually demolished, replaced by regular streets and modern apartment buildings.¹⁸⁶

Protecting the *Inscribed Past*

More subtly, but more central for the arguments of this chapter, was the decision to preserve the reliefs and inscriptions, mostly in Latin and some in Greek, that had been placed along

with Maps and Plans (London: John Murray, 1893), 49; J. Logotheti, *Constantinople: New Guide-Book* (Constantinople: Imp. Levant Herald, 1893), 34. See chapter 2 for a longer discussion of the formation and function of these vistas.

¹⁸⁴ Choay, *Historic Monument*, 8.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 12-13.

¹⁸⁶ A few decades later, after Eiffel Tower astonished the entire world as a monument not to the gone days of the yore, but rather to the modernity and the future, an illustrated vignette appeared in the popular magazine *Şehbal* related Eiffel to its humbler and more ancient counterpart in Galata [fig. 5]. In the vignette, the Ottoman Council of Ministers (Meclis-i Vükela) decides to convene in the rooftop of the Galata Tower, in order to see the dangers that the Ottoman politics awaits, after a proposal to bring the Eiffel Tower to Istanbul and situate it on top of the Galata Tower was rejected after a majority decision. This vignette, I think, shows the symbolism the tower gained towards the end of the nineteenth century as a landmark of the city, comparable—albeit in a satirical way—to this novel, internationally recognized symbol of modernity in Paris. *Şehbal* 9, August 1, 1325 (August 14, 1909).

the fortifications. Commemorating the names of various *podestas* in the history of the district, Byzantine emperors, or the Genoese compatriot aristocrats located in Geneva; or sometimes plainly showing Genoese, Byzantine, or Christian insignia and coat of arms, these inscriptions and reliefs were dispersed along the fortifications, as well as on the walls of certain ancient buildings in the area. The news that the Sixth District decided to preserve these artifacts was announced by the municipal engineer and archivist Marie de Launay in his serialized article that was published on December 1, 2, and 5, 1864, when the demolitions were still ongoing: “His excellency Server Effendi, the president of the Municipal Council, ordered that all the inscriptions, or works of art, found on the walls and towers of Galata to be collected with care and transported to the Sixth District Municipality in order to be preserved there.”¹⁸⁷ In a sense, this could be seen as an early case of salvage archaeology conducted as a response to the pressure of urban development, which, according to the art historian Robert Ousterhout, comprised basically the only kind of archaeological exploration done in Istanbul until the twentieth century.¹⁸⁸

First stored at the municipality, located on Yemenici Street, these inscriptions were then taken to the Galata Tower,¹⁸⁹ hinting at the initial conceptualization of the Galata Tower as a specifically designated monument of Genoese heritage. In 1875 Marie de Launay, in a second article on Galata Walls, reported that “[these stones] are waiting for the municipal resources to be placed in somewhere else, better suited to the study of these precious monuments of Italian

¹⁸⁷ Victor-Marie de Launay, “Notice sur les fortifications de Galata,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4539, December 2, 1864.

¹⁸⁸ Robert Ousterhout, “The Rediscovery of Constantinople and the Beginnings of Byzantine Archaeology: A Historiographic Survey,” in *Scramble for the Past*, 183.

¹⁸⁹ Victor-Marie de Launay, “Constantinople au moyen age: L’Enceinte Génoise de Péra (Galata Actuel),” *L’Ami des Monuments et des Arts Parisiens et Français. Excursions d’érudits-d’artistes, d’amateurs* 20 (1890): 233-234.

glory.”¹⁹⁰ It is not clear how long these artifacts waited within the tower in this ironic situation, as salvaged remnants of the Genoese past, kept locked within the ultimate manifestation of that past, hidden from the outside world. As Eldem notes, the museum’s archives before the 1880s provide very scant information about the items that entered into the collection.¹⁹¹ Philipp Anton Dethier’s diary, kept (yet uncatalogued) in the archives of the museum, has a report on the planned transfer of the thirty-four artifacts “currently stored and preserved” in the Galata Tower to the museum, but there is no information on the date of the actual move.¹⁹² The first instance a number of these Genoese antiquities appeared in an official catalog of the museum came in 1882, with the first systematic catalog prepared by the celebrated French archaeologist Salomon Reinach.¹⁹³ While there were only three items associated with the demolished fortifications that made into the 1882 catalog, thirty years later Celal Esad (Arseven) was able to locate in the Imperial Museum eight different objects taken from the Galata Walls.¹⁹⁴ Semayi Eyice, writing in 1969, was able to see some of these objects “in the ‘Latin Works’ section, along with similar objects that came from other places.” As Marie de Launay had originally listed twenty-three inscriptions and reliefs (fig. 6), and Dethier mentions thirty-four items in his diary, Eyice noted, “naturally many have disappeared [during successive relocations].”¹⁹⁵

The figure that initiated this scholarly and antiquarian conversation on salvaged items of Galata Walls was Victor-Marie de Launay, and his works have continued to be central to any

¹⁹⁰ Launay, “Notice sur le vieux Galata (Pera des Genoïs)” *L’Univers: Revue Orientale, Politique, Scientifique* 4 (1875): 232.

¹⁹¹ Eldem, “Early Ottoman Archaeology,” 28.

¹⁹² I am grateful to Edhem Eldem who kindly shared this finding with me.

¹⁹³ Salomon Reinach, *Catalogue du Musée Impérial d’Antiquités, Catalogue du Musée impérial d’antiquités*. (Constantinople: Imprimerie Levant Times, 1882), 44, 56, 60.

¹⁹⁴ Celal Esad, *Eski Galata ve Binaları*, 96-102. According to Celal Esad, the museum inventory numbers for these objects were 954, 951, 971, 961, 963, 962, 950, and 2450.

¹⁹⁵ Eyice, *Galata ve Kulesi*, 19.

scholarly discussion concerning the walls, either their demolition, or their prior history—because it was also Marie de Launay who created the first detailed map of this medieval fortification system (fig. 3). However, apart from a long list of references given to his articles, the scholarship has not engaged with what he actually had to say, and why he compelled to say them in the first place. This cardinal place he holds in this history and historiography calls for a closer reading of his works, and understanding his role in not only documenting the Genoese heritage of the district but also in articulating the ideological foundations of the Sixth District project in its first two decades.

Marie de Launay and the Invention of Historicist Discourse in the Late Ottoman Empire

Victor-Marie de Launay was a Frenchman who came to Istanbul around the time of the Crimean War (1853-1856), in which the Ottomans were allied with France, Britain, and Sardinia against Russia. Ahmet Ersoy speculates that his arrival to Istanbul might have been directly related to the war efforts, as his first recorded duty in the Ottoman Empire was being the draftsman/architect of the directorate of lighthouses, connected to the Naval Ministry (Bahriye Nezareti). His next position was at the newly founded Pera municipality of the Sixth District, where he started working as an engineer, archivist, and draftsman.¹⁹⁶ He was appointed to work on the first cadastral survey of Galata and Pera, though that work was not completed until 1876, long after he engaged in various other projects. One of these early projects was a proposal to bring water to Pera provided by artesian wells, a project that he tried to popularize by writing articles in *Journal de Constantinople* in July 1864. As we learn from the detailed report of another French engineer, Eugène-Henri Gavand—the engineer/entrepreneur of the Tünel project—the Council of

¹⁹⁶ Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 110; Edhem Eldem, *Osman Hamdi Bey Sözlüğü* (Ankara: Kültür ve Turizm Bakanlığı, 2010), 354-356; BOA, DH.SAİDd. 6/593 (29 Zilhicce 1238 [September 6, 1823]).

the State (Şura-yı Devlet) did not accept his terms for the requested concessions, and the project was withdrawn, with the water issue left unresolved for another two decades.¹⁹⁷

Outside his municipal and infrastructural work, Marie de Launay established himself as a figure in the artistic and cultural scene among the elites of the Ottoman Istanbul from very early on.¹⁹⁸ After he wrote a report on the 1862 Ottoman Exhibition held in Istanbul,¹⁹⁹ he continued to produce several articles on the Ottoman presence in international exhibitions.²⁰⁰ In fact, at the 1867 Paris World Exhibition, he contributed to the Ottoman section with his own paintings, and was commissioned to prepare the catalog for the Ottoman works exhibited in the event, and took part in the exhibition's official general catalog by two other articles.²⁰¹ During this time, he was appointed as a secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Public Works (Ticaret ve Nafia Nezareti), which was responsible for representing the Ottoman Empire in these international fairs. Marie de Launay seems to have stayed in the same ministry for around two decades. In the 1880s he served as a member of the ministry council, and eventually became the scribe of the same council, finally retiring in 1890.²⁰²

Marie de Launay's—partial—fame in the Ottoman historiography is due to his contributions to the two of the most important works on Ottoman history of art and architecture in the late nineteenth century: *Usul-i Mimari-i Osmani* (Fundamentals of the Ottoman Architecture)

¹⁹⁷ Eugène-Henri Gavand, *Projet de distribution d'eau de Galata, de Péra, des faubourgs et des villages de la côte d'Europe du Bosphore* (Constantinople, 1869), 24-27. For the water infrastructure of Pera, see chapter 3.

¹⁹⁸ He was most *probably*—for the Ottoman transcription of the French name found in his official personal record (*sicil*) is not very clear—a student of Léon Gautier, the famous French historian and philologist of the Middle Ages. Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 107-108.

¹⁹⁹ Victor-Marie de Launay, *Coup d'oeil général sur l'exposition nationale à Constantinople: Extraits du Journal de Constantinople* (Istanbul, 1863).

²⁰⁰ Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 110.

²⁰¹ Victor-Marie de Launay, *La Turquie à l'exposition universelle de 1867* (Paris, 1867).

²⁰² Eldem, *Osman Hamdi Bey Sözlüğü*, 354-356.

and *Elbise-i Osmaniye—Les Costumes Populaires de la Turquie en 1873* (Popular Costumes of Turkey in 1873). Both of these seminal books were published in 1873, commissioned by the Ottoman state to be displayed in the World Exhibition that was held in Vienna the same year.

Usul was the first systematic study of Ottoman architectural history. It was prepared by a group of intellectuals working under the auspices of one of the most prominent statesmen of the era, Ibrahim Edhem Pasha (1818?-1893), Minister of Trade and Public Works. The creators of *Usul* consisted of French artist Eugène Maillard, Armenian artist Bogos Sasiyan, Italian-Levantine artist Pierre Montani, Ottoman bureaucrat Mehmed Şevki Efendi, and finally Marie de Launay, who was not only the editor of the entire text but also authored most of the book himself.²⁰³

The second book, *Elbise*, was another joint effort, this time by Osman Hamdi Bey, alongside Marie de Launay. The future director of the Imperial Museum and the most famous Ottoman painter, Osman Hamdi Bey was, at that time, a young artist with a European training and an excellent connection: he was the son of the aforementioned Ibrahim Edhem Pasha. Appointed as the “exhibition commissary,” he was involved not only in the creation of *Elbise*, but also, indirectly, *Usul*, and the rest of the Ottoman representation in the Vienna Exhibition. *Elbise* was mostly a photography album that displayed what the authors presented as traditional costumes of the Ottoman peoples from various geographies, ethnicities, religions, social groups, and professions, accompanied with a text that offered the authors’ view, which juxtaposed the “authentic” clothing of the Ottomans with the Western styles that were becoming popular in the

²⁰³ Victor-Marie de Launay et al. *Usul-i Mi‘mari-i ‘Osmani / L’architecture ottomane / Die ottomanische Baukunst* (Istanbul: Imprimerie et lithographie centrales, 1873); Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 96.

nineteenth century.²⁰⁴ This work was surely inspired by a much more humble precedent, several ethnographic paintings made by Marie de Launay for the 1867 Paris Exhibition.²⁰⁵

In his important work on the historicist architecture and architectural discourse in the late Ottoman Empire that especially provides a close reading of *Usul*, Ahmet Ersoy shows that, starting in the reign of Sultan Abdülaziz (r. 1861-1876), a nascent critique on “superficial interpretations of modernization”²⁰⁶ was developed among intellectuals hand in hand with a strong demand for history within the larger reading public.²⁰⁷ A rising interest in archaeology, the—albeit slow—growth of the museum, advent of historical novels and plays, the slightly later emergence of the illustrated journals with long sections devoted to popular history-writing, the “invented traditions” of legitimacy-making,²⁰⁸ were all reflections of “a new consciousness about the past” that dominated the last decades of the nineteenth century.²⁰⁹ As precursors of this discourse, the authors of *Usul* and *Elbise* were speaking to, and shaping this critical rupture and self-reflexive sensitivity to the past. Their writings appealed, on the one hand, to the desire to make a place for the Ottomans in the “history of humanity,”²¹⁰ and on the other, to the traditionalist, proto-nationalist sentiments

²⁰⁴ Osman Hamdi Bey and Victor-Marie de Launay, *Bin İki Yüz Doksan Senesinde Elbise-i ‘Osmaniye / Les costumes populaires de la Turquie en 1873* (Istanbul: Levant Times & Shipping Gazette, 1873). Launay manifested his ethnographic interest in Ottoman costumes in another work he co-published, *Bursa ve Civarı* [Bursa and its Environs], with half of a chapter devoted to the costumes of the peoples of the Ottoman city Bursa. See Victor-Marie de Launay and Bonkowski Bey, *Bursa ve Civarı*, ed. Burcu Kurt and İsmail Yaşayanlar (Istanbul: Heyamola, 2015 [1881]), 84-92.

²⁰⁵ Eldem, *Osman Hamdi Bey Sözlüğü*, 356.

²⁰⁶ Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 160-161.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 14.

²⁰⁸ Selim Deringil, “The Invention of Tradition as Public Image in the Late Ottoman Empire, 1808 to 1908,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 35, no. 1 (January 1993): 3-29.

²⁰⁹ Zeynep Çelik, “Defining Empire’s Patrimony: Late Ottoman Perceptions of Antiquities,” in *Scramble for the Past*, 470.

²¹⁰ Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 68.

that functioned as critiques of Westernization, echoing in certain ways the Romanticist authors in Europe.²¹¹

Destroying the Ruins, Assembling the Past

In a serialized article titled “Notice sur le Vieux Galata – Pera Genoïis” (Notes on the Old Galata – Genoese Pera), published in *L’Univers: Revue Orientale, Politique, Scientifique* from November 1874 to March 1875, Marie de Launay openly manifested this sensitivity to the past, and the critical attitude towards his present:

Today everyone knows how much the history of the Middle Ages and the early modern times (the studies of which were long neglected and even scorned) is fertile with lessons. There one indubitably finds all elements of progress, much advocated by certain doctrines in our day, with regard to issues such as the physical and moral condition (that is, the well-being) of the so-called inferior classes, particularly the workers, as well as the perfection of the products of art and industry. For many nations, among which Turkey needs to be counted, true progress involves a clear and resolute return to the past. The cost of having renounced the immortal principles [of the past] will be largely compensated by the vigor regained by these anemic nations as they immerse themselves in the sources of their glorious past.²¹²

Ersoy analyzes this passage as an example of Marie de Launay’s—and Osman Hamdi’s—imagination of the past “as a paragon of moral order and social harmony that, they believed, their contemporary environment lacked.”²¹³ But Ersoy, whose focus lies mostly in *Usul*, and to a lesser extent in *Elbise*, locates this idealized past that the author talks about in the “Ottoman-Islamic” heritage of the empire, even though Marie de Launay does not utter it himself in any section of this particular article. After all, in these aforementioned works, Marie de Launay and his co-authors contended that the idealized and authentic versions of Ottoman artistic culture were to be found in its Islamic past, which, according to them, could be utilized as points of inspiration against the

²¹¹ Ibid., 205.

²¹² Victor-Marie de Launay, “Notice sur le vieux Galata,” 26. Here I use Ersoy’s translation, see Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 111-112.

²¹³ Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 115.

corrupting effects of modernization. However, in “Notice sur le Vieux Galata,” Marie de Launay has a more immediate context than the Ottoman-Islamic past: it is, as the title had it, the *Genoese* past of Galata. Furthermore, his 1874-75 article was profoundly based on his series of articles published in *Journal de Constantinople* more than ten years ago, in 1864, written right in the midst of the destruction of the walls. For Marie de Launay, then, the past had a much more immediate, physical tangibility than the idealized and invented authenticities of the Ottoman-Islamic past conveyed in *Elbise* and *Usul*. When seen not in the general light of an Ottoman past, but rather in the particular context of Galata and its history, the centrality of the historical writings of Marie de Launay for the municipal project of making modern Pera becomes much more intelligible.

Marie de Launay published three important—albeit rather repetitive—pieces on Galata Walls in almost three decades. The first one was published in 1864 in the most popular newspaper of the district at that time, *Journal de Constantinople*, and its aim was to give an immediate recording, as well as justification, of the demolitions that were still going on, by a municipal functionary who was actively assigned in the process. The second one, the aforementioned article published in *L’Univers* in 1874 and 1875, was a rework of the first, and aimed to give a fuller account of the Genoese history of the city in a prestigious publication—*L’Univers* was one of the first Ottoman periodicals that dealt with scientific, artistic, social, and cultural issues in length, featuring articles by a cadre of prominent residents of the Ottoman capital, including Alexander Paspates (Paspatis), medical doctor and one of the founders and presidents of *Greek Literary Society of Istanbul* (Sillogos),²¹⁴ and Philipp Anton Dethier, the first director of the Imperial Museum with archaeological skills, if not a formal training.²¹⁵ Among the contributors were also

²¹⁴ For more insight on Paspates and his enthusiasm for the city walls of Istanbul, see Sümertaş, “İstanbul’un Kara Surları.”

²¹⁵ Eldem, “Early Ottoman Archaeology,” 43.

venerated journalists in France, such as Amédée Matagrin, the editor of the paper *Le Constitutionnel*, and J. Collet, that of *La Semaine Financière*.

Finally, Marie de Launay's third publication came in 1890, in the internationally acclaimed journal of *L'Ami des Monuments et des Arts*, again in a serialized form, relying on and expanding his previous articles, this time for a much bigger international audience,²¹⁶ and with the significant addition of close-up photographs of three stones with reliefs. It was apparently due to the suggestion of Vital Cuinet, the Secretary-General of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration, the article was chosen for publication. The editor of *L'Ami des Monuments et des Arts* gave a short preface to the article, writing "... to the north of the Golden Horn, extends the Frankish town formed in the suburbs of Galata and Pera. It is here that one feels the influence par excellence of the Occident, where the hotels frequented by European travelers are established. Formerly occupied by the Genoese, these Italian estates were surrounded by a wall. It has now almost completely disappeared." Ignoring—or perhaps with complete ignorance of—the active duty of Marie de Launay in the municipality during the demolition of the walls, the editor connected Launay's writings to the other contributors of the journal, and to the international mission to protect heritage that the journal embarked upon: "We will see how many of the ideas of [Monsieur] de Launay are those that our collaborators have often expressed... Thus, little by little, the friends of the monuments (*les amis des monuments*), via their intermediary publication, are united to accomplish their task of safeguarding [monuments], even though their residence in various countries seems to leave them isolated from each other. Our keen desire is to help [this oeuvre] of

²¹⁶ This international audience was largely the making of proliferation of scientific journals, associations, and congresses in the nineteenth century. See Robert Fox, *Science without Frontiers: Cosmopolitanism and National Interests in the World of Learning, 1870-1940* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2016).

the concentration of forces, persuaded that only the result [of their efforts] can assure the safeguarding of that poetry [of the monuments], which is the principal charm of existence.”²¹⁷

What seems to be on a plain look a blatant case of ignorance of the historical facts concerning the actors involved in the demolition of the medieval walls of Galata could be better understood through a closer reading of Marie de Launay’s writings. I argue that the praise received by Launay from an international body that prides itself in propagating the importance of the protection of monumental heritage across borders was—albeit certainly ironic—actually in line with how he and the Sixth District situated their work vis-à-vis the history of the district. By destroying the material remains of the ancient fabric of the city, they discovered—and invented—the medieval history of Pera, salvaged what they discovered, and created a historical narrative that in many ways influenced the way in which the district’s past was written by later generations.

All three articles of Marie de Launay provided thorough information regarding the ancient walls of Galata: their varying types, sizes, lengths, and construction materials—as a considerable amount of the stones used in the construction were *spolia* materials, taken from the ruins of older Byzantine buildings of Constantinople.²¹⁸ The articles also mapped the walls through the second half of the nineteenth-century topography of the district, many times *in absentia*. Marie de Launay then proceeded with detailed descriptions, transcriptions, and translations of the inscriptions on the walls to French, with greater attention in his second and third articles. His special interest in and competence with these inscriptions was probably related to the fact that his tutor, Léon Gautier, was an eminent paleographer himself, who was a member of Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-

²¹⁷ Preface to Launay, “Constantinople au Moyen Age,” 223.

²¹⁸ Launay, “Notice sur le vieux Galata,” 28-29.

Lettres.²¹⁹ But it was also a reflection of a seasoned practice in conservation and heritage safeguarding since the early Renaissance: protection and description of inscriptions have been prioritized over the rest of the ruins that they were parts of.²²⁰

Justifications in the Present and in the Past

The first ideological justification of the demolitions we read through the texts of Marie de Launay was more conventionally in line with modern urban principles, and the ideals of progress promised by modernization. In his 1864 article in *Journal de Constantinople*, he argued that with the demolitions, the district would gain new lands for the enlargement of the road network; many dead-end streets, “which make any rescue attempt in case of fire impossible,” would be transformed into “practicable streets, the access to which would no longer be closed by walls”; and long time-desired roads for vehicles would finally be more than mere speculations. All of this, Marie de Launay predicted, would connect the “high districts” [Pera and its northern extensions] to the “lower city” [Galata, and by implication, the other side of the Golden Horn], which, he proclaimed, would no doubt greatly increase commercial transactions in the larger city.²²¹

This “incontestable” ideal of a commercialized and better-circulated urban regime was manifested in Marie de Launay’s rhetoric repeatedly. Writing about the towers of the fortification system, he argued that they were to be immediately demolished, including those that were inhabited, along with the “parasitic constructions” that used the towers and walls as their support

²¹⁹ “Emile-Théodore-Léon Gautier (1832-1897),” *Chiré: Diffusion de la pensee Français*. Accessed October 1, 2018. <http://www.chire.fr/A-197050-emile-theodore-leon-gautier-1832-1897.aspx>

²²⁰ Choay, *Historic Monument*, 29.

²²¹ Victor-Marie de Launay, “Notice sur les fortifications de Galata,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4539, December 2, 1864.

structures, for they were physically in “a state of despair.”²²² There was no explicit plan to settle the people living in the towers or in the “parasitic constructions.” They were seen as impediments against a functioning urban system, along with the ancient walls of the district. In the same vein, Marie de Launay noted that parts of the walls were already destroyed in order to make room for the reconstruction of Havyar Han, the old stock exchange building of Galata, which was one of the first tasks of the Sixth District, and its main source of revenue.

Marie de Launay was aware that despite all of these advantages the demolitions would bring, they would also risk “the loss of precious historical documents,” in other words, “the commemorative stones” laid on the walls, including inscriptions and reliefs. This is why he was full of praise for Server Efendi, the president of the Sixth District council, whose orders to relocate them to a safe space had allowed him to write these articles, “delivered to the archaeologists’ appreciation, whose experience will complete them and make them useful.”²²³ From the very outset, then, the destruction was accompanied by a municipal desire to make the knowledge of the ancient Pera archaeologically relevant.

In a significant case that shows that municipal project was more complex than simply the modernization of urban space with total disregard of heritage, Marie de Launay mentions “the remains of an old Genoese tower,” on Hisardibi (*castle-bottom*) Alley. A wooden house had been built on these remains, which was in a property owned by Lazarists, a Catholic order that presided over St. Benoit Church in Galata.²²⁴ According to Marie de Launay, both the house and the tower

²²² Launay, “Notice sur les fortifications de Galata,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4538, December 1, 1864.

²²³ Launay, “Notice sur les fortifications de Galata,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4539, December 2, 1864.

²²⁴ Alison Forrestal and Seán A. Smith, eds., *The Frontiers of Mission: Perspectives on Early Modern Missionary Catholicism* (Leiden; Boston: Brill, 2016), 125.

were very well maintained by the members of the order.²²⁵ The municipal practice in the destruction of the walls was to leave certain parts of the fortifications untouched if they were not considered to obstruct the street network, especially if they were located in properties owned by powerful institutions, or protected by foreign states. Lazarists, under the protection of France, seemed to convince the municipality that such was the case with ‘their’ tower, so it was left intact. “However,” wrote Launay, and this is what makes the case interesting, “the municipality did not think it could abandon the care of the conservation of the Genoese commemorative stones placed on their buildings. The Lazarists made no objection, and it was with their consent that [I] loosened a stone, embedded in the rubble above the entrance of the tower, and transported it to the municipality.”²²⁶

Here we see that even when the walls were not to be demolished, the reliefs and inscriptions, what the municipal officials thought could be of interest to historians and archaeologists, were collected from their original localities in order to be kept along with other similar stones, despite the fact that they were protected by the Lazarists for a long time, as noted by Launay himself. Similarly, Marie de Launay exposed his scholarly interests towards the Arab Mosque, a formerly Latin Catholic cathedral that was turned into a mosque soon after the Ottoman conquest. In his works, Launay described a stone found in the courtyard of the mosque, dated back to 1323 (around the construction date of the cathedral), even though the mosque was not part of any plans involving the demolitions.²²⁷

²²⁵ It is not really clear what Launay meant with “a house built on the remains of a tower” that is also supposed to be “well-maintained.”

²²⁶ Launay, “Constantinople Au Moyen Age,” 274

²²⁷ Launay, “Notice sur le vieux Galata (Pera des Genoïs)” *L’Univers: Revue Orientale, Politique, Scientifique* No. 2 (1874): 108-109.

What seemingly began as a salvage excavation in the face of demolition was now expanded to places that were unharmed by the infrastructural work carried by the municipality. The Sixth District was not only transforming the city's built environment in the name of modernization, it was also undertaking a heritage project, creating an archive, deeming what is worthy to preserve and what is not, by selecting ruins, and thereby rewriting the city's history.

A *Municipal Past of One's Own*

Unfortunately, the Ottoman archives do not provide many clues about the decision-making process behind these operations, especially with respect to what was deemed worthy of saving, what was found historically significant, and most importantly, what was the reason the Sixth District claimed responsibility of safeguarding parts of these ruins. It would be wrong to assume, however, that as a mid-ranking municipal engineer, Marie de Launay's personal interests in paleography had been solely responsible for such official work.²²⁸ His own writings can once again suggest the reasons for the municipality to sponsor these activities. After he hastily wrote his first article in 1864 right in the middle of the demolitions, he had more time to study the inscriptions closely, and approach the district's Genoese past in a more systematic fashion. Resulting publications in *L'Univers* and *L'Ami des Monuments* show that Launay did not value these inscriptions merely as neutral documents to an era the physical remains of which he contributed to eradicate. In fact, through his transcriptions, translations, and accompanying commentary, he formed a historical narrative, which suggests why the municipality supported the work of Launay.

The narrative pursued by Marie de Launay emphasized the importance of establishing autonomy in the district. In both of his 1875 and 1890 articles, after laying out that the life in

²²⁸A fruitful contrast would be with his work on Bursa, in which he describes the city walls without showing any comparable attention to inscriptions. Launay and Bonkowski Bey, *Bursa ve Civari*, 39-41.

Genoese Pera was restricted to a merely 369.137 square meters because of the fortifications, he continued “the habits of the time sufficiently justify the small extent of this space. The cities of the Middle Ages did not need, like those of our day, wide public roads.” Its small size did not prevent Galata, argued Launay, to become “the center of immense [commercial activity] of the Genoese in the Levant.” What was worrying for the rulers of Galata was not its size, but its isolation: “What was most important to the Genoese Pera, because of *its isolated position in the heart of the Eastern Empire*, was to be strong enough for the complete freedom of its operations, hence the necessity for extensive fortifications.”²²⁹

“*Its isolated position in the heart of the Eastern Empire*” was at the crux of how the elites of Pera imagined their situation in the late nineteenth century, especially during the first decades of the municipal rule in the district. According to commentators, Pera had a unique position in Istanbul, and from a larger perspective, within the larger empire. Being the only example of municipal governance from 1857 to 1867, this was literally true from an administrative point of view. In a period shaped by immense reorganization of the bureaucratic structure, as well as financial constraints felt throughout the Ottoman bureaucracy, forming a “model” organization, an experiment in governance, was not an easy task, however. The municipal council’s autonomy was contested by different sections of the Ottoman state from the very start. An especially contentious issue was the budget of the Sixth District, which ideally should have safeguarded its autonomy. Limited in tax-collecting powers, however, it was immediately forced to seek resources from the state. Until the foundation of other district municipalities and placing all of them under the authority of the Şehremaneti in 1877, the administrative autonomy from and, conversely, the

²²⁹ Launay, “Constantinople Au Moyen Age,” 263-264. Emphasis added.

financial reliance on, the central state bureaucracy, made the Sixth District a very controversial experiment.²³⁰

After transcribing an inscription placed at the Mumhane Gate of the fortifications, dated 1446, Marie de Launay provided a translation to French. In English, it reads as follows:

Prætor Balthazar Maruffo, estimable, graceful, humane, full of eloquence, wit and similarly equity, erected these fortifications. He did a work nobler than the others. These generous foundations preserve to themselves the name Roman, divine with the gods, as well as celebrated with the men.²³¹

This tribute to the Podesta of Galata was for Marie de Launay a clear indication of the “pompous majesty” the “municipal” governance of Genoese settlement has reached in the fifteenth century. Another inscription devoted to Balthazar Maruffo, found also in Mumhane, praising the doubling of the height of the Galata Tower as well as the enlargement of the fortifications under the reign of Maruffo, ended with following: “The Genoese citizens and the settlers of Galata and its suburbs have dedicated him [this inscription].”²³² This was the medieval past of the district that Marie de Launay had in mind, in his hands, in his surroundings, in the storage of the municipality; this was the “history of Middle Ages and the early modern times fertile for lessons.” These were the “sources of [the nations’] glorious past” he was urging his readers to go back, in order to recover their health from the “anemia” they found themselves in the present day—an idealized past in which the citizens of the district had enacted tributary stones to praise their municipal leaders who governed in a “pompous majesty,” with autonomy from “the Eastern Empire” that was surrounding it, but also from the metropole in Italy.

²³⁰ Neumann, “Modernitelerin Çatışması.” For the contemporary discussions on the municipal autonomy of the wider city, see Güçlü, “Urban Tanzîmât,” especially chapter 3.

²³¹ Victor-Marie de Launay, “Notice sur le vieux Galata (Pera des Genoïis)” *L’Univers: Revue Orientale, Politique, Scientifique*, No. 4 (1875): 225-226.

²³² *Ibid.*, 229-230.

This vision of *uniqueness* was not limited to the administrative issues. The core of the cultural narrative that would continue to dominate the image of Pera well into the twenty-first century was established around this time. Accordingly, Pera was the European part of the Ottoman capital, innately distinct from the rest of the city through the composition of its peoples, and the socio-cultural life experienced within its limits. It was not easy to equate the Latin residents of the district under the late Byzantine, early Ottoman periods with the nineteenth-century mix of Levantines and resident Europeans, especially when the shared language medium of the district was no longer Italian, but French. Nevertheless, this Western connection was emphasized, reimagined, and reinvented in the late nineteenth century to give a distinct identity to the ‘European’ and ‘cosmopolitan’ part of Istanbul.²³³

In this vein, Marie de Launay highlighted the relics that especially spoke to the Genoese politics in the metropole. In two instances, he determined that the commemorative stones under scrutiny were laid down as protests to the foreign occupation of Genoa. The first stone, dated to 1404 and found in the aforementioned tower in the territory of the Lazarists, featured two coats of arms of the Podesta Jean Sauli, contrary to the usual practice of one for the colony and one for the metropole. The reason, argued Marie de Launay, was the desire to symbolically reject Genoa’s ongoing occupation by the French.²³⁴ For a similar, subtly symbolic message, Marie de Launay pointed out to a stone found on the tower located in Stoupodji Street, close to the Naval Admiralty

²³³ This is similar to Hala Halim’s observations on archaeological practices in colonial Alexandria, where Hellenistic past of the city is used to “create a local genealogy” for “the secular colonial state.” See Halim, *Alexandrian Cosmopolitanism*, 23-24. See also Paula Sanders, *Creating Medieval Cairo: Empire, Religion, and Architectural Preservation in Nineteenth-Century Egypt* (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2008).

²³⁴ Victor-Marie de Launay, “Notice sur le vieux Galata (Pera des Genoïs)” *L’Univers: Revue Orientale, Politique, Scientifique* No. 3 (1875): 172; Launay, “Constantinople Au Moyen Age,” 271.

in Kasımpaşa, placed in 1435. This stone featured the coat of arms of the Podesta Stefano Marinis, and in place of the coat for the metropole, there was a simple cross. Launay suggested that, because Genoa was under Milanese occupation at this time, the relief was deliberately left incomplete so that it would not represent the full Milanese coat of arms (a cross with a crown on top), as a shrewd rejection of the authority of the invaders of the metropole, showing “their usual patriotism.”²³⁵

In these attempts to underline the autonomous, free-spirited identity of the district that was literally carved into its material fabric, what Marie de Launay was also trying to convey was the inherently connected history of Galata and Genoa. In order to get more exposure for this historical connection, he even wrote to the Genoa Municipality, apparently sharing with his Italian counterparts his first article published in *Journal de Constantinople*. We learn this through a letter that appeared in the same newspaper, penned by Marquis Groppallo, the trustee of Genoa Municipality and the son of the former Sardinian ambassador to Istanbul, written on February 16 and published on March 29, 1865:

It is with the greatest satisfaction that I have received the letter that you have kindly addressed to me through the minister of Italy at Constantinople, with the pamphlet that you call “Preparatory Work for the History of [Genoese] Colonies,” and I hasten to express the gratitude of the Municipality of the City of Genoa, to which I gave the communication.

[Your] project to publish a History of the Genoese Colonies of Pera and Galata, and to illustrate the monuments and inscriptions; and the intention of the municipality of these famous suburbs, to bring together those [monuments and inscriptions] that currently exist, and to preserve them after the demolition of the ancient walls, could only evoke the interest of many of my fellow citizens, and me particularly, [as] in my early youth I made a long stay at Pera, and know perfectly these places which were the witnesses to the glory of our old republic.

²³⁵ Launay, “Notice sur le vieux Galata (Pera des Genoïs)” *L’Univers: Revue Orientale, Politique, Scientifique* No. 3 (1875): 173.

In applauding this idea, we cannot recommend enough, sir, to carefully assemble all the existing Genoese monuments in the Galata tower, without, however, taking away from their place those who might remain, if a part of the fortifications is still going to be respected ...²³⁶

As Marie de Launay was going to write about the inscriptions taken from the tower that was not part of the demolitions in his second and third articles, Groppallo was yet to learn that his demands were not to be complied by the Pera municipality. He finished his letter by recommending Launay the existing historical literature on Genoa, and he promised his enthusiastic addressee to send these works to the Italian legation in Pera so that Marie de Launay could consult for his research. Groppallo was also willing to share representative drawings of the coats of arms of the leading families of Genoa. Indeed, Marie de Launay's significantly more systematic approach and informed study of the antiquities in his later writings seem to have benefited from a comprehensive reading of these sources. He also shared a plan of the walls with the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Genoa Municipality, and Societa di Storia Patria, a Genoese historical society.²³⁷

The interest shown by the Genoa Municipality to their 'rediscovered' heritage seems to have continued after this initial exchange. In 1875, by the request of Societa di Storia Patria, the Genoa Municipality contacted with the Italian legation in Istanbul and collected the photographs of eighteen stones retrieved from the fortifications.²³⁸ In fact, the only surviving version of Marie de Launay's plan of the Genoese Walls comes from the Societa's reproduction, which sponsored

²³⁶ "Chronique," *Journal de Constantinople* 291, March 29, 1865. I am grateful to Edhem Eldem for drawing my attention to this source.

²³⁷ Luigi Tomasso Belgrano, *Documenti Riguardanti La Colonia Genovese Di Pera* (Genova, 1888), 413, table I.

²³⁸ Alphonse Belin, *Histoire de la Latinité de Constantinople* (Paris: Alphonse Picard et Fils, 1894), 140, n: 3; Celal Esad, *Eski Galata ve Binaları*, 95. The fact that out of the twenty-three stones studied by Launay, only eighteen were photographed by Italian representatives, indicates that the disappearance of some of the objects began as early as the mid-1870s.

further research on the district's Genoese history, stemmed from—and corrected—the initial findings of Launay.²³⁹

In the end, through his emphases on the historical connections with Genoa, and his initiation to communicate with Genoese representatives, Marie de Launay claimed a place for Galata in the early modern European history, as well as a place for himself in the community of scholars and antiquarians in Europe. His communication with the Genoa Municipality was also a manifestation of seeking relevance and justification for the municipal project of transforming the urban space, as well as writing its history.

Reading, Writing, Excavating Communities

The renowned late Ottoman and early Republican art historian Celal Esad opens his book on Galata, published in 1911 in Ottoman Turkish, by complaining about the lack of interest shown to the history of the district:

Even though the town of Galata had been in existence since the first days of Byzantium, and had been a scene of many important incidents during the Middle Ages, its history has not been narrated in accordance with its importance. The reason for this is that the chroniclers paid all of their attention to the great city of Byzantium across Galata.... It is true that there are few important works on Galata. However, most of these were written according to the Latin point of view, and they neglected both antiquities and the particulars of Byzantine history pertaining to Galata.

In a relative sense, that was true—the volume of scholarly and amateur production on Byzantium's history exceeded by far what had been then produced on Galata and Pera. Before the demolitions and Launay's work, especially, writing on Genoese Galata was indeed very limited.²⁴⁰

²³⁹ Emilio Pandiani, *L'Opera della Società Ligure di Storia Patria dal 1858 al 1908 (Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria V. XLIII)* (Genova: Nella Sede Della Società – Palazzo Rosso, 1908); Luigi Volpicella, Elena Skrzinska, Ettore Rossi, *Iscrizioni Genovesi in Crimea ed in Costantinopoli (Atti della Società Ligure di Storia Patria V. LVI)* (Nella Sede Della Società – Palazzo Rosso, 1928).

²⁴⁰ For a rare example, see Lodovico Sauli, *Della Colonia dei Genovesi in Galata* (Torino: Giuseppe Bocca, 1831).

Nevertheless, Celal Esad's book, one of the first monographs on the history of the district, was part and parcel of a growing scholarly discourse on this past.²⁴¹ This growing interest was surely a manifestation of the increasing attention in history shown by the larger Ottoman reading public; but it was also related to the particular context of Galata and Pera where the mass destruction and rapid transformation of the old fabric of the city helped the formation of a scholarly and lay conversation on the history of everyday spaces of the district.²⁴² In other words, Marie de Launay was not writing in a vacuum. There was an apparent curiosity of the reading public, manifested in frequent articles in newspapers that touched upon different phases of Pera's history, as well as in their reporting of the archaeological exploits of Marie de Launay and few others in the ruins of the old Pera.

The Genoese Walls were not demolished overnight. It was a process that took around two years, and considering that demolished walls and filled ditches were prepared as grounds for new roads and apartment buildings to be built, construction work on their site went on for a long time.²⁴³ This uprooted physical fabric brought up new discoveries from time to time, celebrated in the popular press. When Marie de Launay discovered a new stone, it was hailed as "crowning a new success";²⁴⁴ and when a find could not be retrieved smoothly and was damaged in the excavation, it was "the result of the awkwardness and negligence of the stonemasons employed in the new constructions."²⁴⁵ And even when articles on the museum's collections did not list any of the

²⁴¹ Eldem notes the early twentieth-century works on the Genoese history of the region. See Eldem, "Ottoman Galata and Pera," 20.

²⁴² Especially for the writing in the 1870s, one must also mention the traumatic impact of the 1870 Fire on the historical understanding of Pera.

²⁴³ Sales of the land plots continued at least until 1880. "Nouvelles du Jour," *La Turquie* 192, August 20, 1880.

²⁴⁴ "Untitled," *Journal de Constantinople* 4552, December 17, 1864.

²⁴⁵ "Untitled," *Journal de Constantinople* 4587, January 27, 1865.

Genoese antiquities, they gave passing references to the recent finds in Galata.²⁴⁶ As these years witnessed the partial removal of the ancient cemeteries from the district, newspapers also featured informal archaeological practices in cemeteries, from which larger histories of the district were derived, especially focusing on its Catholic heritage.²⁴⁷ A piece published in *La Turquie* on August 14, 1866, discussed Pera's present situation within a historical narrative, in which the progress realized under the Sixth District Municipality was juxtaposed with "the degree of malpractice to which Pera was subjected in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries..."²⁴⁸ Overall, a historicist discourse began to take root in the period's press that demanded a unique place for the district's history, and lauded all the efforts that unearthed any spoils from this past, be it from the ruins of the walls, or of the cemeteries. Artin Bey's excavations in the garden of a private household, which opened this chapter, took place in such an environment.

One name that was frequently featured in the pages of the dailies in this particular context was Philipp Anton Dethier, who, as we have previously seen, would become the director of the Imperial Museum in 1872. Dethier, "a passionate amateur of antiquities,"²⁴⁹ was one of the early exponents of the inquiry into Galata's past through the window opened by its destruction, following the footsteps of Marie de Launay. In fact, right after the final part of Launay's first serialized article in *Journal de Constantinople* was published, Dethier wrote a piece himself, which appeared on December 7, 1864. At that time, Dethier was yet to be the director of the Imperial Museum, but he was already active in the culture and art circles in Istanbul, and according to

²⁴⁶ Albert Dumont, "Le Musée Sainte-Irène à Constantinople: Antiquités grecques, gréco-romaines et byzantines," *Revue Archéologique* 18 (1868): 255-256.

²⁴⁷ "Untitled," *Journal de Constantinople* 4550-4551, December 15-16, 1865. This was surely helped by the growing Italian-Catholic population of the district. See Girardelli, "Sheltering Diversity," 119.

²⁴⁸ "Péra," *La Turquie* 162, August 14, 1866.

²⁴⁹ Eldem, "Early Ottoman Archaeology," 42.

Eldem, must have already been affiliated with the museum even in an unofficial capacity during the 1860s.²⁵⁰ In his article, Dethier praised the municipality for its decision to preserve the inscriptions from the demolished walls, “in the interest of history, ... rather than their destruction or scattering around the museums in Europe,” as well as Marie de Launay, for his ability to work on these inscriptions in a very accurate manner, “except for a few minor errors.”²⁵¹

Dethier himself was interested in the walls and their inscriptions, including those of Genoese in Galata, and the Byzantine across the Golden Horn.²⁵² As a member of the Greek Literary History Society *Sillogos*, he worked with Alexander Paspates and Andreas D. Mordtmann to map the extant Byzantine land walls during the 1860s.²⁵³ Indeed, in his article published in *Journal de Constantinople*, after he corrected several errors committed in Launay’s pieces, he admits that one of the inscriptions listed by Marie de Launay had already drawn his attention, and he, together with Mordtmann, had previously worked on it. In return, Marie de Launay has acknowledged Dethier’s contributions to his interpretation of Genoese commemorative stones in his future writings, and actually gave credit to him for discovering one of the studied relics for the first time.²⁵⁴

Firuzan Melike Sümertaş points out to the network of antiquarians and amateur historians that was formed in the 1860s and 1870s around the society of *Sillogos*—which itself was located

²⁵⁰ Eldem, *Osman Hamdi Bey Sözlüğü*, 170. Dethier, like Launay, contributed to 1867 and 1873 exhibitions, the former with some drawings on restoration practices in Istanbul, and the latter with a map that showed the changes occurred in Istanbul after the fall of Byzantium, as well as a guide book: P. Anton Dethier, *Le Bosphore et Constantinople description topographique et historique* (Vienne: Hölder, 1873).

²⁵¹ P. Anton Dethier, “Untitled,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4543, December 7, 1865.

²⁵² Dethier, *Nouvelles découvertes archéologiques faites a Constantinople* (Constantinople: Imprimerie Centrale, 1867).

²⁵³ Sümertaş, “İstanbul’un Kara Surları,” 44.

²⁵⁴ Launay, “Constantinople Au Moyen Age,” 235.

in Pera—and concerned itself with urban archaeology in Istanbul, which included not only Paspates, Dethier, and Mordtmann, but also important statesmen such as Ibrahim Edhem and Munif pashas.²⁵⁵ While she does not mention it in her article, her research has also revealed that Marie de Launay, too, was a member of Sillogos.²⁵⁶ She also speculates that their work during these two decades, considering they were politically well connected, might have had some role in shaping official policy towards heritage protection and led to the decrees that banned any damages to historic walls in 1884. While it is difficult to ascertain the impact they were able to make through this particular policy change, it is obvious that the discourse on urban archaeology and heritage was developed under the patronage of powerful figures who had influence in policy making, as well as in the shaping of public opinion.

It is crucial here to indicate that these characters were actually part of a larger (but not *large*) network of intellectuals that also included the group that was responsible for *Usul* and *Elbise*, the official publications of the Ottoman state for 1873 Vienna Exhibitions. Edhem Pasha, who was not only a member of Sillogos and the supervisor of the exhibition commission but was also the highest authority that gave the authorization of the destruction of the Genoese Walls as the minister of public works,²⁵⁷ seemed to be the critical figure that connected this extended network. In fact, it is plausible that Marie de Launay’s historical work during the demolitions might be the first instance that he was introduced to Edhem Pasha’s circles, which—several years and a few projects later—enabled him to work for the highly-prestigious, internationally acclaimed publications for

²⁵⁵ Sümertaş, “İstanbul’un Kara Surları,” 45.

²⁵⁶ I am grateful to Firuzan Melike Sümertaş for sharing this information with me.

²⁵⁷ BOA, İ.MVL. 497/22492 (18 Cemazeyilahir 1280 [November 30, 1863]).

the 1873 Vienna Exhibition,²⁵⁸ for which the creators worked together in Edhem Pasha's residence.²⁵⁹

While their contents were obviously quite different, the two projects in which Launay was involved were similar in their goals to appropriate different medieval pasts. Whereas in the 1870s, as Ersoy has shown, Marie de Launay and his peers imagined an ideal Ottoman past that aimed to reinvent the modern Ottoman identity as an oriental one. In the 1860s the aim was to find a unique western identity in Pera's past, inherently different than the rest of Istanbul and the empire. Perhaps his success in the latter positively affected the decision to commission him for the former. It is certainly ironic that Edhem Pasha's order to demolish the walls, which, in his words, were like "fruitless trees" (*meyvesiz fidan*) that needed to be torn down, had a constitutive impact in the formation of a network that flourished in developing a discourse of cultural heritage management. However ironic it might be, the demolition of the walls, as we have seen, was one particular form of heritage management, especially since it was immediately accompanied by a scholarly practice of preserving and studying one kind of historical artifacts (inscriptions) at the expense of others (walls).

The intellectual output of this network, and especially that of Marie de Launay, became a fundamental source for scholars working on the history of the district into the twentieth century. Marie de Launay not only succeeded in making a place for himself in a powerful network of intellectuals and statesmen, he also successfully built up an international scholarly expertise on Genoese Pera that was rooted in his work in conjunction with the destruction of its heritage. In

²⁵⁸ In a letter sent to *La Turquie* on December 31, 1872, Launay publicly defended Hamdi Bey, Edhem Pasha's son, and by implication Edhem Pasha, for the way the Ottoman state formed exhibition commissions. Marie de Launay, "Untitled," *La Turquie* 301, December 31, 1872.

²⁵⁹ Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 96-7.

1867, he became a member of Société internationale des études pratiques d'économie sociale.²⁶⁰ His works were cited in many foundational texts in the nineteenth century, from the Italian historian Luigi Tomasso Belgrano's critical work on his descriptions of the inscriptions,²⁶¹ to the renowned archaeologist Salomon Reinach's 1892 article,²⁶² *Histoire de la Latinité de Constantinople* by François-Alphonse Belin,²⁶³ the famous orientalist and French Consul-General to Istanbul (and another member of Sillogos); and continued to be a common point of reference for authors writing in the twentieth century, from J. Gottwald,²⁶⁴ Frederick William Hasluck,²⁶⁵ Eugène Dallegio d'Alessio,²⁶⁶ Semayi Eyice,²⁶⁷ to Louis Mitler.²⁶⁸ Considering that these sources are still used as important references for the history of Pera in general, and the history of Genoese Middle Ages and early modernity in particular, the exponential and lasting influence of Marie de Launay's work on the city's ruins would be better understood.²⁶⁹ In a way, following Stefan Berger and Christoph Conrad's work on national histories, one could argue that Marie de Launay's

²⁶⁰ "Untitled," *Bulletin - Société internationale des études pratiques d'économie sociale* 2 (1867): 205.

²⁶¹ Belgrano, *Colonia Genovese di Pera*.

²⁶² Salomon Reinach, "Chronique d'Orient," *Revue Archéologique*, troisième série, t.19 (January-June 1892).

²⁶³ Belin, *Histoire de la Latinité*.

²⁶⁴ J. Gottwald and A. D. Mordtmann. *Die Stadtmauern von Galata & Historische bilder vom Bosporus* (Konstantinopel: Keil, 1907).

²⁶⁵ Frederick William Hasluck, "The Mosques of the Arabs in Constantinople," *The Annual of the British School at Athens* 22 (1916/1917 - 1917/1918): 157-174.

²⁶⁶ Eugène Dallegio d'Alessio, "Les inscriptions latines funéraires de Constantinople au moyen âge," *Échos d'Orient*, t. 31, no.166 (1932): 188-206.

²⁶⁷ Eyice, *Galata ve Kulesi*.

²⁶⁸ Mitler, "The Genoese in Galata."

²⁶⁹ Significant for the district's history was also the fact that its periodicals were the first venues in which this scholarship was produced, as foreign publications either referencing, or directly recirculating their articles. In a sense, Pera's history was originally written as *local history* in Pera, making their periodicals part of a network of international knowledge production.

writings in the immediate wake of the demolitions were constitutive in shaping the history of Pera as a “scientific field,” which has repercussions even to this day.²⁷⁰

Conclusion: Ruin, Knowledge, and the Creative Destruction of Pera’s History

Every era imposes a special program. Formerly, the privileged capitals were noted by their walls, fortified towers, grand bazaars, majestic temples, beautiful aqueducts, and huge arenas. In the century we [live] in, the works that are most necessary are: The channeling and distribution of water; the canalization of indispensable sewers; the quality and price of gas...²⁷¹

In a time when Pera was trying to reinvent itself with a new municipal organization, inflow of international capital and migrants, and new investments into its infrastructure and built environment, the ruins of its medieval edifices asked a fundamental question to those who governed, as well as those who thought about the city: what were they going to do with the Genoese heritage of Pera, embodied in these ruins?

The answer was complicated, however, for in fact, the walls were no longer Genoese in their practical, everyday sense. During the previous four hundred years, they had become part of the Ottoman civil heritage of the city; as dynamic parts of the urban life, as “lived spaces,”²⁷² they changed shape, were repaired, maintained, partially torn down to allow further changes in the built environment, and rebuilt as needed.²⁷³ What were demolished in the 1860s thus turned out to be more Ottoman than Genoese, along with “the parasitic constructions”—shops that used the walls

²⁷⁰ Stefan Berger, *The Past as History: National Identity and Historical Consciousness in Modern Europe*, with Christoph Conrad (Houndmills; Basingstoke; Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 3.

²⁷¹ Alfred de Caston, “L’avenir de Péra et de Galata. La Distribution des Eaux.—Les Égouts—Le Gaz” *Journal des Travaux Publics de l’Empire Ottoman* (May 29, 1873). Quoted in Alfred de Caston, “Les exigences de la vie, ce qu’il faut faire de la municipalité du 6eme cercle, la voie publique, l’hygiene,” *Revue de Constantinople*. May 9, 1875.

²⁷² Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford; Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991), 40-41.

²⁷³ See, for example, BOA, C.BLD 134/667 (22 Zilhicce 1179 [June 8, 1766]); BOA, C.BLD 141/7020 (7 Cemazeyilahir 1221 [August 22, 1806]); BOA, C.BLD 53/2620 (2 Şevval 1250 [February 1, 1835]).

as their beams, houses that used the walls as their backbones—and many construction materials carved into their mix over centuries of maintenance. In this sense, Genoese Pera was re-created at the moment of its destruction, for the preservation and study of the antiquities that were deemed worthy of salvaging, could serve as a basis for a decontextualized historical narrative that ignored the previous centuries of evolution, which had hitherto shaped Galata’s built environment. This historical narrative was able to push for a ‘municipal’ connection between a medieval golden age, and an inventive, progressive present.²⁷⁴ The connection between the “Genoese ruins” and the modern city marked by difference from the rest of the city was perhaps best illustrated by Alfred de Caston, a journalist who published *Revue de Constantinople*, in 1875:

His Majesty [Abdülaziz] has shown an elevation of sentiment and an intelligent liberalism, which cannot be praised too much, by allowing the Christians, on the ruins of the old Genoese city, to raise a city again, who could make his capital jealous?²⁷⁵

The scientific expropriation and historicist rewriting of Pera’s past occurred at the same time its lands were physically expropriated in the name of progress and economic gain, cementing an economic network that was at the root of the founding of the Sixth District. In other words, demolishing Genoese Walls provided two pillars for the institutionalization of this model municipality: a more commercialized urban space that not only created resources for the municipality, but also benefited its powerful allies; and a historical narrative as a “code of difference”²⁷⁶ for its self-fashioned identity, to which it could hold onto as it claimed further autonomy from the central authority.

²⁷⁴ Timothy Mitchell tells a related case of how ‘destruction’ was required for ‘heritage preservation’ in the case of Gurna, Egypt. See Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 191-192.

²⁷⁵ Caston, “Les exigences de la vie,” 243.

²⁷⁶ Berger, *The Past as History*, 8.

This was not an outright success story, however, as the municipality gradually lost the autonomy it initially enjoyed; and its finances were never relieved from the pressures of bankruptcy.²⁷⁷ However, the historical vision born out of the demolitions and developed by Marie de Launay lingered into the twentieth century, and influenced modern history-writing on the district, which has tended to find the reasons for Pera's nineteenth-century 'difference(s)' compared to other parts of the Ottoman capital in its Genoese medieval and early modern past.²⁷⁸

What was also left to later generations was a rhetoric of loss concerning the "authentic" Pera, a district whose modern identity was carved onto the destruction of its most iconic topographical feature. As an early proponent of such a discourse, Celal Esad wrote:

Perhaps one day it would be possible to write a detailed history of Galata through studying individual documents with great effort and perseverance. However, Galata, which was exposed to constructions and transformation of the topography (*tahavvülat-ı topoğrafya*) more than Byzantium, has been left with only a minuscule of its fortifications and former buildings; as it has become the city's commercial center thanks to the financial and economic activities given to our city by the constitutional period (*meşrutîyyet*), it is subject to change more than anywhere else; ... it would be even more difficult in five-ten years to find the traces [of old Galata], which could now be witnessed here and there.²⁷⁹

For Celal Esad and others, the knowledge of the once extensive fortifications that had given the district its topographical identity was perhaps even more impressive in their absence. The scattered ruins, juxtaposed with the extensive mapping reached by the series of scholars initiated by the writings of Marie de Launay, made the Genoese past much more tangible in the eyes of the literati of the early twentieth century. Rapidly disappearing from the landscape, virtually the only way the medieval walls could be imagined was in their ideal medieval form, extensively studied by previous scholars, with complete disregard for their four centuries of "lived" histories. The

²⁷⁷ Neumann, "Modernitelerin Çatışması."

²⁷⁸ Akın, *Galata ve Pera*, 7.

²⁷⁹ Celal Esad, *Galata ve Eski Binaları*, 3.

demolitions also visualized at an intimate level a feeling of rupture with the past that dominated the nineteenth century, making it possible for a historicist approach towards history.²⁸⁰ The tendency to write on urban spaces in the moment of their “loss,” with nostalgia towards an idealized past, is certainly not unique to Pera, nor the proponents of this discourse in the case of Pera have been necessarily and exclusively influenced by the scholarly and popular production developed around the late nineteenth-century demolitions of the district’s medieval walls. Nevertheless, it is important to locate the origins of the modern scholarship of the region in this moment of destruction, which from the very beginning entailed a purposeful attempt to write the district’s history and to appropriate its past for presentist goals.

This chapter has shown how the politics of infrastructure, together with the politics of archaeology, cultural heritage, and history writing, were intertwined in reconstructing the spaces and histories of Pera in the late nineteenth century. In the 1860s, the material assemblage that made up the district received perhaps its most radical intervention until that point—walls torn down, soil unearthed, graves uprooted, *spolia* stones put into use once again to fill the ditches of the fortifications, or even carved into new constructions. Houses and shops were destroyed, roads were opened, and people were displaced. History of these people were not recorded in the salvaged Latin inscriptions. As Laurajane Smith writes, “the management of material or tangible cultural heritage is also ultimately about the management and governance of the meanings and values that the material heritage is seen to symbolize or otherwise represent.”²⁸¹ In the midst of this material mobility, one set of materials—commemorative stones taken from the walls—was assembled as the setting stones of a new history for the district, and with this new history, a new, cosmopolitan

²⁸⁰ Berger, *The Past as History*, 5.

²⁸¹ Smith, *Archaeological Theory*, 195.

identity. Out of the ruins, not only a new urban space, but also a space for historical expertise, and a scholarly network emerged. The destruction created modern Pera, and its historical scholarship.

Chapter 2—Cosmopolitanism over the Fields of the Dead: Cemetery, Subway, Garden

Even the dead will not be safe from the enemy if he wins.

Walter Benjamin²⁸²

The garden is characterized by the fence.

Joachim Radkau²⁸³

On November 17, 2015, a Turkish daily published a very brief and rather strange news item about the ‘pedestrianization’ project that was underway in Taksim Square, the present-day heart of the Beyoğlu district. According to the news, several human bones and skulls were unearthed during the construction. As witnesses were in shock, authorities called archaeologists in order to explore the finds. “There are some rumors,” the daily concluded, “that there might have been a graveyard in the area previously.”²⁸⁴

What was strange about this short news was not the fact that construction workers came across human remains in Taksim; but rather the utter ignorance on the part of the journalist, site manager, and engineers, on the history of the district, with respect to the former presence of cemeteries. This ignorance translates into a larger silence and oblivion within the greater public memory regarding the history of Ottoman/Turkish modernization on urban space.

²⁸² Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt, trans. Harry Zohn (New York: Schocken Books, 2007), 255.

²⁸³ Joachim Radkau, *Nature and Power: A Global History of the Environment*, trans. Thomas Dunlap (Cambridge; New York: German Historical Institute; Cambridge University Press, 2008), 55.

²⁸⁴ “Taksim'deki kazılarda kafatası ve kemik bulundu,” *Radikal*, November 17, 2015, accessed October 16, 2016, <http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/taksimdeki-kazılarda-kafatasi-ve-kemik-bulundu-1474520/>

This dissertation deals with several projects of infrastructure that were constitutive in the formation of the late nineteenth-century Pera. The demolition of the medieval Genoese Walls, which opened the route to the construction of the world's second subway, the building of waterworks between Pera and the far-off regions of the city, and the installation of sewers provided necessary amenities to an increasingly transnational community living in Pera. But also, through the physical links they established, they brought various actors in contact, helped them form networks, revealed competing ideological and material interests over the use of urban space, in the above- and underground. But if we are to suggest a more fundamental infrastructure, onto which the modern Pera, including its various modes of infrastructure covered in this dissertation, was built, we have to look at the cemeteries of Pera.

Pera had been a place of grapes and graves. In the Byzantine and most of the Ottoman period, the overarching character of Galata's northern extension was its green spaces, composed of vineyards and cypress trees, accompanying thousands of graves. Whereas there were several burial grounds belonging to various religious denominations, there were two main "fields of the dead" in Pera: What the French (and after them, the rest of the Europeans) called the Grands-Champs des Morts and the Petits-Champs des Morts. While the former was divided into various mostly non-Muslim graveyards, the latter was where the first Muslim cemetery, Küçük Kabristan, of Istanbul was established, roughly over the same area of an ancient Byzantine cemetery in Tepebaşı that was formed during the devastating sixth-century plague.²⁸⁵

²⁸⁵ Hans Peter Laqueur, *Hüve'l-Bâki: İstanbul'da Osmanlı Mezarlıkları ve Mezar Taşları*, trans. Selahattin Dilidüzgün (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1997), 45; William Rosen, *Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire, and the Birth of Europe* (New York: Viking, 2007), 215.

Pera, of course, had changed over centuries. Nonetheless, by the mid-century, a traveler coming from Bosphorus could still recognize the district by the cypresses of its cemeteries.²⁸⁶ This, however, was no longer the case by the 1950s.²⁸⁷ Within the span of several decades, Pera was *cleansed*—at least in the eyes of an observer above the ground—of the remains of a centuries-long accumulation of dead bodies, as well as most of its historic green spaces. In this transformation, one of the famous pieces of modern infrastructural investments in the city played a significant role.

The Tünel (*tunnel*), or, the Galata'dan Beyoğlu'na Tahtelaz Demiryolu (Underground Railway from Galata to Pera), is called the “second oldest subway of the world.”²⁸⁸ It is, however,

²⁸⁶ Théophile Gautier, *Constantinople of Today*, trans. Robert Howe Gould (*London: David Bogue*, 1854), 78.

²⁸⁷ Laqueur, *Hüve'l-Bâki*, 45. In 1951, Milliyet newspaper published an account of a local shopkeeper who could not believe the rumors that there had been a cemetery in Tepebaşı. “Tepebaşı mezarlık mı idi?” *Milliyet* (November 5, 1951), accessed October 16, 2016, <https://goo.gl/A43Jhd>. Semayi Eyice argues that it was mostly by the orders of Cemal Pasha, a military general who took control of the Ottoman government during the World War I, together with Enver and Talat pashas, that most of the cemetery was cleared. See Semayi Eyice, “Haliç ve Tarihçesi,” in *Haliç 2001 Sempozyumu: 3-4 Mayıs 2001* (Istanbul: İSKİ, 2001), 119.

²⁸⁸ When Tünel was opened in 1875, underground transportation systems were quite new in the world. It had been only twelve years since London had its *Underground* opened, and Paris had to wait for more than two decades to have its own *Metro*. New York's first trial of a subway system took place in 1869, but the public use began only in the early twentieth century, just few years after other large North American cities such as Boston and Chicago. “Subway,” *Encyclopædia Britannica* (August 31, 2017), accessed October 12, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/technology/subway>. Hence local authorities of Istanbul now proudly brand *Tünel* as the “second oldest subway of the world.” The official declaration of the foundation of the Tünel company in the British newspaper *Times*, however, made reference to “a very similar railway called ‘Croix Rouse’ that has successfully worked in Lyon for 10 years.” Indeed, Lyon had a partially-underground funicular since 1862, thus at least for the executioners of the project, and definitely for the French engineer Gavand, *London Underground* was not the sole reference point when they undertook the task of building a subway in the Ottoman capital. “The Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople,” *The Times* 27463, August 23, 1872. It must also be stated that until the twentieth century subway was yet to reach its unquestionable place in the pinnacle of urban transportation systems. See Peter Soppelsa, “Urban Railways, Industrial Infrastructure, and the Paris Cityscape 1870-1914,” in *Trains, Culture, and Mobility: Riding the Rails*, ed. Benjamin Fraser and Steven D. Spalding (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2012), 108.

also one of the “shortest” ones.²⁸⁹ With its 550 meters-long, two-stops journey between Galata and Pera (fig. 7), the Tünel occupied a very small section of the geography of Istanbul, which at the end of the nineteenth century already spanned over a very large area in two continents, divided into three urban centers, populated by around a million of inhabitants, and served by several infrastructural networks. The Tünel’s history has thus been treated as a symbolic episode in the Ottoman Empire’s struggle for modernization.²⁹⁰ However, as a spatial phenomenon, it has been reduced to a matter of touristic eccentricity and a marginal note in the *infrastructured* history of Istanbul.²⁹¹

A more critical look, however, reveals the constitutive role played by the construction of Tünel in the making of modern Pera. As this chapter will show, the geographic location selected for the project, local and transnational actors it brought together—from engineers to ministers of the empire—technical and discursive issues tied to the construction of an underground railway, and various acts of resistance shown against the direct and indirect spatial transformations triggered by the construction, make the Tünel much more than a symbol of the Ottoman modernity or an item of nostalgic eccentricity. This chapter will in fact argue that the Tünel’s material, as well as ideological, connotations, make this *eccentric* funicular an ideal case to disentangle the spatial relations that played an important part in the making of Pera in the late nineteenth century.

In this chapter, I read the history of the Tünel in relation to its impact on Pera’s spatial restructuring, side by side the history of the transformation of a particular locality at the heart of

²⁸⁹ Lyon’s 1862 funicular may rightfully claim this title from Tünel, too, with its mere 489 meters-long route.

²⁹⁰ Engin, *Tünel*.

²⁹¹ “Tünel offers the shortest, most joyful, and the warmest travel experience for its passengers while silently connecting Karaköy and Beyoğlu every day.” From a board inside Tünel, documented on April 18, 2016 by me.

the district: Tepebaşı. This site embodies the Tünel's most significant intervention in the existing topography. Located at the northwestern border of Pera, Tepebaşı was the end point of the Petits-Champs des Morts, which stretched all the way to the neighboring district Kasımpaşa's shorelines. Between 1873 and 1875, during the construction of the Tünel, the material debris of the construction was dumped over a significant portion of this cemetery, altering the landscape completely. A few years later, this newly created terrain became the site on which one of the most emblematic spaces of the late nineteenth-century 'cosmopolitan' Pera was built: the Jardin des Petits-Champs.

The Jardin, opened in 1880, with its entrance fee, theater hall, expensive dinners in the open air, hosted pashas, beys, the diplomatic corps residing in the city, employees of foreign companies operating in the empire, and artists and tourists who usually stayed at the hotels surrounding the garden. It would not be wrong to assert that this limited elite milieu that consumed the Jardin was a microcosm of the cosmopolitan sociability that was continuously referred to in the history-writing of Pera.²⁹² The history of this multilingual, multicultural group, which was invested an extraordinary agency with its financial and cultural capital, has been matched with the history of the district, which in return is told as a story of hotels, theaters, restaurants, and gardens.

This narrative of upper-class cosmopolitanism, however, tends to neglect two crucial aspects of the district's history. On the one hand, there is often a very scarce reflection on the *others*, including lower-class people, animals, and the dead, who were not only absent in but also actively excluded from the cosmopolitan diversity. On the other hand, there is also limited understanding of the historical reality of cosmopolitanism in Pera, and on which spaces the 'cosmopolitan' Pera was built. Edhem Eldem points out to "slippery grounds" the terms

²⁹² See, for instance, Akın, *Galata ve Pera*; Batur, "A. Vallauray & R. D'Aronco."

cosmopolitanism and transnationalism rest upon when used to define the late nineteenth-century Ottoman society.²⁹³ Criticizing the continuous and ahistorical narratives of cosmopolitanism that connects early modern diversities to the nineteenth century, he argues that the social reality of the late nineteenth-century Pera was not “a modernized and transformed version of a pre-existing form of social and cultural fluidity” as the existing literature has suggested.²⁹⁴

Rather than starting with an elite and timeless notion of cosmopolitanism and finding it in the Jardin, the following seeks to explore how the cosmopolitan spaces came to exist in the first place, and who/what were excluded from those spaces. This is in line with Ariel Salzmänn’s suggestion to refuse using cosmopolitanism as a ready-made concept and to realize the importance of the particularities of places.²⁹⁵ The aim is to understand how a specific place, the Jardin des Petits-Champ, which was particularly deemed as “cosmopolitan,” came into being, and to see what this emergence meant for the larger historiography of Pera. In a way, then, the objective is not only to point out to “slippery grounds” upon which the literature on cosmopolitanism was established but also to explore the *actual grounds* on which the ‘cosmopolitan’ spaces were built.

In order to undertake this exploration, the construction of Tünel will be used as a gateway to disentangle the spatial relations that carved up modern Pera. In the following, I first discuss the construction process of the Tünel, spanned between 1869 and 1875, with a particular focus on how it altered existing spatial order in the nineteenth-century Pera. As a bridge between the construction of this novel piece of infrastructure and the transformation of a premodern cemetery, this chapter

²⁹³ Edhem Eldem, “Istanbul as a cosmopolitan city: myths and realities,” in *A Companion to Diaspora and Transnationalism*, ed. Ato Quayson and Girish Daswani (Oxford: Blackwell, 2013), 214.

²⁹⁴ Eldem, 219-220.

²⁹⁵ Ariel Salzmänn, “Islampolis, Cosmopolis: Ottoman Urbanity Between Myth, Memory and Postmodernity” in *Cosmopolitanisms in Muslim Contexts: Perspectives from the Past*, ed., Derryl MacLean and Sikeena K. Ahmed (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 68-91.

will engage the changing attitudes towards the spaces of the dead, which made this infrastructure-driven transformation of the cemetery not only *desirable* but also *normal* in the eyes of many contemporaries.

This is then followed by an analysis of the social topography that put Tepebaşı in a liminal position between two distinct emergent social worlds of Pera and Kasımpaşa. This liminal position was once occupied by the Petits-Champs des Morts, which provided an easy passage between the two, but the Jardin des Petits-Champs provided more strict boundaries. What the Jardin also provided was a visual ‘infrastructure’ for the orientalist gaze to be directed at Istanbul proper. I engage with the records of local and international stakeholders to explore how these spaces came into being, the material and discursive investment into the transformation of Pera’s early modern spatiality, and the struggle over the use of such spaces. This inquiry into Pera’s spatial change that centered around the Tünel’s construction reveals several key characteristics of the district’s urban development during the second half of the nineteenth century: its global character, its exclusivity, the importance of its position *vis a vis* Kasımpaşa as well as Istanbul proper, and its dependence on destruction.

A Bright Idea

As discussed in the Introduction, Pera and Galata have extremely entangled histories. This entanglement, however, was one of historical construction: the nature of Pera and Galata’s interconnection was shaped by specific interventions in the spaces of these areas throughout centuries. In this chapter, I scrutinize the making of this interconnection in the late nineteenth century through the construction of the Tünel, as another case of “creative destruction.”

The main passage between these two quarters until the early 1870s was the Yüksekaldırım Street (*high pavement*), a staired thoroughfare that preceded the end of the district’s high street,

Grand Rue de Péra almost to the port of Galata, crossing the Voyvoda Street along the way, where several banks and the stock exchange were located. Yüksekalkdırım itself was a busy locus of commercial activity, notorious with its crowd of petty sellers and passersby, as well as its steepness. Sermet Muhtar Alus, an early twentieth-century observer of the daily life in Istanbul, described the scene of the street as being “full of tiny shops, rummagers, street vendors, hardware mongers” and “*those who could not afford the Tünel.*”²⁹⁶ Indeed, such was the stated purpose of the Tünel, the underground railway between Galata and Pera: to form an alternative route to the Yüksekalkdırım, for those who *could afford to pay* for their ride.

The moment of the Tünel’s engineer Eugène-Henri Gavand’s initial conception of the idea for the project became part of a literary trope, based on Gavand’s own book. According to this story, the French engineer, who visited Istanbul “solely for touristic reasons,”²⁹⁷ stayed in a hotel in Pera, and, in the words of a Turkish author writing in the 1970s:

Every morning he left his hotel in Pera in order to enjoy the magnificent view [of Istanbul proper], walked to Yüksekalkdırım, and from there proceeded to Galata. Every time he passed through this extremely steep hill, he would come across a dense crowd moving up

²⁹⁶ Sermet Muhtar Alus, *İstanbul Kazan Ben Kepçe* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1997), 77. Emphasis added.

²⁹⁷ A graduate of École Centrale des Arts et Manufactures in Paris, Gavand worked on waterworks and railroads in Portugal, Venezuela, and Romania, before his arrival to Istanbul. After he left Istanbul in 1875, he went back to France, and worked on a drainage project in Marseille. He published work related to almost all of these projects he was involved in: Eugène-Henri Gavand, *La Question des chemins de fer en Roumanie pour les provinces en deçà du Milcow* (Impr. Nationale, 1866); Gavand, *Chemins de fer roumains. Lignes de Bucarest à Pitesti et à Ploïesti, études de 1866. Rapport general* (Impr. de J. Weiss, 1867); Gavand and Nadault de Buffon, *Notice sur le dessèchement des marais du Mas-Thibert à Fos sur la rive gauche du canal d'Arles à Bouc et sur le colmatage de 20,000 hectares de la plaine de la Crau* (Paris: Impr. de Lahure, 1877). For his life, see Pierre Oberling, “The Istanbul Tünel,” *Archivium Ottomanicum* (1972): 219, 240. I have also benefited from the soon-to-be-opened Istanbul Tünel Museum’s archives, with the courtesy of Suna Altan.

and down. This density of the crowd eventually inspired him to come up with a *bright idea*.²⁹⁸

In this short passage, the author touches upon several leitmotifs that concern this chapter: The hotels in Pera, the magnificent view of Istanbul proper, the crowds on Yüksekaldırım, and Pera's extension to Galata. What brings them together, in Yılmaz's words but also here in this chapter, is a "bright idea."

This "bright idea," of course, was the construction of the Tünel. Gavand himself gave a pretty similar reasoning in his book. After summarizing the busy daily life in Galata and Pera, he told his readers that there was no public transport that eased the movement between these two centers: "As I was traveling along the streets as a tourist, this absence [of public transport] stuck in my head, and thus I calculated the numerous advantages of a simple, fast, and budget-friendly vehicle."²⁹⁹ This manifests a twofold understanding of the Tünel's place in the history of Istanbul. On the one hand, there is an established consensus on the status of the project as the epitome of the modernization process, which was exemplified as early as the Tünel's opening ceremony on January 17, 1875, when one of the officials of the Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople company talked about the funicular as a statement "of the universal mission of civilization and progress" and a "work of improvement and public utility."³⁰⁰ And on the other hand, the Tünel's

²⁹⁸ Hasan Yılmaz, "İstanbul Tünel'inin Tarihçesi," accessed October 10, 2018, <http://earsiv.sehir.edu.tr:8080/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11498/4981/001503842006.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>. Emphasis added.

²⁹⁹ Eugene Henri Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli-Tunnel de Constantinople*, trans. Vahdettin Engin (Istanbul: İETT, 2010 [1876]), 21.

³⁰⁰ "Le 'Metropolitan Railway' de Constantinople: Inaguration de la ligne," *Levant Herald, Edition Hebdomadaire* 3, no. 3, January 20, 1875. Also quoted in Oberling, "İstanbul Tünel," 220; and Çelik, *Remaking*, 97.

story is relegated to a moment of genius of a Western engineer, who himself is shown as the agent of modernization.³⁰¹

Rather than dealing with the project either as the epitome of a larger-than-life logic, or as the ultimate manifestation of a singular intellect of a talented engineer, what I propose here is to take the Tünel as *one* key to unravel the making of modern Pera, affecting a larger geography than the limited construction site of the project. We should see the Tünel as part of a larger assemblage of what we now refer as ‘cosmopolitan’ Pera; and thus, using this scrutiny as a means to disentangle this very narrative.

The Material World of a Nineteenth-Century Ottoman, British, and French subway

During the seven years between when Gavand came up with a bright idea (incidentally as he came up Yüksekaldırım), and when idea was hailed as a statement for the “universal mission of civilization and progress,” the construction of the Tünel required the stakeholders to find their way in various complicated settings. These included the complexities of and struggles within the Ottoman bureaucracy; the circles of European finance that were sought to fund the project; and assembling the necessary materials for the construction from the various geographies of Europe and the Mediterranean.

Gavand was responsible for navigating the differences among the Grand Vizierate, ministries, and the Sixth District, over clashing interests and opinions with regards to the use of urban space. Between 1868, when Gavand first proposed the project to the officials of the Ottoman Empire, to 1872, when the construction finally started, there were several moments when the project was almost canceled. Gavand’s most effective weapon in his struggle to accommodate the intricacies of the Ottoman bureaucracy was his expert position as an engineer. He served in the

³⁰¹ Oberling, “Istanbul Tünel,” 250.

cadastral commission and waterworks commissions of the Sixth District, and prepared a report on the waterways in the city, which was immediately published as a book.³⁰² In his book on the Tünel, he informs us that the young scribes of the Council of the State were calling him “Mad Gavand,” and he was not sure whether this was because they thought his project was never going to be realized, or because he was doing all of the work for the Ottoman state for free.³⁰³ While on his part this was a utilization of his expertise in order to secure his project’s future, it may also be argued that the state was using the bureaucratic abeyances in order to gain the most out of this expert residing in the capital.

The Tünel was assembled through a widespread material network, which transcended the narrow confines of the construction site, of Pera, of the municipal boundaries of the Sixth District, Istanbul, and the Ottoman Empire. Thanks to the detailed information given by Gavand, one can map this extensive geography through which the Tünel was assembled. Accordingly, the lime used in the construction came from L’homme d’armes in France, and Kireçburnu in Istanbul; the cement mixture from Santorini and Grenoble; station marbles from Cassis and Trieste, bricks from Livorno and Marseille; and the timber from Salonica’s oak trees, as well as from the cypresses cut from the cemeteries in Pera. Turnstiles were manufactured at the Detouche & Co. factory in Paris; moving parts and brakes in Pantin, and all the other machinery and the boilers from the iron foundry in Le Creusot.³⁰⁴

Finally, financial capital moved along this network, too, supporting the material investment in Pera and in return profiting from the operation of the Tünel as well as the urban value created by the project. After Gavand’s proposal was accepted by the Ottoman state, he went to Paris to

³⁰² I deal with Gavand’s work on Pera’s water infrastructure in chapter 3.

³⁰³ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 22, n.6.

³⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 37, 42.

find the initial funds for the project, where he established a company called Chemin de fer Métropolitain de Galata à Péra in 1870. However, his plans were interrupted with the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian War in July of the same year, forcing Gavand to establish a company in London.³⁰⁵ Finally, with the help of the London branch of the Ottoman Bank,³⁰⁶ The Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople was founded in 1872 in London. Investors to the project were mostly bankers, merchants, and members of the gentry. The first list of the shareholders, compiled on November 24, 1872, presents a wide distribution of ownership, that spread out in Istanbul, England, and France.³⁰⁷ Out of the 12,500 shares of the company, around 4,700 were held by persons and companies located in Istanbul (almost entirely in Pera), around 4,000 were owned by those in France, and around 3,700 were sold to those in England.

Abraham Camondo, who at that time was settled in Paris, had the second largest share in the company after Baron Louis d'Erlanger, a French banker residing in London.³⁰⁸ Even though Camondo was in Paris, his “real estate empire” was growing in Istanbul, most notably in Pera.³⁰⁹ This signals that the weight of Pera-based shareholders in the project was actually even higher than a mere comparison of the numbers show. Other prominent figures from the district that appear in the list are Emile Deveaux, the deputy general manager of the Imperial Ottoman Bank, and Charles Helbig, the Belgian-Levantine businessman residing in Istanbul. Helbig’s mother was from the Balzac family,³¹⁰ a member of which was also an initial shareholder of the Tünel. Gavand, too,

³⁰⁵ Gavand, 23.

³⁰⁶ OBA, LA2396700300094 (May 8, 1872), and OBA, LA2396700300095 (May 15, 1872).

³⁰⁷ TNA, BT 34/94/6385 (November 12, 1872).

³⁰⁸ D'Erlanger’s involvement with the company’s shares seems to be a result of an agreement signed by the Ottoman Bank and Baron d'Erlanger. OBA, LA2396700300108 (July 10, 1872).

³⁰⁹ Baruh, “Modern Axis,” 171.

³¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 163.

whose daughter eventually married one of Charles Helbig's sons, Gustave Emmanuel Joseph,³¹¹ had a considerable share in the company. So did the Ottoman Bank. Perhaps most strikingly, prominent Ottoman statesmen including Edhem Pasha, at that time the Minister of Public Works (Nafia Nazırı), Ahmet Vefik Efendi (later Pasha), the Minister of Public Instruction (Maarif Nazırı), and Salih Bey, the president of the Court of Appeals (Nizamiye Mahkemesi) were all listed as shareholders of the company—albeit with small number of shares. These three were also members of the Board of Directors in 1872, which also included two British parliamentarians (Donald Darlymple and Thomas Hughes), and Charles Helbig, among others.³¹²

Both Edhem Pasha and Ahmet Vefik Efendi were generously acknowledged in Gavand's book; Edhem for "never withholding his support and high patronage for the success of the enterprise," and Ahmet Vefik "for the approval of the company's internal regulations by the Ottoman government."³¹³ All in all, a network of finance, patronage, and personal relations, extensive in its geographic scope, but at the same time tightly-knit, especially through its close connections to the spatial development in Pera, was materialized through the 550 meter ride of the funicular. The actual materialization, of course, also needed physical power, which was provided by a diverse labor force. In Gavand's account, it was the Muslim, Kurdish, and Armenian workers, assisted by the Italians, who dug the soil and buttressed the dig with timber. Gavand worked with the Croats, too, but they proved to be "too stubborn, hard to manage, and arrogant." The Italians plastered, the Greek and the French carved, and "the Persian muleskinners" handled all of the local carriage required for the construction.³¹⁴

³¹¹ Istanbul Tünel Museum Archives.

³¹² "The Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople," *The Times* 27463 (London, England), August 23, 1872.

³¹³ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 7.

³¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 33.

This network did not prove to be as firm as Gavand wanted it to be, however. Even though the Tünel was Gavand's brainchild, the divergence between the company's Administrative Board in London and the operations in Istanbul directed by Gavand soon became apparent. The company sent a representative, Baron Foelckershamb, to Istanbul, in order to "help Gavand" on paper, but in reality, to oversee him. In Gavand's account, Foelckershamb was actually harmful to the cause, as his way of dealing with the policymakers was breaching the acceptable rules of conduct in Istanbul.³¹⁵ When, eventually, the Tünel was opened with a pompous ceremony on January 17, 1875, attended by the statesmen, foreign dignitaries, and the elites of Pera, Gavand was not among the attendants. The engineer, who came up with "a bright idea," who worked for free in various state positions for the sake of his project, who traveled around Europe in search for funds and materials, was not there to see the actualization of his project.

In a letter he wrote to *Levant Herald* after the ceremony, he said that it was "for particular reasons" that he "did not wish" to attend the event, and not because of an "indisposition" as the paper had claimed. The paper responded by identifying its source as a toast given to honor Gavand by Charles Ritter, an engineer of the Ministry of Public Works. Ritter wrote a letter to the newspaper, too, saying that he "merely expressed regret at not seeing Mr. Gavand at this celebration, at which he should have occupied a front row seat. I knew the real cause of Mr. Gavand's absence and it is certainly not I who would have spoken of an indisposition."³¹⁶ Gavand himself did not explain this "real cause," however, either in the letter to *Levant Herald* or in his book. His reluctance to speak about the cause of the dispute may be related to his ongoing interests

³¹⁵ Ibid., 28. On Foelckershamb's account, on the other hand, it was the local directors of the company, whose behavior to Foelckershamb was a cause for concern. OBA, LA2396700300625 (November 1, 1876).

³¹⁶ Quoted in Oberling, "Istanbul Tünel," 240-241.

in the enterprise, for he—and after his death in 1889, his descendants—continued to possess some portion of the company’s shares.³¹⁷ Nevertheless he does mention the first accident occurred in the subway, roughly one year after its opening, and criticizes the lack of control and maintenance of the cables. The prestigious local magazine *L’Univers Revue Orientale* also accused the company of sending Gavand away and leaving the responsibility of maintenance to incompetent engineers, causing the accident.³¹⁸

Not allowing the conflict between the company and himself damaging his expert position, Gavand was quick to capitalize on the success of the project. His book on the Tünel, *Chemin de fer métropolitain de Constantinople*, which also included a proposal for a new commercial zone and port for Istanbul, was published just one year after the Tünel’s opening.³¹⁹ And he continued to promote his expertise by using the Tünel as a pioneering project in underground railways. In the 1880s, when there were public discussions on the type of the urban railway that would be most appropriate for Paris, Gavand sensed the relevance of his work and republished his book by changing its name to more general *Étude de construction d’un métropolitain souterrain* (Study on an Underground Metro).³²⁰ *Le Genie Civil*, a French engineering magazine, gave an instant review, underlining the timeliness of the book. The magazine also praised Gavand’s success both in the project itself and in the written work, “signaling the leading role of French civil engineering in overcoming social and material obstacles,” thus reaffirming the ideology of expertise carried to and from distant places thanks to their engineers. Of course, Gavand, as a European engineer, had

³¹⁷ For example, TNA, BT 34/94/6385 (April 10, 1889).

³¹⁸ Engin, *Tünel*, 69.

³¹⁹ Eugène-Henri Gavand, *Chemin de fer métropolitain de Constantinople, ou chemin de fer souterrain de Galata à Péra, dit Tunnel de Constantinople. Projet d'une nouvelle ville et d'un nouveau port de commerce à Constantinople, par Eugène-Henri Gavand* (Paris: Impr. de Lahure, 1876).

³²⁰ Gavand, *Étude de construction d’un métropolitain souterrain* (Paris: B. Tignol, 1884).

come to Istanbul to showcase his expertise and profiting from it. But his return to Europe having worked in a project in the periphery solidified his position in his home country.

Reconfiguration of Spatial Relations through Infrastructure

With the documentation at hand, it is impossible to know for certain the cause of the strife between Eugène-Henri Gavand and the Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople. But if we turn our attention to the issues surrounding the urban politics of Pera in relation to the Tünel, we can surmise that Gavand's controversial involvement in land disputes caused by the construction might have played an important part. In this section that I discuss the land development and disputes triggered by the establishment of the Tünel, I argue that in geographical as well as material terms, the project should be seen in relation to the quite recent demolition of the Genoese Walls. The demolition, as discussed in the first chapter, was the first crucial act to transform the built environment and the urban life of Pera towards a more privatized and ultimately gentrified urban center. Geographically, the transformation put forth by the Tünel was a continuation of the demolition of the walls into its north-south axis. Its premise was not only to ease the movement between Galata and Pera, through bypassing the hassle of the steep Yüksekaldırım Street, but also to open up new lands for development and to increase the urban value around the stations within the respective quarters.

In fact, two years prior to Gavand's first visit to the district, an article published in *La Turquie* had already hinted at a geographic connection by calling for the transformation of the "Téke quarter," which corresponded to the upper part of Yüksekaldırım and was named after the Galata Mevlevi Lodge (*tekke*). "The Téke quarter is very populated," the article began, "with the petty trades and industries have established their bases there...Most of the houses are built in wood... [Varnish workshop] at the center... puts the safety of the inhabitants and their properties

under great danger, [and] stinks the neighborhood by evaporating its products, which can at any moment put the T ke on fire and ruin a number of manufacturers.”³²¹ This area, seen as overpopulated and causing risk to the rest of the district with its wooden architecture and the varnish workshop located at the center, was targeted as a next step for Pera’s renewal. To the eventual vindication of the editor of *La Turquie*, T nel’s Pera station was built in this very area, as we will see below.

Connections between the two subsequent projects were not only geographical or ideological; there are several continuities among the actors. The Sixth District was at the forefront of the efforts for the demolition of the walls and their replacement with new streets. Several of the creditors of the municipality in 1864, whose money funded this venture, had properties within the newly opened zones, including the famous bankers of the period, Tubini, Zarifi, and Camondo. In the case of the T nel, we once again see several of the same actors, playing important roles. Abraham Camondo was one of the three investors with the highest number of shares at the foundation of the company. Whereas there were frequent changes in the ownership structure over the years, the Camondos consistently held onto their shares for the decades to come.³²²

In 1879, another company was founded in London, named Constantinople Land and Building Society, the administrative board of which was composed of the same people who governed the Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople. Shareholder structure was also very similar, again led by d’Erlanger and Camondo, with shares from Gavand, Helbig, and the Imperial Ottoman Bank. In its “Memorandum of Association,” the main activities of the company were listed as “to acquire lands as may be deemed desirable by purchase, lease, license or otherwise, within the

³²¹ “Nouvelles locales,” *La Turquie* 144, July 21, 1866.

³²² TNA, BT 34/94/6385.

Imperial Ottoman Empire [sic], or in any part of the world; to build houses, hotels, shops or other erections upon, cultivate, develop or otherwise turn to account and improve any lands belonging to, leased, used, or occupied by the company.”³²³ The same document also lists “Land and Hereditaments at Galata and Pera,” which accounted for twenty-two properties, owned by two names: Camondo and Charles Helbig. When one maps these properties in relation to the route of the Tünel and zones of expropriation, the links between property ownership and urban infrastructure becomes quite apparent (fig. 8). The company was surely established with the intention to benefit from, and presumably further the spatial reordering that the Tünel caused in Pera’s topography, linking the short funicular more explicitly with the real estate development.

Discussions on properties—and their expropriations—dominated the four years of public debate during which the Tünel was under construction. For Gavand, expropriations were the single most troublesome part of the process. He argued that both the State Council, which dealt with the objections raised by property-owners, and the Sixth District, which had the authority to execute the expropriations, had mistreated him and tried to stall the construction. A member of the State Council blamed him, as he recounted in his book, for trying to rob the landowners.³²⁴ In Gavand’s account, the authorities’ negative attitude against his cases largely resulted from the intentions of the members of the Sixth District municipal council, who were after the expropriated lands for themselves—another point for the importance of personal networks, or in this case, the lack of them. He wrote, “Expropriations made for the municipality are realized extremely quickly. Their prices were not even close to what I had been paying. Lands are transferred to the municipality’s property without the full payment. People whose lands are expropriated are forced to run after their

³²³ TNA, BT 31/30930/13396 (October 2, 1879).

³²⁴ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 27, n.10.

money.”³²⁵ Gavand even demanded damages, caused by the delays in the expropriations, to be paid by the municipality.³²⁶

However, accusations of profiteering were not unilateral. Gavand, too, was at the center of allegations of misconduct, especially coming from the members of the public. The claims focused on the expropriations for two streets in Galata, Kumru and Mertebani, which were, in their entirety, requested for expropriation by the company. In a complaint dated July 2, 1873, jointly written by the Armenian subjects of the Ottoman Empire, Manok, Babacan, Toros, Hacı Krikor, Karabet and Haçik, and addressed to the Sixth District, Gavand was accused of trying to expropriate lands that were not necessary for the construction of the Tünel, “just for his own benefit, rather than that of the public.”³²⁷ Unfortunately for the complainants, most of the expropriations went through, and they continued to seek compensations through individual petitions.³²⁸ In another instance, “Hacı Krikor and his companion,” whose property was saved from expropriations, complained that the construction was undermining the physical structure of a “han” they owned at the intersection of Kumru and Mertebani Streets.³²⁹ Another joint complaint was written by the residents of Billur, Kumru, and Söğüd Streets, who claimed that municipal workers began to tear down their lands before there was any formal decree of expropriation. They also complained that the workers used abusive language and threw their stuff to the street, that they were “insulted.”³³⁰ The aforementioned List of Hereditaments of Constantinople Land and Building Society shows that

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, 26, n.9.

³²⁶ BOA, ŞD 2405/23 (9 Cemazeyilahir 1290 [Agusut 4, 1873]).

³²⁷ BOA, ŞD 2407/23 (5 Zilhicce 1291 [January 13, 1875]).

³²⁸ BOA, ŞD 683/12 (23 Muharrem 1292 [March 1, 1875]).

³²⁹ BOA, ŞD 683/11 (27 Cemazeyilahir 1291 [August 11, 1874]).

³³⁰ BOA, ŞD 2876/13 (12 Cemazeyilahir 1290 [August 7, 1874]).

the land plots on these three streets were almost completely acquired by the biggest investors of the project.

While state documents reveal such cases of urban struggle connected to a change in the infrastructure, the most interesting instance was documented by Gavand himself, who recounts an act of resistance by some Muslim women against expropriation.

In Istanbul, there is a tradition [for men] of not entering the houses in which Turkish women reside. One of the landowners, in order to prevent the evacuation of his house, let the Turkish women into the house. Municipal authorities, responsible for the evacuation of the houses and handing them to me, did not show the courage to enter the place and to use force. Nevertheless, in order to perform their duties, they virtually sieged the house, preventing any food to enter. After a while, the Turkish women had to compromise and left the property.³³¹

Relying on their religious protection/restriction, these Muslim women that are found in Gavand's narrative *occupied* their property to prevent it to be sacrificed to the "universal mission of civilization and progress." They were not able to avert it, however, but they managed to stall the destruction, and manifested for the record the most striking case of resistance against the project's reshaping of urban space.

The properties of Muslims, Armenians, among people from other *millets* of the Ottoman Empire, were expropriated, demolished, reduced, as the owners resisted in different ways, from petitioning to occupying. The presence of these spaces in this formative moment of Pera, however, has largely been forgotten. This historiography has often overlooked the presence of lower classes and their spaces in the district. This view must be corrected by pointing out to the spaces that were replaced by the flow of European capital, which found its expression in the symbolic cosmopolitan spaces of Pera and the infrastructure that was designed to serve them. And, as we have seen at the opening of the chapter, the oblivion is even stronger when it comes to the cemeteries of the district.

³³¹ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 27, n.,12.

Pera's Funerary Infrastructures

Scrutinizing the cemeteries as the fundamental *infrastructure* of the late nineteenth-century Pera promises to offer valuable insights for both of these absences in the historiography. In the nineteenth century, cemeteries were not reserved solely for the dead. They were passageways and recreational zones for the lower classes,³³² but also sources of anxiety about hygiene and security. Their elimination from the urban centers, or, their material submission to the cosmopolitan fabric, was immediately a matter of inclusion and exclusion, creation and destruction.

In this remaining section of this chapter, the material impact of the Tünel on the cemeteries of Pera will be traced. In so doing, the discursive genealogies that affected the spaces of the dead in the late nineteenth century will also be explored. I will discuss how, in the 1860s and 1870s, the logics of capital, hygiene, security, recreation, and not the least, attitudes towards the spaces of the dead, came into a dialogue that ended up leaving an important mark in the urban fabric of Pera, and triggering a process that left a complete oblivion on present-day Istanbulites on how their modern lives were actually built over the spaces of the dead.³³³

During the early modern period, European visitors who had commented on the cemeteries in Pera took note of their presence within the outskirts of the “city,” which, for them, meant the other side of the Golden Horn. Until the late eighteenth century, most of the European cities had

³³² Using cemeteries as sites for recreation had a long precedence in the Ottoman and Islamic traditions. See Munir Maurice Cerasi, “Open space, water and trees in Ottoman urban culture in the XVIIIth-XIXth centuries,” *Environmental Design: Journal of the Islamic Environmental Design Research Centre 2* (1985): 37; Leor Havlavi, *Muhammed's Grave: Death Rites and the Making of Islamic Society* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007), 147-148.

³³³ Residents of Istanbul are not alone in this. Recycling cemeteries for urban development has manifestations around the former geographies of the Ottoman Empire and other parts of the world. For a particularly striking and multilayered example from Salonica from a later period, see Devin E. Naar, *Jewish Salonica: Between the Ottoman Empire and Modern Greece* (Stanford: California: Stanford University Press, 2016), 239-276. For the cases in Izmir, see Naar, 248; Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 85, n. 4.

quite intimate relations with their dead, thus the distance of Pera's cemeteries to the historical center of Istanbul was taken to be a novelty by the visitors.³³⁴ With the nineteenth century, this attitude was replaced by a fascination with the Turks' careless interaction with their dead. Two reasons might be given for this change of heart. The relocation of cemeteries from European urban centers began around this time, and the simultaneous urban growth of Pera and the northward shift of Istanbul's center put the cemeteries of Pera in an increasing proximity to the spaces of the living.³³⁵

These cemeteries were transformed, partially by giving their spaces to new gardens, one in 1870 and the other one in 1880. Urban historians tend to explain the emergence of two 'public'³³⁶ gardens in the district at the expense of two historical cemeteries as a straightforward result of the necessity of green and open spaces in a modernizing urban center.³³⁷ If one looks at the 1858-1860 map of d'Ostoya, commissioned by the Sixth District, however, it is obvious that such a straightforward explanation needs to be qualified, as the map is actually full of green spaces, comprised of those very cemeteries (fig. 9). Writing in 1864, Pierre de Tchihatchef (Tchihatcheff; Pyotr Chikhachyov), one of the founding and most celebrated figures of geology in the nineteenth century, had no words but admiration for the cemeteries of Istanbul, and especially for their rich flora:

³³⁴ Nicolas Vatin and Stéphane Yerasimos, *Les cimetières dans la ville: statut, choix et organisation des lieux d'inhumation dans Istanbul intra muros* (Istanbul: Institut français d'études anatoliennes, Georges Dumézil, 2001), 10.

³³⁵ One should also point out to the Orientalist convention of the 'fatalistic Oriental,' which motivated the Western observers to exaggerate this closeness of two worlds, the living and the dead.

³³⁶ The gardens were publicized as "jardin public" in French—the lingua franca of Pera and of the 'Westernized' communities across the empire. But they were not *public gardens* per se, as even though they were owned and administered by the local municipality, they had an entrance fee.

³³⁷ Akın, *Galata ve Pera*, 264; Çelik, *Remaking of Istanbul*, 40-41.

These green trees play a very important role in the entire Orient and cannot be ignored as they are constitutive parts of the region's flora. Visitors to these little forests can never forget the vision of these ceremonial and melancholic cypress trees that nestle the living and the houses of the dead. I am speaking of nestling, for cemeteries located at the heart of Eastern cities are favored for promenading by the locales... Who among us have not heard the beautiful cemeteries of Pera, called the Grands-Champs des Morts and the Petits-Champs des Morts, or the magnificent cemetery of Üsküdar, which by itself is a small forest? ... Muslim cemeteries are covered with a lush carpet, thanks to the wide spaces left for nature; there the botanist can classify plants, made especially alluring by emotions emanating from being in such a place. As a natural scientist, my frequent promenades in the cemeteries of Istanbul are among the most cherished moments of my life.³³⁸

Similarly, contemporary accounts of the social life in the cemeteries of Pera depict a picture of a diverse scene, populated by kids and adults, women and men, animals and humans, the living and the dead. The famous Italian novelist Edmondo de Amicis described the scene in the Petits-Champs des Morts with the following words:

Footpaths wind in and out among the graves and trees, crossing and recrossing one another in all directions from one end of the cemetery to the other. A Turk seated in the shade smokes tranquilly; boys run about and chase each other among the tombs; here and there cows are grazing, and a multitude of turtle-doves bill and coo among the branches of the cypress trees; groups of veiled women pass from time to time; and through the leaves and branches glimpses are caught of the blue waters of the Golden Horn streaked with long white reflections from the minarets of Stambul.³³⁹

Similar accounts of *multipurpose* utilization were evident for cemeteries of various religious groups across the empire. Historian Devin Naar, for example, points out that the Jewish cemetery of Salonica served as “a grazing pasture for farm animals, a hangout for transients and squatters, prostitutes and teenage lovers, a battlefield for Jewish and Christian children engaged in rock fights, the site of several suicides, and a center for hashish trade.”³⁴⁰ Finally, writing in the 1880s,

³³⁸ Pierre de Tchihatchef (Tchihatcheff; Chikhachyov), *Istanbul ve Boğaziçi*, ed. Hamdi Can Tuncer, trans. Ali Berktaş (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2000 [1864]), 112-113.

³³⁹ Edmondo de Amicis, *Constantinople* (New York; London: Merrill & Baker, 1896), 92-93.

³⁴⁰ Naar, *Jewish Salonica*, 243.

the prominent Austrian city-planner and architectural critic Camillo Sitte, used the “greeneries” of Istanbul as a counter-example to what he saw as the ills of modern city-building in Europe.

There is greenery everywhere, so that amidst the tangle of bazaars and houses, one always has the sensation of being out-of-doors. In each case, the vegetation blends readily, picturesquely, and perfectly into the panorama of plazas and streets: it nowhere interrupts. That everywhere since time immemorial vegetation grew naturally and was removed only when it disturbed the effect; where it has remained, however, it is right, natural and perfect.³⁴¹

Sitte’s ahistorical romanticism towards Istanbul’s flora notwithstanding, all of these remarks make it abundantly clear that the lack of European-style gardens did not necessarily translate into lack of green spaces. Analyzing the transformation of Pera’s cemeteries in the second half of the nineteenth century, it is thus difficult to be convinced by the alleged objective necessity of green spaces as recreational zones. One needs to ask which sorts of spaces were seen to be qualified as legitimately recreational and green. Thus, this was at the same time a conceptual problem with respect to how an urban ‘natural’ space would look like, and whether a cemetery would be considered as one.

There was a strong allusion in the press to the public necessity of green spaces, differentiated by their controlled nature, order, and organized entertainment, from the already existing green spaces in the district. In a piece published in *Journal de Constantinople*, dated January 18, 1860, dreams of a “European-like garden,” exemplified in the famous gardens of Paris, were balanced out with realistic expectations:

In Europe, for example, every city has its public promenade, just like it has a church, a municipal palace, and a marketplace. These promenades are not only hygienic, they are also beneficial for social morals: they bring people together, make them more human and civilized... After all, it is not a Bois de Boulogne that we expect, but why cannot we have a clean and orderly garden?³⁴²

³⁴¹ Sitte, *City Planning*, 184.

³⁴² “Chronique Locale,” *Journal de Constantinople Écho d’Orient* 1142, January 18, 1860.

As we see here, even the alleged necessity of green spaces was expressed through a complex narrative, compounded of discourses of public hygiene and morals. In this, it was easily connected to the debate over cemeteries, which have been going on both in Europe and in the Ottoman Empire for some time. In these discussions, cemeteries were mostly tied to discussions of hygiene especially concerning the spread of diseases. Proponents of one of the two competing theories regarding the spread of disease, “miasmatism,” argued that the poisonous gases that caused the diseases have resulted from unhygienic conditions mostly of graveyards and sewers. This theory was not uncontested, as its opponents rather proposed—and eventually proved—that diseases spread not through miasmas in the air but rather through bodily contagion.³⁴³ Nevertheless, miasmatic theories did influence the way in which policymakers and public in Europe perceived cemeteries for long. Centuries-old spaces of the dead were subjected to new regulatory practices with the urban reforms starting in the early nineteenth century, and to their ultimate relocation outside of city centers.³⁴⁴ In the Ottoman Empire, the same discussion was quite lively throughout the century as well, and it was intertwined with questions of urban reform, free trade, and national security.³⁴⁵

In Pera, concern over cemeteries as health hazards became increasingly vocal by the 1850s. There were sanitary reports published in newspapers, raising the issue of cemeteries as one of the most important areas required for improvement. As the discourse of public hygiene came to be the dominant one with respect to both cemeteries and—the lack of—gardens, the former was seen by

³⁴³ David Inglis, “Sewers and Sensibilities: The Bourgeois Faecal Experience in the Nineteenth-Century City,” in *The City and the Senses*, ed. Alexander Cowan and Jill Steward (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 115.

³⁴⁴ Peter Thorsheim, “The Corpse in the Garden: Burial, Health, and The Environment in Nineteenth-Century London,” *Environmental History* 16, no. 1 (January 2011): 38-68.

³⁴⁵ Birsen Bulmuş, *Plague, Quarantines and Geopolitics in the Ottoman Empire* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), 131-152.

most as a natural ground for which the latter to be built upon. *Journal de Constantinople* mentioned in 1858 that it had been three years since a plan to carry cemeteries “at a suitable distance from the city,” to be replaced by “a public promenade, which the need is so keenly felt,” was put forth, to no avail.³⁴⁶ The author was correct. In fact, as early as 1853, foreign embassies located in Istanbul were notified that the burials of non-Muslims in the cemeteries of Pera were to be ceased, and the existing tombs were to be relocated to a larger cemetery. The official reason was “the great number of passersby and limited space in the cemeteries.” And the official communication also mentioned that the former spaces of cemeteries were to be used as “recreation sites for the public.”³⁴⁷ The article in *Journal de Constantinople*, after stressing the delay of this transformation, expressed its hopes that the recent establishment of the Sixth District in 1856 would have a positive impact on the advancement of the project.

Over the years, similar accounts of complaints from the cemeteries within the district continued to be vocalized in district’s newspapers, tied to the necessity of “green spaces.” Even though there were several decrees passed in the 1850s and 1860s that banned new burials in the cemeteries of Pera,³⁴⁸ their relocation began in the final years of 1860s, and only after one of the deadliest disasters took the Ottoman capital city to its knees.

1866 International Sanitary Conference: The Global Making of Local Spaces

When the first news of a cholera outbreak reached to Istanbul from Egypt and Hijaz in the spring of 1865, the reaction was slow. And when Istanbul had its first victims in July, the newspapers were reporting that the situation was not very serious. However large parts of the

³⁴⁶ “Nouvelles et faits divers,” *Journal de Constantinople Écho d’Orient* 897, April 3, 1858.

³⁴⁷ Masayaki Ueno, “Urban Politics in 19th-Century Istanbul: The Case of the Armenian Cemetery in Beyoğlu”, in *Human Mobility and Multiethnic Coexistence in Middle Eastern Urban Societies*, ed. Hidemitsu Kuroki (Tokyo: ILCAA, 2015), 87.

³⁴⁸ Ueno, “Urban Politics,” 85-91.

capital city's population fell victim to cholera in a short period of time. By September of the same year, those who got affected by the disease were more than ten thousand people, and the death toll reached five thousand.³⁴⁹ The eventual estimate of the deceased was close to thirty thousand people.³⁵⁰

The international community was alert to such global threats from earlier cholera outbreaks. The spread of steam power and railroads triggered the perception of a “shrinking and boundless world,” which made the European powers increasingly feel “exposed and vulnerable” to biological threats coming from the outside.³⁵¹ This led to the convention of series of International Sanitary Conferences during the second half of the nineteenth century, the first being the Paris Conference in 1851, bringing together not only scientists but also official delegations of partnering countries. In the outbreak of 1865, the fact that cholera hit the Ottoman Empire caused significant worry among international actors, not only because of the empire's sheer size but especially because hundreds of thousands of pilgrims flocking to the Hijaz made the contamination risk very high. As Istanbul was one of the main gateways for the pilgrims commuting to and from the Hijaz, it was also thought to be under greater risk, and subjected to closer scrutiny.³⁵²

The 3rd International Sanitary Conference convened under these conditions in the Imperial High School of Galatasaray, at the heart of Pera, in 1866.³⁵³ Conference minutes show that

³⁴⁹ Orhan Koloğlu, “Osmanlı Basınında 1865 Kolera Salgını, İstanbul Sağlık Konferansı ve Mirza Malkom Han,” *Osmanlı Bilimi Araştırmaları* 6, no. 2 (2005): 139-150.

³⁵⁰ Edhem Eldem, *İstanbul'da Ölüm: Osmanlı – İslam Kültüründe Ölüm ve Ritüelleri* (Istanbul: Osmanlı Bankası Arşiv ve Araştırma Merkezi, 2005), 204.

³⁵¹ Valeska Huber, “The Unification of the Globe by Disease? The International Sanitary Conferences on Cholera, 1851-1894,” *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 2 (2006): 453–476.

³⁵² Nermin Ersoy, Yüksel Güngör, and Aslıhan Akpınar, “International Sanitary Conferences from the Ottoman Perspective (1851–1938),” *Hygiea Internationalis: An Interdisciplinary Journal for the History of Public Health*, no.1 (2011): 56.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, 59.

Ottoman state officials were under attack by foreign representatives for the “unhealthy local conditions,” which were not seen as the sole reason for “diffusion of the disease,” but thought to “intensify cholera epidemics.”³⁵⁴ Especially condemned were “breathing foul air, drinking impure water, and living upon soils impregnated with decomposing organic and especially excrementitious matters.” Warnings against “foul air” and “excrementitious matters” solidified the pressure on cemeteries, which were already used as grounds not only for burials but also for the dumping of organic waste.³⁵⁵

With the new impetus given by the deadly disease and international pressure, the Sixth District finally put its belated plans into action as it expropriated a portion of the Grands-Champs des Morts. In 1869, a new law urging the relocation of cemeteries out of city centers, with the exception of the cemetery of Eyüp, was passed.³⁵⁶ In the meantime, foreign and non-Muslim communities of the district were granted burial zones in the Tatavla neighborhood, situated further north of Pera. While the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate agreed to this move, it was not easy for them to abandon their rights on the former ground, a problem that became apparent when the Sixth District’s plan to turn the space into a “jardin public” was heard. The patriarch’s repeated pleas to the authorities left unanswered, however, and the municipality went on with its plans of transformation.³⁵⁷

³⁵⁴ TNA, FO. 881/1475 (October 3, 1866).

³⁵⁵ While connections between warnings of the conference and the transformation of the cemeteries of Istanbul are clear, I could not find any decision taken by the conference to suggest the removal of cemeteries from the residential areas of the city, either in the Ottoman or in the British archives. That was a claim repeated in the historiography, lastly in İlhan Tekeli, *Istanbul’un Planlanması ve Gelişmesinin Öyküsü* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2013), 80. 1865 epidemic also prompted the authorities in Izmir to move the cemeteries outside the urban centers. Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 84.

³⁵⁶ “Règlement sur l’inhumation dans la ville de Constantinople, ainsi que dans la banlieu et dans les villages du Bosphore,” *La Turquie Journal National*, March 19, 1869.

³⁵⁷ Ueno, “Urban Politics,” 90.

In May 1869, the Jardin du Taxim was finally opened, as the municipality's overdue response to pleas by the community leaders for "European-style green spaces." *La Turquie* informed its readers that those enjoying this first Jardin in the town were "the most elegant people, not only of Pera but also of other districts."³⁵⁸

Whereas new burials were banned in the district, and non-Muslim cemeteries began to be relocated—albeit not without controversy—to the new spaces designated outside Pera, Muslim burial grounds within the district continued to be sources of contention between the public and local authorities. One important nuance was that there was no new ground designated for Muslim burials outside Pera, even though burying on the old ones were prohibited. The work by Demirakın and Ueno on non-Muslim cemeteries around this time show that Armenian and Greek Patriarchates were instrumental in negotiating with state and local authorities about these radical changes in the sacred geographies of the non-Muslim communities in Istanbul, whose interests were protected by European powers, at least on paper.³⁵⁹ The lack of such official representation in local and international politics resulted in the authorities' failure to designate a new ground for the relocation of Küçük Kabristan and other Muslim burial grounds in Pera. As new burials to these cemeteries were prohibited but there was no effort for an *en masse* relocation, this period witnessed an increasing number of documents that attest to the level of controversy arising from these lands. The nature of the controversy was not limited to hygienic concerns, but it was perhaps more related to economic ambitions. Members of the public wrote several petitions throughout the last decades

³⁵⁸ "Chronique," *La Turquie*, November 25, 1870.

³⁵⁹ Ueno, "Urban Politics"; N. Işık Demirakın, "Expropriation as a modernizing tool in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire: the case of cemeteries in Beyoğlu," *International Journal of Turkish Studies* 18.1/2 (2012): 1-15. See also Demirakın's unpublished dissertation, Demirakın, "Sixth Municipal District."

of the nineteenth century, complaining about the sale of land plots and trees, both from Küçük Kabristan and Ayaspaşa (part of the Grands-Champs), two Muslim cemeteries of the district.³⁶⁰

State authorities had mixed responses towards such claims. On the one hand, there was the repeated rhetoric of “protection of Muslim cemeteries.” As a response to one petition by the residents of Kasımpaşa district, requesting the walling-up of the Küçük Kabristan, the president of the municipal council Kamil Bey wrote that “[before] the start of municipal reforms, the cemetery in question was in a very bad shape, its lands are being sold by tricksters like grasshoppers, and such a dire state can be prevented by walling up the ground.”³⁶¹ The reach of these complaints was not limited to the local governance, and they found an audience in the uppermost circles of Ottoman society, manifested in a letter addressed to Pertevniyal Valide Sultan, mother of Sultan Abdülaziz, written by the Grand Vizier Fuad Pasha, one of the famous statesmen of the Tanzimat period. In his letter, Fuad Pasha responded to the rumors about the damage to Muslim cemeteries within the boundaries of Sixth District by the actions of the municipality. He rejected such accusations, saying, “On the contrary, cemeteries had previously been turned into dumping grounds (*mezbelelik*); but now [thanks to the municipality] they are being enclosed by walls and put in a protected and respected state.”³⁶²

The reality on the ground was contradicting such statements, however, as cemetery spaces constantly shrank; complaints and petitions continued to hoard the authorities. In March 1865, *Journal de Constantinople* reported that the Petits-Champs des Morts was now surrounded by walls from the north, in the Tepebaşı side, but its Kasımpaşa side was still wide open.³⁶³

³⁶⁰ For one early and one late example, see BOA, İ.DH 443/29297 (20 Safer 1276 [September 18, 1859]); BOA, Y.A.HUS 312/44 (6 Cemazeyilevvel 1312 [November 5, 1894]).

³⁶¹ BOA, MVL 835/120 (7 Recep 1276 [January 30, 1860]).

³⁶² AK, PER.VAL.SUL 3277 (27 Cemazeyilahir 1279 [December 20, 1862]).

³⁶³ “Chronique,” *Journal de Constantinople* 4616, March 3, 1865.

One can see these ongoing tensions over the cemetery as part of a straightforward dichotomy between two logics struggling over urban commons: defending the public good by asking the protection of a space used as a common land on the one hand, and pursuing privatization of space by opening the cemetery to land sales and disregarding its protection so that it would quickly disappear, on the other. However, taking the physical and social topography into account presents a more complex picture than a simple juxtaposition of *commons versus enclosure* would posit.

Cemetery as a Porous Border between Two Emergent Social Worlds

The Petits-Champs des Morts stretched all the way from the hills of Pera to the shores of Kasımpaşa, which was situated on the Golden Horn, further west of Galata. The cemetery did not only mark the border but also provided an easy passage between these areas, evidenced by the French author Théophile Gautier's visit to Kasımpaşa via passing through the Petits-Champs.³⁶⁴

By the nineteenth century, Kasımpaşa was defined by the presence of the growing Imperial Arsenal (Tersane-i Amire) and the Naval Ministry, and a social structure that was composed of the growing populations of working class and urban poor.³⁶⁵ While the district had strong physical ties to Pera and Galata, until the early 1870s it was out of the Sixth District's purview. With the first municipal law that divided the Ottoman capital into fourteen districts and gave Galata and Pera the first municipal governance, Kasımpaşa, along with Hasköy, was designated as the Ninth District, yet was not granted an administrative body, as the Sixth District was the only functioning district municipality for a decade.³⁶⁶

³⁶⁴ Gautier, *Constantinople of Today*, 87-88.

³⁶⁵ Şennur Sezer, *Kasımpaşa* (Istanbul: Heyamola Yayınları, 2009), 127.

³⁶⁶ Ergin, *Mecelle*, 1307-1310.

With the Sixth District's reforms in infrastructure and public health, the lack of municipal attention to Kasımpaşa became a growing concern. The district was one of the major sites of cholera during the 1865 outbreak, and its hygienic problems were evidenced in the newspapers of Pera and Istanbul, perhaps with a significant degree of exaggeration.³⁶⁷ With such accounts becoming widespread, the Petits-Champs's liminal topography between Pera and Kasımpaşa came to receive increasingly unfavorable attention. Of course, the cemetery was a liminal space in its own right, functioning as a threshold between the world of the living and the world of the dead.³⁶⁸ But that alone fails to explain the sentiments of Baron de Fontmagne, a French visitor to the city, who wrote: "[From Tepebaşı] one hears the jingling of chains from the arsenal, caused by [worker] prisoners wandering with iron collars chained to their feet."³⁶⁹ And even those who were not chained might have made the Pera society nervous, as the 1860s and 1870s saw constant agitation and strikes on the part of the arsenal workers.³⁷⁰ The aforementioned journal article from 1865, which attested to the absence of walls in the Kasımpaşa side of the cemetery, pointed out to potential security hazards of this lack.³⁷¹ As will be discussed in chapter 4 in more detail, it seems that the growing district of Kasımpaşa, with its unquestionably working-class character, combined with its lack of municipal oversight, caused anxiety among the residents of Pera at the top of the

³⁶⁷ Koloğlu, "1865 Kolera Salgını," 140.

³⁶⁸ English traveler Julia Pardoe wrote on the social and romantic life pursued along the Petits-Champs: "...many a fond couple wander away amid the graves, and sit hand in hand upon some lettered stone, to exchange their vows, and to lay plans for the future on the very threshold of the past!" Julia Pardoe, *The beauties of the Bosphorus* (London: Virtue and Co., 1839), 132.

³⁶⁹ Quoted in Sermet Muhtar Alus, "Belediye Bahçeleri: Tepebaşı Belediye Bahçesi," *İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, ed. Reşat Ekrem Koçu (Istanbul: İstanbul Ansiklopedisi ve Neşriyat, 1968), 2455.

³⁷⁰ Kadir Yıldırım, *Osmanlı'da İşçiler (1870-1922): Çalışma Hayatı, Örgütler, Grevler*, (Istanbul: İletişim, 2013), 209-211.

³⁷¹ "Chronique," *Journal de Constantinople* 4616, March 3, 1865.

hill, who were fashioning a different form of urban life than the one they imagined to exist down the hill, with chained prisoners, striking workers, and open sewers.

Finally, in November 1871, Kasımpaşa, together with Hasköy and Beşiktaş, were put under the jurisdiction of the Sixth District. *La Turquie* celebrated this news, arguing that the first thing to be done by the municipality under Kadri Bey's command, was "cleaning" Kasımpaşa and Hasköy, which were seen as the "permanent homes of the epidemic." Tensions of municipal governance were also stressed, however, as the newspaper raised concerns on the potential additional burden that would be put on the Sixth District with these new responsibilities.³⁷²

One should analyze the liminal place the Petits-Champs held within the larger urban geography keeping in mind this problematic relationship between Pera and Kasımpaşa. While it is true that encircling cemetery spaces with walls were meant for their protection and were supposedly for the good of the communities that were using them, in the case of Tepebaşı, it also meant sealing off the mobility between two adjacent districts with a widening difference in social welfare and lifestyles. Perhaps only in this way, one can make sense of a petition written by Kasımpaşa residents in 1856, asking for the termination of the construction of walls around the cemetery, as it would disrupt their mobility in the area.³⁷³

The liminal topography outlined so far was radically altered during the 1870s, and the prime mover of this change was the Tünel. The project's first impact on Pera's spaces of the dead came with the acquisition of the graveyard of the Galata Mevlevi Lodge in order to open ground for the construction of the funicular's Pera station. For Gavand, whose attempts to expropriate lands on the route of his project were extremely difficult from the very start, the hope to acquire

³⁷² "Chronique," *La Turquie* 252, November 25, 1871.

³⁷³ BOA, HR.MKT 40/199 (5 Zilhicce 1273 [July 27, 1857]).

the Mevlevi graveyard without a significant controversy was next to none. In his book, he succinctly wrote the potential troubles of expropriating a space of dead:

Among the lands that I needed for the construction of Pera station, one did not belong to the general expropriation list; and because of its special importance, I was required to act very carefully. This land was part of Téke cemetery needed for the station. In all civilized nations, and especially in Turkey, respect for the dead made it impossible to expropriate this cemetery that was next to the Galata Mevlevi Lodge. Many were quite certain that I would not be able to realize this expropriation. In fact, if it were possible to build the station anywhere else, I would have asked for that.³⁷⁴

According to Gavand, stakeholders in this case were the Sixth District, which “already expropriated many cemetery spaces and wanted this one for itself”; the sheik of the Galata Mevlevi Lodge, and the Ministry of Pious Foundations (Evkaf Nezareti), which claimed that the cemetery was under its jurisdiction.³⁷⁵ Gavand followed the suggestion of Süleyman Bey, the inspector engineer who was commissioned to the project by the government, to see Midhat Pasha, another prominent Ottoman statesman of the Tanzimat, and offered to directly pay him the expropriation fee, so that it could be used for “charity.” Midhat Pasha agreed to this proposal, and the cemetery was given to the Tünel company. This story told by Gavand is verified in the Ottoman archives. In fact, the official document states that the money Gavand promised to give was to be donated to the Orphan School (Daruşşafaka) and Imperial School of Fine Arts (Sanayi-i Nefîse-i Şahane Mektebi).³⁷⁶ Gavand’s gesture of gratitude to Midhat Pasha in his book’s acknowledgments, “for his energetic support to solve the most difficult case of expropriation,” is a further indication that the deal he finalized with Midhat was essential to continue the construction.³⁷⁷

³⁷⁴ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 28.

³⁷⁵ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 28.

³⁷⁶ BOA, A.}MKT.MHM 465/70 (10 Şaban 1290 [October 3, 1873]).

³⁷⁷ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 7.

The transformation of the cemetery of the lodge into a subway station did not go unnoticed by the Ottoman public. Galata Mevlevi Lodge had been built in 1491, as one of the earliest and most significant manifestations of Muslim presence in the city after the Ottoman conquest.³⁷⁸ Its cemetery had contained the bodies of dervish sheiks for around four centuries. The contemporary court chronicler Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi, complained about this in his *History*, just like he did for the destruction of the Genoese Walls. He gave a vivid account of how “Croatian workers, using their crowbars and huge pickaxes, broke the beautifully scripted and ornate gravestones, wrecked human bones.”³⁷⁹ According to Ahmed Lûtfî, the authorities were justified in their attempt to try to clean urban centers from graveyards, since Istanbul did not have any regulations on burial grounds before, as people buried their relatives on any little open space they found anywhere. But he was not happy with how this particular removal was handled, and how the authorities ignored the disrespect shown against these historically important graves. The newspaper *Levant Herald*, on the other hand, was extremely happy with this indirect outcome of the construction, as it maintained in its article on the Tünel’s opening to the “magical transformation of the site of the old Turkish cemetery, which, with its ruined tombs, had encumbered the land in front of the Dervish Lodge.”³⁸⁰

³⁷⁸ Ekrem Işın, “Galata Mevlevihanesi,” *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1992), 362-363. See also Raymond Lifchez, “The Lodges of Istanbul,” in *The Dervish Lodge: Architecture, Art and Sufism in Ottoman Turkey*, ed. Raymond Lifchez (Berkeley; Oxford: University of California Press: 1992), 73- 129.

³⁷⁹ Gülersoy cites this passage in relation to the destruction of the Petits-Champs des Morts. But actually, Ahmed Lûtfî was complaining about the harm done to the cemetery of the lodge. See Çelik Gülersoy, *Tepebaşı Bir Meydan Savaşı* (Istanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 1993), 22; Ahmed Lûtfî, *Vak’a-Nüvis Ahmed Lûtfî Efendi Tarihi* v. 15, ed. Münir Aktepe (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1993), 14-15.

³⁸⁰ “Le ‘Metropolitan Railway,’” *Levant Herald*, 21.

The Debris over the Graves

The Tünel's most tangible impact in terms of Pera's funerary infrastructure, however, was not the destruction of the lodge's cemetery. This major impact had not been planned by Gavand or the other stakeholders, and rather was forced upon them by the growing material mass of the Tünel's construction. The debris of the construction, taken from the steep topography of Pera, mixed with the material remains of the district's Genoese past, corpses and graves; expropriated and demolished houses of its much more recent residents; dug out by Muslim, Kurdish, Armenian, and occasional Italian workers, and carried by the mules of Persian muleskinners, became a major source of concern for the residents as well as the policymakers.

When the construction began, and soil started to be excavated, the debris stayed right next to the first construction site in Azapkapı for some time. In the meantime, Gavand was trying to get permissions to put the debris in a more permanent place. His first attempt was directed towards the Şehremaneti, with the aim of dumping the debris either somewhere in Kasımpaşa or in Tepebaşı. The Şehremaneti directed Gavand to the Finance Ministry (Maliye Nezareti). Gavand's appeal to the ministry in 1872 shows that he adopted an economic language to convince the authorities, as he proposed to "dump the debris on the upper end of the Küçük Kabristan so that it would be leveled with Kabristan Street [in Tepebaşı], and its estate value would be doubled."³⁸¹ It took some time, as it usually did with the Ottoman bureaucracy, for Gavand to be granted the permissions. But as the debris piled over in Azapkapı continued to disturb residents, Gavand was finally allowed to move the debris to Tepebaşı in August 1873.³⁸²

³⁸¹ BOA, ŞD 253/9 (12 Şaban 1289 [April 21, 1872]).

³⁸² Engin, *Tünel*, 54.

It seems strange that dumping the debris of an infrastructural construction over a Muslim cemetery did not create much controversy among the Muslim residents of Istanbul. As has been pointed out, cemeteries were already controversial spaces in the late nineteenth-century Istanbul in hygienic, religious, and social terms, and it would not be difficult to assume that such controversy would have been manifested in the case of Tepebaşı. After all, if Gavand was right and “respect for the dead” was an essential quality of the Turks, how can one explain the overall neglect shown to the authorities’ decision to cover one part of Küçük Kabristan with industrial waste?

While there is no doubt that the dumping ground was within the boundaries of the cemetery,³⁸³ probably because of the steep topography of the cemetery and its very close proximity to the growing urban center of Pera, its uppermost end had already begun to lose its sacrosanct nature. We know that the cemetery itself had been used as a promenade in the nineteenth century, both by lower and upper classes. Promenaders, as well as regular passersby, should have brought a degree of waste into the cemetery. Indeed, documents from the Ottoman and British archives suggest that the area was sometimes referred to as a “wasteland” prior to the authorities’ decision with respect to the Tünel’s debris.³⁸⁴ Thus what we can infer is that Gavand’s proposal was not seen as a total desecration of a sacred Muslim cemetery, a process already begun by Muslims and non-Muslims from different walks of life who used the spaces of the dead as public promenades, low-class joints, and occasional wastelands. And when there was an opportunity to increase the land value of the surroundings by further polluting a cemetery; authorities did not refrain from it. In fact, the district’s first cadastral survey, completed in 1876, showed this newly created terrain

³⁸³ Count G. D’Ostoya, *Plan Général de Galata, Pera et Pancaltı, 1858-1860* (Istanbul, 1860) [Repository: Atatürk Kitaplığı, SALT Research]. See figure 9.

³⁸⁴ BOA, İ.DH 443/29297 (20 Safer 1276 [September 18, 1859]); TNA, T 1/16121 (May 6, 1879).

after the dumping of Tünel's debris as "Place Abdul Aziz," separate than the rest of the cemetery—a short-lived celebration of the creation of this new land in honor of the highest authority in the empire.³⁸⁵

It was then the soil and the dirt of a modern infrastructure project, together with changing attitudes about the spaces of the dead and what was considered to be a "green space" that reshaped Tepebaşı's topography. A combination of these factors laid the grounds used for the emblematic venue of Pera's late nineteenth-century cosmopolitan character, over one of the symbolic spaces of its waning past, which hitherto belonged to the dead and their living companions.

Cosmopolitan Space, Picturesque Vista: Jardin des Petits-Champs

Ahmet Cemil asked for permission, as he preferred this secret and half-dark side to that lighted and crowded place, wishing to contemplate in front of the scenery of the Golden Horn and Istanbul under the enlightened sky.³⁸⁶

That lighted and crowded place was in the Tepebaşı Garden, and so was the secret and half-dark place that Ahmet Cemil had preferred. The famous protagonist of one of the foundational texts of the Turkish novel, Ahmet Cemil was an aspiring author and a member of the developing and increasingly commercial literary scene of the late nineteenth-century Ottoman capital.³⁸⁷ On that night, depicted in the opening scene of *Mai ve Siyah*, the seminal novel of Halit Ziya (Uşaklıgil), several authors were having a festive dinner, discussing literary trends and gossiping about other authors, in the garden at the heart of Pera. Ahmed Cemil got disillusioned from this atmosphere, picked a dark spot in the garden, from which he could watch the view of Golden Horn and Istanbul,

³⁸⁵ AK, Hrt.Gec. 1963. See fig. 10.

³⁸⁶ Halit Ziya (Uşaklıgil), *Mai ve Siyah* (İstanbul: Muhtar Halit Kitaphane, 1330[1916 or 1917]), 16-17.

³⁸⁷ Zeynep Seviner, "Blue Dreams, Black Disillusions: Literary Market and Modern Authorship in the Late Ottoman Empire" (PhD diss., University of Washington, 2015).

under an “enlightened sky.” We can imagine what Ahmet Cemil saw to be the landmarks of Ottoman and Islamic Istanbul: Bayezid Tower, Süleymaniye Mosque, New (Valide) Mosque, Sultan Ahmed (Blue) Mosque, Hagia Sophia (Ayasofya) Mosque, and the Topkapı Palace, the former seat of the Ottoman sultans.

Of course, Ahmet Cemil was a fictional character, but his fascination with this view was very real and widespread. During the long nineteenth century, travelers admired this scenery of Istanbul proper, soon to be called the “Historic Peninsula,” available to be seen from the different points of Pera that looked southward over Golden Horn. This was very much a public(ized) admiration as well. Many travel accounts recommended various spots to enjoy the wondrous oriental sights delivered by Istanbul’s historic center, as we have seen in the previous chapter with the case of the Galata Tower. And the upper corners of Küçük Kabristan proved to be among the primary places to experience that scenery. This feature with no doubt played an important role in the cemetery’s use as a popular promenade by the residents of Pera. Hotels built nearby advertised this view extensively, and from the 1850s onwards, several investors and policymakers tried harder to turn the view from the Petits-Champs into more profit, not solely relying on building hotels or residences nearby, but by offering plans to make a more organized recreation space out of the cemetery. In the transformation of Tepebaşı, then, this beauty played an important role.

One must question the naturalness of this beauty, however. Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, in her seminal work *Constantinopolis/Istanbul*, shows the complexities embedded in the construction of Istanbul’s symbolic landscape in the early years of the Ottoman rule. This construction was realized not only through architecture but also through certain visual techniques of representation in the works of European and Ottoman artists, commissioned by the sultan. An image of the Islamic city came to be in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as “the creation of monumental

panoramas of the Ottoman capital [coincided] with the perfection of the city's monumental prospect, marked by cascades of domes and a multiplicity of minarets."³⁸⁸

The practice of looking at Istanbul and depicting it as a quintessentially Islamic city was thus not a new practice in the nineteenth century, and rather a carefully curated experience the foundations of which were laid down in the wake of the Ottoman capture of the city in the fifteenth century. Nevertheless, the practice gained new layers of meaning during the nineteenth century, which were formed through colonial and semi-colonial encounters of Westerners with non-Western cities. Here it is helpful to refer to Edward Said's critique of orientalism, which has proved to be particularly useful for those who worked on colonial urbanism and technologies of representation. Scholars have shown that city planning, various forms of visual representation from orientalist paintings to world exhibits, and nascent tourism industry worked in tandem to form and sustain a dichotomous and static image of Oriental and Occidental parts of non-Western cities. This separation was inherently embedded within a whole array of other discursive dichotomies that underlined the existence of two mutually exclusive spaces, peoples, cultures, of order versus disorder, modern versus traditional, new versus historical, civilized versus savage, sanitary versus unsanitary.³⁸⁹ As Brian McLaren argues, modern tourism, in particular, the emergence of which coincided with forms of modern infrastructure, propagated an obsession with authenticity, made possible by the "objectivization and historicization of the 'native,'"³⁹⁰ and in our case, native

³⁸⁸ Çiğdem Kafesçioğlu, *Constantinopolis/Istanbul: Cultural Encounter, imperial vision, and the Construction of the Ottoman capital* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2009), 168.

³⁸⁹ Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin Books, 2003); Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), esp. chapter 1.

³⁹⁰ Brian L. McLaren. *Architecture and Tourism in Italian Colonial Libya: An Ambivalent Modernism* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2006), 5.

spaces. Picturesque representations of historical sites and cities, which became very fashionable in the nineteenth century, should then be understood within this context of orientalist dual imagery.

As Shirine Hamadeh posits, this imagery required an outsider perspective, so that a city could be assigned the qualification of “traditional city” from without.³⁹¹ This perspective was expressed eloquently by the French author Théophile Gautier:

From the promenade of the Little Field [Petits-Champs], one beholds a wonderful spectacle. On the other side of the Golden Horn, Constantinople glows and sparkles, like the crown of carbuncles of an oriental emperor. The minarets blaze with rows of lamps from all their galleries; and from spire to spire verses of the Koran gleam in letters of flame,—seeming, in the distance, as if written upon the azure page of the firmament, by the hand of Omnipotence. Saint Sophia, Sultan-Achmet, Yeni-Djami, the Suleimanieh, and all the long line of temples of Allah which rise between Serai-Bournou [the Seraglio point] and the hills of Eyoub, blaze with resplendent light, and pronounce with tongues of fire the formula of Islam. The crescent of the moon, attended by a single star, seems to emblazon the insignia of the empire upon the unfurled standard of the sky.

The waters of the bay reflect and multiply these myriads of lights, and seem to pour a stream of molten jewels. It is said, that in a dream there is always an element or portion of reality; but here the reality surpasses the dream! The tales of the “Arabian Nights,” offer nothing more magical or fairy-like; and the treasures of Haroun-al-Raschid would pale, beside this blazing and colossal casket, of a league in length!³⁹²

What Ahmed Cemil chose to contemplate against, and what Gautier saw over the Golden Horn, the reality of which “surpasses the dreams” and the tales of the Arabian Nights, then, was not a random image, it was rather a manifestation of the Islamic iconography, with all the features conceivable to a trained eye. From the vantage points like the Petits-Champs, it was expected that Istanbul proper, or the ‘old-city,’ was to present itself with all of its historical grandiosity, its oriental manners and its Islamic aesthetics. As Eldem notes, “The ‘old-city’ designation came to

³⁹¹ Shirine Hamadeh, “Creating the Traditional City: A French Project” in *Forms of Dominance on the Architecture and Urbanism of the Colonial Enterprise* ed. Nezar AlSayyad (Aldershot: Avebury, 1992), 241-259.

³⁹² Gautier, *Constantinople of Today*, 96-97.

symbolize more than the purely historical. Underlying the epithet was the idea of obsolescence, stagnation, and backwardness as opposed to the dynamism of modernity and westernization.”³⁹³ The chaotic nature of an oriental city was only to be grasped, read, captured and imagined from afar. Such scenery was the best way for European visitors to recreate the oriental Istanbul that they have already known from the orientalist archive they were all familiar with. Visitors were often advised not to look at the city from too close, as it would have made the voyeur lose its perspective and miss the real picturesque beauty of this oriental capital.³⁹⁴ In the words of Théophile Gautier, “The dazzling mirage presented by Constantinople at a distance was rapidly vanishing, Paradise was turning into a slough, poetry into prose, and I asked myself, with a feeling of melancholy, how these ugly hovels could possibly assume at a distance such a seductive aspect, such a tender and vaporous color.”³⁹⁵

When they followed this advice and chose to stay in Pera, visitors were occasionally dismissive of the district for being an “inauthentic” and “low-quality replica” of the West, but they still continued to take residence in its hotels and enjoyed the vista in its gardens as it gave a familiar setting from where they could direct their gaze towards the “authentic” other.³⁹⁶ Thus the prevalence of this imagery in the visual culture of late Ottoman Istanbul, and the abundance of references to how Istanbul proper across the Golden Horn exhibited itself to the voyeurs in Pera must be seen as part of this wider phenomenon. It was no coincidence that the same decade

³⁹³ Eldem, “From Imperial to Peripheralized,” 204.

³⁹⁴ Joseph François Michaud and J.J. François Poujoulat, *Correspondance d'Orient: 1830-1831*, vol. 2 (Paris: N.J. Gregoir, V. Wouters et Ce, 1833), 146.

³⁹⁵ Théophile Gautier, *The Travels of Theophile Gautier*, vol. 3, ed. and trans. by F. C. de Sumichrast (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1912), 40.

³⁹⁶ Anna Bowman Dodd, *In the Palaces of the Sultan* (New York: Mead and Co, 1903), 384.

witnessed the Ottomans' first-time participation to world fairs with oriental self-representations,³⁹⁷ the Orient Express began its operation and initiated the first wave of mass tourism into the Ottoman heartlands,³⁹⁸ and a cemetery, noted with its vista of the Oriental Istanbul, was partially turned into a European-style garden. The garden itself became the heart of a quarter in Pera that was full of hotels and painting studios, both of which, in their own ways, depended on and reinforced the orientalist duality superimposed on Istanbul's visual geography.³⁹⁹

Hence the transformation of Tepebaşı from a burial and waste ground into a European-style garden was intelligible in the eyes of the authorities not only for the hygienic and security concerns, as well as class-based anxieties because of the proximity to Kasımpaşa, but also for the visual imprint the garden would leave on Istanbul's larger visual landscapes.⁴⁰⁰ The initial step towards this end, as we know, came five years later, when the Tünel's engineer Gavand, together with the president of the Sixth District Municipal Council Blacque Bey, convinced other authorities to dump the excavation debris of the Tünel on the Petits-Champs. This was only the first attempt of Blacque Bey to give Tepebaşı a gentrified view terrace and organized area of

³⁹⁷ Zeynep Çelik, *Displaying the Orient: Architecture of Islam at Nineteenth-century World's Fairs* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), 96-110. Ironically, the member of the Ottoman commission for 1873 Vienna Exhibition, Pierre Montani, proposed to include a small cemetery for the Ottoman pavilion, as an allusion to the Orientalist trope of Muslim graveyards. See Ersoy, *Architecture and the Late Ottoman*, 62.

³⁹⁸ Edward Henry Cookridge, *Orient Express, The Life and Times of the World's Most Famous Train* (New York: Random House, 1978).

³⁹⁹ Seza Sinanlar and Günkut Akın, "Pera'da resim üretim ortamı 1844-1916," *İtüdergisi/b sosyal bilimler* 5/1 (Aralık 2008): 48. Sibel Acar also mentions the connection between the construction of orientalist gaze on Istanbul and tourism, and points out the tendency for the guide books to recommend tourists to visit the Galata Tower in the first day of their sojourn in Istanbul. See Sibel Acar, "'Konstantinopolis Nasıl Görülür?' On Dokuzuncu Yüzyıl Seyahatnamelerinde ve Rehber Kitaplarında İstanbul," *İdealkent* 8, no. 22, (2017-2): 665-691.

⁴⁰⁰ Merik Birik passingly mentions the importance of the "panoramic vista" for the transformation of Pera's urban spaces, especially Şişhane, but falls short in questioning the structure and function of the panorama itself. See Merik Birik, "Kentsel Mekânın Değişim Sürecinde Transformasyon ve Deformasyon" (PhD diss., Mimar Sinan Güzel Sanatlar Üniversitesi, 2011), 81.

recreation. From the memoirs of Ahmet Fehim, one of the first Muslim stage actors of the Ottoman Empire, we learn that the construction of a theater was proposed by the municipality immediately after the debris was used to level the terrain in Tepebaşı. However, the money taken from the Metropolitan Railway Company was not enough to realize the project, which forced Blacque Bey to try a more radical measure. According to Ahmet Fehim, the municipality placed Roma people in the neighborhood, causing “discomfort” among the residents, and asked for their contributions for the construction of a theater and garden that would gentrify the quarter and force ‘gypsies’ out.⁴⁰¹

While no other source verifies the extent to which such measures were employed by the municipality, we know that Guatelli Pasha, the official music headmaster of Sultan Abdülaziz, had been granted the permission to build a theater hall and a garden in 1873 in Tepebaşı but his plans failed.⁴⁰² More important than the accuracy of Ahmet Fehim’s claims is what they reveal in terms of the nature of the transformation in the late nineteenth-century Pera imprinted in the minds of its contemporaries. Over and over again Tepebaşı was conceived as a “waste ground” in the language of the contemporaries. Hygienic and security problems the cemetery allegedly caused, dumping of Tünel’s debris, and finally the rumors of the placement of Gypsies in the neighborhood, all touched a chord among the wealthy residents and policymakers, and motivated them to take action for “beautifying” their district.

⁴⁰¹ Ahmet Fehim, *Ahmet Fehim Bey’in Hatıraları* (Istanbul: Tercüman, 1977), 21-22.

⁴⁰² In 1879, when Blacque Bey reinvigorated his attempts to build the garden, Guatelli Pasha’s permit from six years ago became part of the discussions. After deliberations among different state departments, he was given permission to build a “summer theater” at the corner the terrain next to the British Embassy. See BOA, ŞD 2896/26 (19 Zilkade 1296 [November 4, 1879]); BOA, ŞD 2423/1 (11 Muharrem 1297 [December 25, 1879]). See fig. 11. A theater at that spot was eventually built in the late 1880s, different than the one located at the center of the garden—“winter theater.” See Gülersoy, *Tepebaşı*, 81.

In 1879, Blacque Bey tried his chances once again to transform the spatial configuration of Tepebaşı. In his official application letter to the state authorities, he proposed three different logics for constructing a garden on top of a former cemetery. The first reason was quite familiar: the “waste ground” was causing the spread of diseases. In fact, Blacque Bey asserted, one person living in Glavany Street, which connected the Grand Rue de Péra and the Petits-Champs, very recently died of typhoid, and his suggestion was that untamed ground of the Petits-Champs was to be accused. The second reason was also familiar: With the reorganization of the dumping ground as a private garden, the municipality would increase its revenues—a perennial issue for the Sixth District. The last reason mentioned by Blacque Bey, however, was the most unusual one: “Since that place was a Muslim cemetery,” organizing it as a garden, he argued, would in fact prevent “the construction of buildings on top of the cemetery and its further use as a wasting ground that would offend the Muslim people.”⁴⁰³

So with a twist of argumentation, Blacque Bey presented this municipal works not as a threat to the Muslim heritage of Pera, but rather as its protection against other external factors. In a sense, this was a similar logic employed by Marie de Launay and his companions when they framed the destruction of the Genoese Walls as a heritage-protection project.⁴⁰⁴ It was unclear whether this particular reason made sense to the Sublime Porte, since we know that a theater was in fact built in the garden, and its presence in Tepebaşı actually contributed to the further disappearance of the rest of the cemetery in the coming decades. Nevertheless, Blacque Bey’s plans did get approved, leaving the question of finances as his main obstacle.

⁴⁰³ BOA, İ.DH 783/63659 (2 Rabiulahir 1296 [March 26, 1879]).

⁴⁰⁴ See chapter 1.

This time Blacque Bey was better equipped in securing the finances for the project. One of his attempts to provide funding for the garden was to ask to the British Embassy, as he rightly believed that they also had the stakes in the “beautification” of Tepebaşı, since the embassy building was situated in the northwest corner of the now infamous “waste ground.” In the official correspondence between the British Embassy to the Department of Civil Works, dated May 6, 1879, we learn that Blacque Bey asked the British Government “to contribute towards converting adjoining *wasteland* into a public garden.” While the initial response to this proposal was positive, ambassadorial officials noted their hesitancy to support a local municipality’s plans as they feared that such a financial support “would create a precedence for foreign assistance to municipal works.”⁴⁰⁵

It was not only the British officials who discussed the nature and methods of municipal works in conjunction with the plans to build a garden in Tepebaşı. The Sixth District invited the proprietors of the quarter to a public and “urgent” meeting, announced via district newspapers.⁴⁰⁶ *La Turquie* reported from the heated debate on the paper’s April 19, 1879 issue.⁴⁰⁷ According to the newspaper, the meeting, held in the “grand salon” of the municipal building, was very eventful, as the landholders who owned property close to the lot in question discussed fundamental questions concerning the responsibilities of municipalities. Many individuals attending the meeting, including Dr. Hubsch, Mr. de Voisin, and Charles Testa, who were specifically mentioned in the article, objected to the plans of a “garden that would be of no use to the public.” They suggested that “the municipality should rather channel funds to clean and furnish the streets of Pera, and to kill the disease-carrying dogs.” As a result, it was decided in the meeting for a new

⁴⁰⁵ TNA T 1/16121 (06.05.1879).

⁴⁰⁶ “Municipalité du VI^{me} Cercle,” *La Turquie* 83, April 8, 1879.

⁴⁰⁷ “La Municipalité et les Petits-Champs,” *La Turquie* 91, April 19, 1879.

committee to be formed with two delegates from Mezarlık Street, and one delegate each from Kabristan, Asmalı-Mescid, Timoni, Derviş, Venedik, Glavany, and Tepebaşı streets. This committee was tasked to present a new project in one week's time, in order to ensure "voluntary subscription" to cover the costs of the garden.

The newspaper was harshly critical of these dissident voices among the property owners, especially refuting their claim that the garden will not be of any use to the residents. "This garden is a public utility; the work that will be executed will embellish the city and consequently will give more value to the nearby properties. The minimal sacrifice that will be done [by the proprietors] will be compensated in a small amount of time, and with the rise of the value of the properties, it will bring extra revenues." The article ended with the praise of Blacque Bey and his "unending efforts to ameliorate" the district.⁴⁰⁸

While such words and similarity of the argumentation once again attest to the close links between the policymakers and those who contributed to the forming of public opinion in the late Ottoman Istanbul, it also shows the not-so-straight connections between capital and urban transformation. Even though I have so far argued that the class nature of Pera's late nineteenth-century transformation is impossible to deny, this nature did not work in the same way and with the same outcome for all property owners. Being part of the networks with municipal and government authorities, with international companies that shaped the infrastructure of the city, with district newspapers that had a say in what circulated as public opinion, certainly paid off. If not, then the best bet of the landowner was to dispute the legitimacy of certain municipal works, as it was the case with the vocal proprietors who were quoted in the reportage by *La Turquie*. In

⁴⁰⁸ Similar discussions about the real value of such embellishment projects, when there were more "urgent" services the municipality was lacking, marked the opening of the organization of Jardin du Taxim as well. See Demirakın, "Sixth Municipal District," 87.

the following days, the Sixth District called on the proprietors for a new meeting as planned, now including the landowners of the Aslan Street, too. Unfortunately, however, we do not know how this new meeting proceeded.⁴⁰⁹

One last actor that was involved in the building of the garden and deserves to be mentioned here is the Imperial Ottoman Bank. Being one of the creditors and shareholders of the Metropolitan Railway of Constantinople, the bank was also active in this associated project. The bank, after an agreement with the Sixth District President Blacque Bey, assumed the responsibility for the construction expenses in return for the profits of the garden for the first eight years following the opening.⁴¹⁰ It is not difficult to see why the bank was willing to be involved in the process. Many of its investors owned properties in the vicinity of the proposed ground, the bank itself was a big landowner in the larger area, and its administrators probably saw the proposed garden as a profitable means to increase the pace of beautification and the expected rise in land values.⁴¹¹ Furthermore, as a large shareholder of the Tünel, it had an interest in the growth and expansion of Pera, presuming that would cause an increase of the usage of the funicular.

Conclusion: Cosmopolitanism over the Fields of the Dead

It is all thanks to the enlightened care and prudence of the last president of the municipal council of the Sixth District, Blacque Bey, who, as an educated and experienced man, was able within a span of two years of his exemplary administration to work miracles, creating resources in a time of scarcity, by his sole authority and the confidence he has inspired on the Imperial Ottoman Bank's Board of Directors; this is how Blacque Bey was able to bring up in the space of six months a municipal garden in the middle of Pera on a vacant lot of the Petits-Champs, with lawns, magnificent trees, under the shades of which one can now

⁴⁰⁹ "Municipalité du VI^{me} Cercle – Avis Urgent," *La Turquie* 96, April 25, 1879.

⁴¹⁰ Baruh, "Modern Axis," 104-105.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, 330-386. These funds later created a lot of strife between the Ottoman Bank, the municipality, and particularly Blacque Bey. OBA, 6e cercle XKHY002-00543 (July 7, 1884).

promenade, with lakes and cascades of refreshing waters, with a splendid pavilion, which contains a room of music acoustically constructed for concerts and theatre plays!⁴¹²

When the Jardin des Petits-Champs was finally opened in July 1880 (fig. 12), newspapers once again documented—and celebrated—the cosmopolitan sociability of the city’s notables attending the ceremony. *La Turquie* described the garden as “presenting a charming and magical appearance,” with “its kiosk, lake, iron bridge, and a sight of the Golden Horn and Istanbul.... This garden, located at the center of the city, is a godsend.”⁴¹³ This “godsend” garden included a theater hall designed by the Armenian architect Housep Aznavour,⁴¹⁴ which soon hosted the famous opera star Sarah Bernhardt.⁴¹⁵ It had the “orchestra of Ranzani” performing every single night “to satisfy the general demand.”⁴¹⁶ All in all, it was destined to become a symbol of Pera’s cosmopolitanism in the late nineteenth century.

This image was to be repeated night after night, newspaper article after newspaper article, and travel account after travel account. Music, food, drinks, diverse groups of peoples, and of course, the vista. The vista of the ‘old-city’ was a constant fascination of the visitors of the garden, now serving to separate not only the cemetery and the world beneath it from Pera, but also, in a visual way, the ‘old-city,’ from the modern quarters of Pera. It was the spatial organization of Pera’s landscape, through gardens, cafes, restaurants, and hotels, that made the divide so real and tangible for the visitor. Three months after the opening of the garden, a new hotel, called Hotel de la Corne d’Or, was opened in Tepebaşı, at the corner of Rue Glavany, and was advertised for the

⁴¹² Spiridon Mavrogény, *Rapport présenté à sa majesté Imperiale le Sultan sur l’état de l’hygiène publique a Constantinople en Janvier 1881 par son médecin en chef et son médecin particulier le Docteur Spiridon Mavrogény* (Constantinople, 1881), 14.

⁴¹³ “Inaguration du Jardin des Petits-Champs,” *La Turquie*, July 26, 1880.

⁴¹⁴ Ezgi Yazıcı, “Theater in the Nineteenth Century Istanbul: Cases for the Translation of An Architectural Typology” (master’s thesis, Middle East Technical University, 2010), 97.

⁴¹⁵ Alus, *İstanbul Kazan Ben Kepçe*, 26-27.

⁴¹⁶ “Municipalité du VI^me Cercle. Avis,” *La Turquie* 174, July 30, 1880.

view it granted not only of the Golden Horn (and its other side), but also the garden.⁴¹⁷ No wonder the most luxurious hotel of Istanbul, let alone Pera, was built next to the garden, benefiting from the same views: The Pera Palace, opened in 1895 and bought soon after by Wagons-Lits, the company that also owned the Orient Express, put the final mark on the topography of Tepebaşı at the end of the nineteenth century that separated it from Kasımpaşa as well as from the other side of the Golden Horn, symbolizing the “the birth of modern Istanbul.”⁴¹⁸ The initial investors of the hotel, the Essayan Brothers, specially requested that the gate of their hotel, which they built on land that they had bought from Bayezid-i Sani Waqf,⁴¹⁹ would lead into the garden, underlining the importance of the garden for the real estate development of the Tepebaşı area.⁴²⁰ In a way, the Pera Palace achieved what Gavand had originally planned, for he, too, had a hotel put into the initial project of the Tünel, to rise above Pera station at its “magnificent location,” benefiting from a similar vista of the ‘old-city.’ He had even laid the foundation of the station in accordance with the extra weight requirements of this “monumental” hotel to be built in the future.⁴²¹

The exclusivity of these gated parks and monumental hotels—built as well as planned ones—drew the contours of Pera’s new spatial configuration, at least on paper. Whereas the cemeteries of Pera were social spaces that cut across ethnic, religious, gender and class lines, the Jardin des Petits-Champs created a new space for a gated sociability. Only those who could pay a certain sum could enter the garden. As Neumann suggested, “the relocation of the cemeteries from the city center, their encircling with high walls, and sanitization; and at the same time opening of

⁴¹⁷ “Nouvelles du Jour,” *La Turquie* 251, October 30, 1880.

⁴¹⁸ Charles King, *Pera Palas’ta Gece Yarısı: Modern İstanbul’un Doğuşu* (Istanbul: Kitap Yayınevi, 2015), 37.

⁴¹⁹ Çelik Gülersoy, “Pera Palas,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994), 239-240.

⁴²⁰ BOA, MV. 72/1 (2 Rabiulahir 1310 [October 24, 1892]).

⁴²¹ Gavand, *İstanbul Tüneli*, 43.

parks with proper infrastructure, separated the spaces of the dead and entertainment in Istanbul, attaching both of the spaces to a concept public order.”⁴²² One of the leading doctors of the district, Brunetti, wrote soon after the opening of the garden, that it actively contributed to the health of the district and its people.⁴²³ This health was not only physical but also social. The garden provided a “healthy” way to socialize for the upper classes of the district, a place in which the attendants would have what Malte Fuhrmann calls “the feeling of being ‘at home’ amongst one’s own class.”⁴²⁴

The classed and organized *nature* of the garden is manifest in the memoirs of the residents of Istanbul from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One of these memoirs belonged to the Turkish author Semih Tümtaz, who echoed the 1860 piece we have seen earlier from *Journal de Constantinople* that defended the opening of European-style gardens on the ground that they would be “for social morals: they bring people together, make them more human and civilized.”⁴²⁵

In my childhood, Tepebaşı [the Petits-Champs] and Taksim [the Grands-Champs] Gardens were like places to learn proper conduct. After giving forty *para* to enter to the place, our servant, whose duty was to take us to/from the school and walk us around, would warn us: “In these gardens you do not run, or talk loudly; you do not open your mouth when you drink or eat something; you do not put your elbow on the table; you do not whisper; you do not look at the faces of the strangers, beware or you would be called vulgar”. When we grew up, we tried to correct ourselves, not to raise attention, not to make any goofs. Tepebaşı Garden *was actually like a private garden*. It was not possible to enter without paying the fee. It was surrounded by *fences*.⁴²⁶

The Jardin des Petits-Champs was *actually like a private garden*, as Mümtaz observed, surrounded by *fences*. Despite the linguistic diversity, the Jardin was not an inclusive space for the

⁴²² Neumann, “Modernitelerin Çatışması,” 443-444.

⁴²³ Dr. Brunetti, “Hygiène de la respiration,” *La Turquie* 217, September 20, 1880.

⁴²⁴ Malte Fuhrmann, “Cosmopolitan imperialists and the ottoman port cities. Conflicting logics in the urban social fabric,” *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 67 (2003): 149.

⁴²⁵ “Chronique Locale,” *Journal de Constantinople Écho d’Orient* 1142, January 18, 1860.

⁴²⁶ Semih Tümtaz, *Tarihimizde Hayal Olmuş Hakikatlar* (Istanbul: Hilmi Kitabevi, 1948), 195. Emphasis added.

entertainment of all people of Pera, let alone of Istanbul, although there was some clientele who demanded even a more exclusive treatment.⁴²⁷ It was the manifestation of a private elite culture, which largely shaped the cityscape from the second half of the nineteenth-century until the end of the empire. From the construction of the Tünel to dumping its debris over the graves, it was their class interest and their ideas of modernity and civilization that very much paved the way for the nineteenth-century spatial formation of Pera. And similarly, it is their private garden that scholarly literature thinks of when it asserts that Pera was cosmopolitan in the second half of the nineteenth century, situated against the oriental vista of the ‘old-city.’

This dual image of Pera versus Istanbul has been repeated and reified over and over again in Turkish and foreign literature, as well as in the historiography. Historical accounts on Ottoman/Mediterranean cosmopolitanism(s) often alluded to this trope. Following the critical literature that challenged this view, and applying an “archaeological dig into history to recover its lost features,”⁴²⁸ I suggest in this chapter that the nineteenth-century transformation of Pera, hailed as the heyday of Ottoman cosmopolitanism, was built upon the houses, graves, and another form of contemporary diversity on common spaces such as the cemetery, which was covered by the spatial of the nineteenth-century urban reforms, as well as by the preferences of the twentieth-century historiography. The diversity of those who used the cemeteries for socializing, playing, passing through, or grazing, as well as of those who dug Pera’s soil, carried over its streets, and dumped it over its cemetery, were not only not included into this dominant narrative, but they were also actively excluded, as their spaces were destroyed and their mobility hindered. It was certainly

⁴²⁷ E. Giustiniani, “Untitled,” *La Turquie* 242, October 20, 1879.

⁴²⁸ Stephanie Polsky, “Down the K. Hole: Walter Benjamin’s Destructive Land-surveying of History” in *Walter Benjamin and History*, ed. Andrew Benjamin (New York: Continuum, 2005), 83.

ironic, but also telling, that the partial transformation of the Petits-Champs des Morts on the grounds that it was an obstacle to the public circulation,⁴²⁹ ended up creating a space between Kasımpaşa and Pera that put material and social barriers against the mobility between these two areas.

As this chapter has shown, the emergence of cosmopolitan spaces, at least in the case of Pera, was dependent on a radical transformation of urban space. And this transformation was possible through the formation of a transnational network of policymakers, investors, experts, as well as materials, flowing into Pera and reshaping its built environment. In this transformation, modern infrastructure was seen not only as a necessary condition for decent and civilized living, but also, and in several cases even more so, as a means for further change in the spatial order and property structure of the district. While turning cemeteries into gardens was not an idea unique to the power-holders of Pera in the late nineteenth century, the material connection between the Petits-Champs des Morts and the Jardin des Petits-Champs, formed by the recycled debris of the construction of the world's second subway, turned this conversion into a physical manifestation of the power and discourses that were in play in the making of Pera.

Naturally, Pera's ascension to a 'cosmopolitan' and 'modern' haven required more than the demolishing of some medieval walls, the appropriation of its past in a peculiar way, the construction of a short subway route, or turning common spaces of cemeteries into private gardens. New urban conditions and the increase in population density required new material arrangements for residents' access to clean water and dispatch of excrement. In the second half of the nineteenth century, these two fundamental necessities made the urban history of Pera an integral part of the

⁴²⁹ Caston, "Les exigences de la vie," 255.

environmental history of the larger geography of Istanbul. The second part of this dissertation tackles this entangled story.

PART II: Provincializing Pera

Chapter 3—Nature’s Cosmopolis: Villagers, Engineers, Soldiers, and Animals along Terkos Waterworks⁴³⁰

In the last couple of years, Turkey’s Justice and Development Party (Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi; AKP) government introduced several massive infrastructure projects that rapidly altered Istanbul’s northern periphery.⁴³¹ Long discussed, extremely controversial, and hastily constructed, the Third Bridge at the northern Bosphorus was opened to the public in 2016, with relentless government propaganda. Further north a third airport, reportedly to be one of the biggest in the world, was partially opened in October 2018, with a massive highway that connects the airport to the city and rest of Thrace; and arguably the most astonishing one of all, a new strait between the Black Sea and the Sea of Marmara is planned, amidst harsh criticisms of activists and experts, pointing out that these “mega-projects” are in the middle of the city’s largest forests, and are endangering the provision of water and clean air to over twenty million residents of the metropolitan region, in addition to irreversibly damaging a vital habitat for animal and plant life.⁴³²

⁴³⁰ An article based on this chapter will be published in an edited volume. See K. Mehmet Kentel, “Nature’s ‘Cosmopolitanism’: Villagers, Engineers, and Animals along Terkos Waterworks in Late Nineteenth-Century Istanbul,” in *The Seeds of Power: Explorations in the Environmental History of the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Onur İnal and Yavuz Köse (Winwick: The White Horse Press, 2019, forthcoming).

⁴³¹ For infrastructural politics of AKP, see Erensü, “Fragile Energy.” İnal mentions the increasing interest of the environmental humanities scholars to these policies. See İnal, “Overview of the Field,” 298.

⁴³² For the transformation of the northern regions of Istanbul, see Nuran Z. Gülersoy et al., eds., *İstanbul’un Geleceğini Etkileyecek Üç Proje: 3. Köprü, 3. Havalimanı, Kanal İstanbul, Tema Vakfı Uzman Görüşleri* (Istanbul: TEMA, 2014), Elif Karacor and Dalia Korshid, “Projected environmental effects of the third airport in Istanbul,” *Journal of Food, Agriculture and Environment*, 13/2 (2015): 223–227; Özlem Altınkaya Genel, “Shifting Scales of Urban Transformation: The emergence of the Marmara Urban Region between 1990 and 2015” (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2016). For present-day water issues of the city, see Kees van Leeuwen and Rosa Sjerps, “Istanbul: the challenges of integrated water resources management in Europa’s megacity,” *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 18/1 (2016): 1–17.

What these projects have done, at least for a large part of several generations of *Istanbulites*, the author of this text included, is not merely the destruction of an environmental heritage and a vital natural reserve. These projects, though they have certainly and severely harmed the ecology of the metropolitan area of one of the world's largest cities, have put the city's surroundings onto the mental map of the urban residents of Istanbul, albeit as zones of imminent danger, devastation, and loss. Northern Forests and Northern Forests Defense (*Kuzey Ormanları Savunması*), an environmental activist group trying to protect the region from the adverse effects of these projects, have become part of daily conversations;⁴³³ walking paths that were created to showcase the ecological desolation caused by Istanbul's northern expansion were selected as artworks displayed in the Istanbul Biennale;⁴³⁴ popular internet news media has featured special stories on the city's "North,"⁴³⁵ and even a NASA astronaut, through the aerial photographs he took and shared on social media, became a participant in this apocalyptic discourse on the city's northern edges.⁴³⁶ The increasing number and impact of heavy rainfalls and hailstorms that have been disturbing the lives of the city's millions of inhabitants has been connected to the continuing environmental harm, particularly done to the Northern Forests, by these infrastructure and land development projects.⁴³⁷ The urban experience of Istanbulites seemed to be never have been this

⁴³³ "Kuzey Ormanları Savunması'ndan 3. Köprü Eylemi," *CNN Turk TV* (March 6, 2016), accessed October 5, 2018. <https://www.cnnturk.com/turkiye/kuzey-ormanlari-savunmasindan-3-kopru-eylemi>.

⁴³⁴ Serkan Taycan, "Between Two Seas," (September 13, 2013), accessed October 5, 2018. https://www.facebook.com/pg/ikidenizarasi/about/?ref=page_internal.

⁴³⁵ "The North," *140Journos YouTube Channel* (May 23, 2017), accessed October 5, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnev9D1MOwQ&vl=tr>.

⁴³⁶ "Good morning from @Space_Station. Istanbul Turkey," *Randy Bresnik Twitter Account (@astrokomrade)* (December 10, 2017), accessed October 5, 2018. <https://twitter.com/astrokomrade/status/936743238903271424?lang=en>

⁴³⁷ "Sel, Afet ve İklim Değişimi," *Hava Delisinin Not Defteri* (July 18, 2017), accessed October 5, 2018. <https://havadelisi.com/2017/07/18/sel-afet-ve-iklim-degisimi/>

much affected by what went on in the periphery, and by the transformation of the country. The northern periphery of the city, one might argue, has been recreated and remapped through its destruction, thanks to infrastructure.

The village of Terkos is part of this remapped geography. At the northern edge of the metropolitan region, adjacent to the Black Sea shoreline, Terkos shares its name with the biggest lake in the region. Lake Terkos is situated forty kilometers northwest of Istanbul city center, and is separated from the Black Sea with forty to fifty meters high dunes.⁴³⁸ Now officially called Durusu, literally meaning “pure water,” the lake is a lagoon of 31.7 km² in size and has a maximum depth of around eleven meters.⁴³⁹ Lake Terkos owes its existence to the tectonic movement of the Black Sea during the third geological age. It collects water from several rivers, mostly coming from the Istranca Mountains, but it had historically been fed by the salty waters of the Black Sea as well, thanks to a small strait between the lake and the sea. This strait was once named the “false entrance” by British sailors who mistook it for the entrance of the Bosphorus and frequently led to shipwrecks in the nineteenth century.⁴⁴⁰ It is now virtually blocked due to the accumulation of silt,⁴⁴¹ as well as conscious human interventions, which comprise part of the story told in this chapter.

Two Chimneys

The dunes that stretch westward from Terkos to the Bosphorus offer occasional sights of “botanical magic” in the words of the botanist Andrew Byfield, with a wide variety of local flowers

⁴³⁸ Necdet Özgül, ed. *İstanbul İl Alanının Jeolojisi* (Istanbul: İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi, 2011), 46-47.

⁴³⁹ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁴⁴⁰ Great Britain Hydrographic Department, *Sailing Directions for the Dardanelles, Sea of Marmara, Bosphorus, and Black Sea*, 4th ed. (London: The Hydrographic Office, Admiralty, 1893), 175.

⁴⁴¹ A. Selçuk Biricik, “İstanbul Şehri ve Su,” *Marmara Coğrafya Dergisi*, no. 2 (2013): 18-19.

blooming in the spring.⁴⁴² A short journey from Istanbul proper to Terkos, which takes one through the middle of the Northern Forests, disrupts this magic. The variety of topography and nature is juxtaposed, or rather ruptured through, by the range of very recent human intervention. One is struck by the mass of concrete and steel imposed over the green spaces, as bridges and highways run over forests, new towns are built over pasture fields in an apparent “land rush,”⁴⁴³ and real estate agencies blossom alongside flowers, in the hopes of turning the concrete and steel into profit. The village of Terkos seems to be increasingly affected by all of this, with the new strait connecting to the Black Sea in the very proximity; a new marina in the region’s historic port Karaburun in the development plans; and the resulting pressure on its real estate markets.

There is a chimney in the middle of Terkos village: a short but thick construction, made of bricks, reminiscent of the factories of the late nineteenth century. For the historian of Pera, it is almost an exact replica of one of the silent but significant fragments of the built environment of Istanbul’s ‘cosmopolitan’ district: the chimney of the Tünel, the eccentric two-stop funicular that has been operating since 1875 between Galata and Pera.⁴⁴⁴ Its lookalike in Terkos belongs to Istanbul’s first modern waterworks, which began to operate nine years after the Tünel, with the explicit aim of bringing potable water first and foremost to Pera, to the residences of the district’s wealthy members who could afford to have central tap water in their new apartment buildings. Contrary to what has been suggested by the urban center’s violent expansion towards the northern rural regions in the last few years, the visual connection between two chimneys, one in Pera and

⁴⁴² Andrew Byfield, “A World Beyond the Walls. The Flora of Istanbul,” *Cornucopia* 54 (2006): 71.

⁴⁴³ Katharina Lange et al., “(Re) valuing natural resources in the Middle East, Africa and Asia,” *ZMO Programmatic Texts* 11 (Berlin: ZMO, 2016), 5.

⁴⁴⁴ See chapter 2.

the other one in Terkos, is indicative of the existence of older and arguably more integral links between the epitome of city's urbanity and this northern periphery.

This chapter introduces the question of environment to the debate on Pera's cosmopolitanism. I trace the environmental encounters in the making of modern Pera in order to disrupt the conventional narratives of the modernization of urban space, which has been studied in isolation, without connecting it to the larger geography of Istanbul. My exploration of the Terkos geography is thus motivated by an uneasiness caused by this isolated treatment of Pera's urban life, as much as it is driven by the present-day transformation of Istanbul's northern regions. This historical exercise would also prove to be fruitful for the critical study of the current ecological crisis of Istanbul engendered by massive infrastructure projects, showing that ecological questions involving nonhuman actors have marred the city's modernization from the outset, often ignored by historians as well as the present-day critics.

Selecting water as a nexus that ties seemingly separate physical geographies and social worlds, as a path to introduce the question of environment into the heart of the city, would be fruitful for different periods in history. But it is essential to note that nineteenth-century urbanization around the world required substantially higher amounts of water than previous periods, for individual and public consumption in response to developing needs for personal hygiene, public health, and industrial manufacture. A growing literature on the history of water-management documents the varied efforts of public officials, policymakers, company representatives, and engineers, to provide clean and/or potable water for urban residents and industries, not only in the industrialized West but also in other parts of the world.⁴⁴⁵ Scholars have

⁴⁴⁵ For a general survey, see Terje Tvedt and Oestigaard Terje, eds., *Water and Urbanization*, series 3, vol.1, *A history of water* (London; New York: I.B. Tauris, 2014), 357-686.

explored the early discussions of different methods of water provision, and debates around centralization/municipalization versus privatization of water service.⁴⁴⁶ They have explored the myriad cultural meanings attached to water, control of which was seen in many contexts as signs of civilizational advance and modernity, but also as the heritage of ancient civilizations and nature's divine contribution to urban life.⁴⁴⁷ Water has been studied as a problem and risk,⁴⁴⁸ as a class marker;⁴⁴⁹ as a zone of contestation between locals and colonial rulers;⁴⁵⁰ almost universally discussed together with fears of the spread of cholera and other diseases, and with the related issues of fire, dirt, and sewers.

Within the context of the Ottoman historiography, water has been traditionally understudied. Starting from the mid-nineteenth century and initiated by foreign engineers commissioned in Istanbul, the traditional tendency in the field has been to give detailed and descriptive accounts of various water projects and various methods to provide water to Ottoman cities, best illustrated in the twentieth century by the seminal works of Kazım Çeçen, who, as a civil engineer-turned-historian, studied Istanbul's historical waterways in detail.⁴⁵¹ More critical and theoretically inspired accounts lately come from environmental historians and historians of technology working mostly on the Arab provinces of the empire,⁴⁵² as they have dealt with water and irrigation systems,

⁴⁴⁶ John Broich, *London: Water and the Making of the Modern City* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013).

⁴⁴⁷ Carl Smith, *City Water, City Life: Water and the Infrastructure of Ideas in Urbanizing Philadelphia, Boston, and Chicago* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

⁴⁴⁸ Robert Stolz, *Bad Water: Nature, Pollution, and Politics in Japan, 1870-1950* (Durham; London: Duke University Press, 2014).

⁴⁴⁹ Antonio Loris, *Water, State and the City* (London; New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

⁴⁵⁰ Susan Gilson Miller, "Watering the Garden of Tangier: Colonial Contestations in a Moroccan City," *The Journal of North African Studies* 5, no. 4 (2000): 25-50.

⁴⁵¹ Gavand, *Distribution d'eau*; Kazım Çeçen, *İstanbul'da Osmanlı Devrindeki Su Tesisleri* (Istanbul: İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 1984); Çeçen, *İstanbul'un Osmanlı Dönemi Suyolları* (Istanbul: İstanbul Su ve Kanalizasyon İdaresi, 1999).

⁴⁵² There are few exceptions to this geographical concentration, for example, Deniz Karakaş, "Clay

dams, sewers, and wetlands, and used the critical window provided by studying water to analyze diverse topics such as center-periphery dynamics,⁴⁵³ construction of temporalities,⁴⁵⁴ state building,⁴⁵⁵ emergence of dominant sectarian identities.⁴⁵⁶

In general, however, it is very rarely that the literature concentrating on late Ottoman Istanbul critically delves into the multifaceted relations between the city and the country, urban residents and villagers, modern technology and animals, humans and nonhumans in the stories it chooses to tell. State and/or company claims and policy justifications are usually taken with their face value, and the discourse of modernization is accepted rather uncritically.⁴⁵⁷ But water actually has the potential to provide a critical lens to explore the ways in which modern urban spaces have

Pipes, Marble Surfaces: The Topographies of Water Supply In Late Seventeenth-and Early Eighteenth-Century Ottoman Istanbul,” (PhD diss., State University of New York at Binghamton, 2013).

⁴⁵³ Alan Mikhail, *Nature and Empire in Ottoman Egypt: An Environmental History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

⁴⁵⁴ On Barak, *On time*.

⁴⁵⁵ Michael Christopher Low, “Ottoman Infrastructures of the Saudi Hydro-State: The Technopolitics of Pilgrimage and Potable Water in the Hijaz,” *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 57/4 (2015): 942–974.

⁴⁵⁶ Faisal Husain, “In the Bellies of the Marshes: Water and Power in the Countryside of Ottoman Baghdad,” *Environmental History*, 19/4 (2014): 638–664.

⁴⁵⁷ Burhan Oğuz, *Bizans’tan Günümüze İstanbul Suları* (Istanbul: Simurg, 1998); Haydar Kazgan and Sami Önal, *İstanbul’da Suyun Tarihi: İstanbul’un Su Sorununun Tarihsel Kökenleri ve Osmanlı’da Yabancı Su Şirketleri* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1999). There are two monographs that deal particularly with Terkos waterworks, from which I have benefited extensively. The first is an analytical account of water provision of Istanbul between the 1850s to the 1950s by Noyan Dinçkal, and that is how it necessarily deals with Terkos. It is an institutional history, sensitive to water-usage practices and changing habits of Istanbul inhabitants. See Noyan Dinçkal, *Istanbul und das Wasser: Zur Geschichte der Wasserversorgung und Abwasserentsorgung von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1966* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 2004), and also Dinçkal, “Reluctant Modernization: The Cultural Dynamics of Water Supply in Istanbul, 1885–1950,” *Technology and Culture* 49, no.3 (2008): 675–700. The second is a firm-history of *Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople*, which launched the Terkos water project and ran it for decades, by İlhami Yurdakul. While it is very rich in detail and archival material, it fails to problematize urban and environmental issues that Terkos water aimed to resolve and/or triggered. See Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*.

been shaped with the interaction of a wide variety of human and nonhuman actors, located not only at the heart of urban centers but rather dispersed along a set of “uneven geographies.”⁴⁵⁸

Studying water dictates an integrated history from the outset, as water is almost never present in one confined location, but rather moves in multiple ways, in many directions; through rivers and channels, through underground tunnels. It is moved by human intervention, and also by natural interruptions, though it is rarely a passive recipient of these outside mediations, and it mediates back via flooding villages and cities, altering landscapes, breaking pipes; forcing us to initiate a reciprocal and relational history of the city and its environment, allowing us “to reconstruct [the] urbanization process as a political-ecological process with water as the entry point”⁴⁵⁹: an urban environmental history.

Water in Absentia

This larger claim, that is the centrality of water for an urban environmental history, should be especially germane to the study of Istanbul, for around the city, water is everywhere. From the hills of Istranca to the Bosphorus basin, the geomorphological history of the region we now call Istanbul and its environs has been defined with the transformative impact of water on the physical environment, with rivers, lakes, inlets, and straits.

Water was everywhere, except that it was not—not in a readily available, easily accessible, and safely potable manner. Soon after the Roman Emperor Constantine I (r. 306-337) moved the empire’s capital to the Greek city of Byzantium and changed its name to Constantinople in 330 AD, it became obvious that, while the geography seemed to be blessed with water, it actually was so poorly provided in natural freshwater sources that the reign of his successor Constantius II (r.

⁴⁵⁸ Harvey, *Geography of Difference*; Smith, *Uneven Development*.

⁴⁵⁹ Erik Swyngedouw, “The city as a hybrid: on nature, society and cyborg urbanization,” *Capitalism Nature Socialism* 7, no. 1 (1996): 76.

337-340) was marked by its citizens “dying of thirst.”⁴⁶⁰ Such was the observation of Doctor Pardo, the secretary-general of Société Impériale de Médecine de Constantinople, one thousand and five hundred years later, in an article appeared in *La Turquie* on March 7, 1879. The article compared European cities with the Ottoman capital in terms of their access to water: “Even in the other capitals which have the advantage of being placed in the vicinity of a river, such as Paris or Vienna, the issue of water is the subject of so much concern ... on the part of governments; in Constantinople, where this advantage does not exist, the issue is vital.”⁴⁶¹

Making water submissive to the needs and desires of the people who chose to reside in/rule over the easternmost corner of the Balkan Peninsula—to clean it, to channel it, to pass it, to surpass it—has constituted one of the most fundamental elements of the region’s history over thousands of years. As the geologist Pierre de Tchihatchef wrote in 1864, “What has been lacking the most in the city of Constantinople since the earliest times was water, and that is the reason why this is the only place where so many monumental works had been built in order to fight the danger [of lack of water].”⁴⁶² Tchihatchef was right: as Byzantinist James Crow and his team of researchers have shown, the “long-distance” Thracian water system was indeed the longest such system in the entire Roman-Byzantine geography, longer than the much-celebrated eleven aqueducts of Rome. It had its springs in the Istranca Mountains, with several different water sources such as Vize,

⁴⁶⁰ Cyril Mango, “Introduction,” in *Constantinople and its hinterland: papers from the Twenty-seventh Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, Oxford, April 1993*, ed. Cyril Mango, Gilbert Dagron, with Geoffrey Greatrex (Aldershot: Variorum, 1995), 5.

⁴⁶¹ Dr. Pardo, “Renaissance de la Turquie au point de vue de l’hygiène,” *La Turquie* 54, March 7, 1879. The same comparative line of argumentation was also present in Gavand, *Distribution d’Eau*, 90.

⁴⁶² Tchihatchef, *Istanbul ve Boğaziçi*, 20.

Danamandıra, and Pınarca, and carried water to Istanbul, passing along Terkos and Büyükçekmece lakes, which themselves are nurtured by the catchments of the Istranca water basin.⁴⁶³

When the Ottomans took over Constantinople in the second half of the fifteenth century, some of this water infrastructure was repaired, redeveloped, and put into use as the city tried to recapture its imperial and urban identity. Their biggest investment, however, was on much closer sources located in and around the Belgrad Forest, which had also been used by the Byzantines.⁴⁶⁴ Overall, the northern hinterland of the city was essential for its growth and sustainability, but also for the symbolic power nested by the Ottoman elites into the daily lives of the inhabitants. As shown by Shirine Hamadeh, in the eighteenth century when the elites of Istanbul tried to foster their benevolent image in the eyes of its subjects, patronage of public fountains became a widespread means to display the magnanimity, aesthetic power, and status of the Ottoman ruling class.⁴⁶⁵ Deniz Karakaş, on the other hand, argues that the water infrastructure in this time was also crucial as a locus of commercial investment and power distribution/contestation.⁴⁶⁶

Pera was even more deprived of local water sources. Before the Genoese semi-autonomous settlement was established in the thirteenth century, it had a large public bathroom, so there must have been some connection to the central waterworks that brought water into this immediate suburb of the imperial capital city.⁴⁶⁷ The first separate water system built for Galata and Pera, however, came in the 1730s when Sultan Mahmud I (r. 1730–1754) commissioned the construction

⁴⁶³ James Crow, Jonathan Bardill, and Richard Bayliss, *The Water Supply of Byzantine Constantinople* (London: Society for the Promotion of Roman studies, 2008), 1-24.

⁴⁶⁴ Paul Magdalino, "Introduction," in *Istanbul and Water*, ed. Paul Magdalino and Nina Ergin (Leuven: Peeters, 2015), 3-4.

⁴⁶⁵ Shirine Hamadeh, *The City's Pleasures: Istanbul in the Eighteenth Century* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 76-109.

⁴⁶⁶ Karakaş, "Topographies of Water Supply."

⁴⁶⁷ Crow et al., *The Water Supply*, 272.

of the Topuzlu Dam (*bend*) in the Belgrad Forest, which was distributed through a reservoir located at the upper part of Pera, giving the area its name: Taksim (*partition, distribution*).⁴⁶⁸

Benefiting from the resources provided by this new waterworks, Pera saw rapid growth and urbanization from the late eighteenth century onwards. And even though the water of the Valide Dam, built in the late eighteenth century again in the Belgrad Forest, was completely diverted to the district's use in 1838, this rapid urbanization put a heavy strain on the city's existing infrastructure. From the late 1840s onwards, the district newspapers featured continuous stories on the water problem in Pera. One of the first and daunting tasks of the Sixth District was to resolve the annual draughts experienced in Pera's hot and dry summers. Changing concerns for public hygiene, largely wooden architecture that was conducive to frequent fires, and development of new private spaces in the rising apartment buildings, all necessitated a better access to water. Indeed, the Ottoman state archives abound with official documentation regarding the water problem. In 1845, during a draught that most severely affected Galata and Pera, the state even requested "suitable" individuals to go to Okmeydanı and Kağıthane, Pera's neighboring regions with large open areas, in order to pray for rain.⁴⁶⁹ Even the architectural evidence of northern Bosphorus villages' concurrent growth, especially of Tarabya with the summer residences of European embassies and summer locations of popular establishments of Pera, should be partially understood as a reflection of the physical necessity caused by Pera's hot and dry summers.⁴⁷⁰

Nevertheless, one should also treat this new interest concerning water or its lack thereof in the newspapers as part of a larger phenomenon of writing, reading, documenting, and discussing urban matters. In the nineteenth century, a new discursive field slowly developed, which

⁴⁶⁸ Çeçen, *İstanbul'un Osmanlı Dönemi*, 252-3.

⁴⁶⁹ BOA, İ.DH. 98/4917 (9 Safer 1261 [February 17, 1845]).

⁴⁷⁰ Girardelli, "Power or Leisure"; Tchihatchef, *İstanbul ve Boğaziçi*, 172.

conceptualized urban space and the life in the city as problems to be fixed through constant intervention by policymakers and expert treatments, in a time when practices and institutions of local municipal governance were slowly being established. It was no coincidence that the local and national press also flourished around this time, as papers found an audience among their readers, Ottoman and foreign, Muslim and non-Muslim, for their continuous coverage of urban problems that were assumed to have an impact on the readers' daily lives.⁴⁷¹ What is really striking for this discourse was the extent to which it was pursued by experts, writing long reports, historical and technical treatises often on the pages of regular dailies. Many of these engineers were invited by the municipality or the Ottoman state to Istanbul, in order to undertake reports and come up with proposals to solve vital problems for the urban life: water, sewage, transportation, and the like. These invited experts—mostly, but not exclusively, French engineers—published their accounts on the question of water serially, starting with Degousse in 1858, and continued with the well-known figures for the readers of this dissertation, including Count G. d'Ostoya, who undertook the first cadastral survey of the city; Victor-Marie de Launay, the chronicler of the Genoese Walls (and of their destruction); and Eugène-Henri Gavand, the engineer/entrepreneur of the Tünel.⁴⁷² They offered their own reasons for the continuous water problem in the district, typically accompanied with a historical overview of how Byzantines, Genoese, and the earlier Ottomans dealt with water shortages, and particular solutions to permanently fix it, trying to make a strong case for their own projects at the expense of others.⁴⁷³ This expert knowledge, tied to the

⁴⁷¹ Duman, *Başlangıcından harf devrimine*, 9; Groc and Çağlar, *La Presse Française*, 203-210.

⁴⁷² For an overview of the reports of these experts, and the full report of Gavand himself, see Gavand, *Distribution d'eau*. See chapter 1 for the other work of Marie de Launay, chapter 2 for Gavand.

⁴⁷³ This publishing activity was so commonplace that one engineer who wrote a piece on the urban infrastructure problems in the Ottoman Empire felt the necessity to put a disclaimer that his article

entrepreneurial and policymaking networks that shaped the urban fabric of the nineteenth-century Pera, was disseminated through these periodicals, and found international audiences as well, through publications in foreign engineering journals.⁴⁷⁴

And within this discursive space, a string of obscure place names in the margins of the Ottoman capital's larger geography were made part of the urban imaginations of the local Pera community. The waters of Bahçeköy, Istranca, Boğazköy, Burgaz, Feriköy, Paşadere, Alibeyköy, Şeytandere, Maslak, and Kurudere gained a place in readers' mental maps of the larger nineteenth-century Istanbul, just as localities along the northern periphery of present-day Istanbul are being remapped in the minds of its current residents due to the massive projects that have been carried out in recent years.

It was with these series of treatments of the water question in official reports and in the periodicals that the name of Terkos was mapped in the discussions regarding Pera. After Lake Terkos was deemed a suitable alternative for clean water to allocate to Pera in the late 1860s,⁴⁷⁵ an engineer, Ternau Bey, teaming up with the palace's master of ceremonies, Kamil Bey, received the concessions for a waterworks project that aimed to bring water from Terkos to Pera in 1872.⁴⁷⁶ The decision was not without controversy, since there were a lot of competing projects on the table, and many opponents of Terkos water had intervened to convince the policymakers and the public that the project was hygienically and financially flawed. One of the sharpest voices in the debate belonged to the Société Impériale de Médecine de Constantinople, a semi-autonomous

was not meant to make it easier for him to receive employment or concessions. See "Les Travaux en Turquie et son avenir," *La Turquie* 37, February 15-16, 1880.

⁴⁷⁴ "The Water Supply of Constantinople," *The Engineer*, September 26, 1873; "The Water Supply of Constantinople" *The Engineer*, November 7, 1873.

⁴⁷⁵ Gavand, *Distribution d'eau*, 23.

⁴⁷⁶ Edgar Pech, *Manuel des sociétés anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie* (Constantinople: Gérard, 1911), 203-6.

medical society, subsidized by the state, which published the influential *Gazette Medical d'Orient*. The society published several reports on the quality of the water of Terkos Lake, and harshly criticized those in favor of the project, arguing that the lake's water was not suitable for public consumption and was hazardous to public health.⁴⁷⁷ The debate was not restricted to the experts, however, as can be seen from a caricature dated to 1874 and published in the Ottoman satirical magazine *Hayal*, showing donkeys and cows drinking and bathing in Lake Terkos, with an outside voice commentating "See, you can both drink and bathe in [Lake Terkos], no need to argue further."⁴⁷⁸ In the end, rather than endless debates on water quality, it was the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-1878, which put additional financial strains on the already bankrupt treasury,⁴⁷⁹ that made it impossible to run an infrastructure project so close to the military zone. The Terkos-Çatalca axis had been conceived as the last defense line of the Ottoman capital and the armistice terms allowed the Russian army to pass even beyond this line, approaching the western fringes of Istanbul.⁴⁸⁰

After the war, water shortage continued to severely affect Pera, including the embassies and consulates that populated the district. In some cases the members of foreign legations accused the palace and the rest of the Ottoman elites of exploiting the city's water sources for their own benefit.⁴⁸¹ After the delay caused by the war and financial problems, Ternau brought together an international consortium of investors, including local bankers and real-estate developers, this time under a new company called Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople or Dersaadet Su Şirketi

⁴⁷⁷ Kazgan and Önal, *İstanbul'da Suyun Tarihi*, 93. Summaries of the reports can be found in Ergin, *Mecelle*, 2880-2885.

⁴⁷⁸ Anonymous, *Hayal*, October 30, 1874, reproduced in Turgut Çeviker, *Karikatür Üzerine Yazılar* (Istanbul: İris, 1997), 155.

⁴⁷⁹ Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*, 27.

⁴⁸⁰ Valentine Baker Pacha, *War in Bulgaria: A Narrative of Personal Experiences*, vol. 2 (London: Low, Marston, Searle, & Rivington, 1879), 322; Edward J. Erickson, *Defeat in Detail: The Ottoman Army in the Balkans, 1912-1913* (Westport: Praeger, 2003), 122.

⁴⁸¹ TNA, FO 78/3345/103 (January 4, 1881).

(Water Company of Istanbul), which was granted a new concession in 1882, for a period of forty years (later extended to seventy-five). The shareholders of the company included la Compagnie Générale des eaux pour étranger, a French company that undertook water projects in several other cities in the Eastern Mediterranean; Banque de Constantinople; the Camondo family; and Société Générale de l'Empire Ottomane—a consortium that brought together many of the leading families of the district and the empire, including Baltazzis, Zoghraphoses, Misirlioglus, and Zarifis.⁴⁸² A network of local and European elites was now established with the aim of installing a material network of water and steel between Terkos and Pera, gathered for a project that promised lower costs and bigger profits. In a city where “market relations” were increasingly becoming “the dominant form of exchange,” water’s flows between urban and environmental spaces was promising to be “an integral part of the circulation of money and capital.”⁴⁸³

The medical community was still not satisfied, however, and Société Impériale de Médecine de Constantinople published another report in 1881, detailing the long and heated history of the debate, and rearticulating their points of objection to the project: The lake’s water, in its current form, was too salty, and the proposed barrier between the sea and the lake in order to reduce the salt level was unrealistic. The water could be used for purposes other than drinking, but they thought that the public could not be safely prevented from drinking the water, which would create a huge risk. They were especially critical of Dr. Margossoff, a leading member of Pera’s medical cadres, who had written harsh articles against the project when it was first proposed in the early 1870s, but now publicly backed Ternau, rationalizing his change of heart with a technical

⁴⁸² Pech, *Manuel des sociétés*, 203-6.

⁴⁸³ Swyngedouw, *Flows of Power*, 2. The project was financed by the company, which secured the sole rights of using the water sources of Lake Terkos and its vicinities. In 1891, it made a net profit of 334,904 francs, which was almost doubled in less than twenty years. See Pech, *Manuel des sociétés*, 205.

error he supposed to have made in the first place.⁴⁸⁴ In the last instance, however, it was the well-established and connected network backing the project that ended up closing the debate, and laying the foundations of the waterworks that would continue to provide water for the ever-growing Istanbul for another century to come.⁴⁸⁵

“L’élément essentiel à toute vie”: Providing Water for ‘Cosmopolitan’ Gardens

On January 2, 1885, the Jardin des Petits-Champs in Tepebaşı, which opened only a few years ago over a section of the Muslim cemetery, hosted a high-ranking ceremony celebrating the opening of a water fountain, which also marked the arrival of water from Lake Terkos to Pera. Paul Boutan, the chief engineer of the Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople finished his speech with the following remark: “We can easily predict that the public support for our work will continue, as we are providing them the essential thing to all life (*l’élément essentiel à toute vie*)!”⁴⁸⁶ The invitations for the event were sent to a limited number of people, in order “for the newly arranged garden not to be spoiled.”⁴⁸⁷ This was not extraordinary for the garden, for, although soon after it was opened it became one of the most important venues for social life in Pera, this life

⁴⁸⁴ Dikran S. Pechedimaldji, *Les eaux du Lac de Derkos et la Société impériale de médecine de Constantinople* (Constantinople, 1881).

⁴⁸⁵ As an interim solution, a pump station was established to bring the waters of Kağıthane River to Pera in 1882, but the amount of water was not seen sufficient to meet the needs of the district, and several people were accused of stealing from the water conduits. See Çeçen *İstanbul’da Osmanlı Devrindeki*, 147; Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople, *Exposition Universelle de 1889. Sections étrangères: Turquie. Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople. Notice de la Distribution des Eaux de Constantinople* (Paris: Imprimerie J. Semichon & Co., 1889), 6-7; “La Disette d’eau,” *La Turquie* 232 October 27, 1882; “Disette d’eau,” *La Turquie* 235, October 31, 1882. Another private company, *Compagnie des eaux de Scutari et Kadi-Keui* began its operations in 1893 in the Asian side, and similar companies were granted concessions across the empire, including Beirut, Salonica, and Izmir, between the 1870s and 1890s. See Noyan Dinçkal, “Water as a commodity? Debates and conflicts on the (de)regulation of water infrastructures in Istanbul, 1885 – 1937,” in *Wasserinfrastrukturen und Macht von der Antike bis zur Gegenwart*, ed. Birte Förster and Martin Bauch (Münich: De Gruyter Oldenbourg, 2015), 214-5.

⁴⁸⁶ BOA, Y.MTV 17/2 (8 Rabiulahir 1302 [January 25, 1885]).

⁴⁸⁷ BOA, İ.DH 938/74292 (6 Rabiulevvel 1302 [December 24, 1884]).

already belonged to a limited coterie, as explored in chapter 2. Thus, the nature of the social circle that participated in the opening event on that early January night, was not probably so different from any other night in the garden.

Indeed, this class of people was the project's first and foremost target. Frederic Briffault, one of the engineers of the project, had elucidated this rather bluntly at a paper he had given at the annual meeting of the Civil Engineers Institute in England:

Too much reliance must not be placed upon the whole of the native population, amongst a large portion of which great poverty prevails, taking the Water. The Author believes that the Company will have a far greater sale for the Water in the European than in the native quarter of the Town.⁴⁸⁸

This newly installed infrastructure, then, was underlining and reproducing the already existing inequalities between different parts of the Ottoman capital. Moreover, this disparity between different parts was not limited to the two sides of the Golden Horn. Inequalities present within and around the boundaries of the Sixth District were represented and reinforced in the operation of Terkos waterworks. A water network plan prepared by the company provides us an inside look into the first phase of the project, aimed to distribute water to the northern side of the Golden Horn, and it is a striking representation of how this modern waterscape of the district was planned and distributed (fig. 13).⁴⁸⁹

The Terkos water first reached to the Feriköy Reservoir, and was then channeled, on the one hand to Galata and Pera, and on the other, through an additional reservoir in Şişli, to the settlements along the Bosphorus. The outer extensions of the network reached to other newly emerging elite neighborhoods, such as Nişantaşı. Two main conduits merged as they entered to

⁴⁸⁸ Quoted in Noyan Dinçkal, "Reluctant Modernization: The Cultural Dynamics of Water Supply in Istanbul, 1885–1950," *Technology and Culture*, 49/3 (2008): 686.

⁴⁸⁹ AK, Hrt. 5783.

Pera, embodied in a “monumental fountain” at Taksim. Here was also located the fire brigade of the district. Embassies and consulates were connected to the system, so were schools, hospitals, and barracks, which were to be provided with water for free.⁴⁹⁰

From Taksim down to Galata, the water network was much denser, as the point here was less to make water available in the main arteries and public fountains and buildings, but also to provide apartment buildings with private subscriptions. The upper parts of Grand Rue de Péra were especially well covered, corresponding to the location of the residences of many wealthy members of the Pera community. In a drastic contrast, Kasımpaşa was almost completely deprived of the Terkos water. While the agreement between Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople and the Ottoman state necessitated the company to build public fountains and provide them for free, these fountains, at least in this initial phase, were very scattered and in no way sufficient for the densely populated working-class neighborhood of Kasımpaşa. A similar thing could be said for Tophane area, another adjacent neighborhood that was within the boundaries of the Sixth District. This plan was thus not only a simple outline of the infrastructure work. It was more importantly a representation of the socio-economic fabric and boundaries of Pera, its inherent inequalities, and how these inequalities were underlined by a physical network of infrastructure that followed the elite networks of the district, rather than aiming to reach a larger public provision. More elites, in turn, followed the waterworks and other municipal services, as noted by Noyan Dinçkal, making centralized water supply a tool for “social segregation.”⁴⁹¹

⁴⁹⁰ BOA, İ.DH 847/68050 (29 Rabiulahir 1299 [March 20, 1882]).

⁴⁹¹ Dinçkal, “Water as a commodity?” 218. Barak also notes the class-based inequality the centralized water provision underlined around the same time in Alexandria. On Barak, “Scraping the surface,” 193.

With ninety-kilometers-long subterranean pipes made of steel and cement, with steam-powered pumps fueled by coal brought from the city of Zonguldak, with monumental fountains at the Tünel Square and in the gardens of the Petits-Champs and Taxim, and the company office located at no. 392 of Grand Rue de Péra—at the cul-de-sac that is still called the Terkos Çıkmazı—the environment of Terkos and the assemblage of Terkos waterworks, albeit unequally distributed, were carved into the material fabric of Pera, following two decades of public controversies and private negotiations, and a construction period of three years.

The Crimean War, and the Layered Environmental Connections

In fact, Terkos had already been a part of Pera’s urban and economic geography. Readers with some prior knowledge of the history of Istanbul and its “westernization” would easily recognize the long-standing trope of the turning point that came with the Crimean War of 1853-1856 for the social life of the city, especially for Pera. It is claimed that the troops of Britain, France, and Sardinia, all allies of the Ottoman Empire against Russia, and who were placed in Istanbul on and off during the war, had played a very important role in introducing their tastes and habits, an overall western lifestyle to the locals of Pera.⁴⁹² True, but apparently, incomplete. For my research has shown that their presence in Pera had immediate material outcomes that far exceeded the geographical borders of the district. The necessity to feed their armies, including the soldiers and animals, had pushed the authorities to find solutions that integrated several rural locations into Pera’s daily economy. A series of documents located in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs archives show that all of the allied powers had their eyes on the pastures of Terkos in order to obtain grass for their horses and livestock. In fact, France and Britain both tried to get concessions for acquiring the grass of the same area in Terkos, for which a crisis among the allied

⁴⁹² For an early and foundational example of this trope, see Engin, *Mecelle*, 1268-1270.

powers was barely averted.⁴⁹³ When one looks at the archives with this perspective, one notices that many legations located in Pera, including the United States of America, Sardinia, and Denmark, had developed extensive ties to the Terkos rural economy, acquiring yearly sums of boars and pigs from the wild and farmlands in the vicinity.⁴⁹⁴ One can even speculate that it was these already established ties that motivated the Crimean war parties to seek their grass in Terkos. In any case, if indeed Pera's urban cosmopolitan character was influenced by the presence of Western embassies, and by the sudden but strong impact of the Crimean War, then we must also concede that the grass and the animals of Terkos had contributed to the development of its unique character.

Establishing these links that were founded before the waterworks is important in order to have a sense of what Terkos meant for Pera's urban development in the larger picture and *longue-r durée*. The rest of this chapter will explore what else was carried between Terkos and Pera along the links established thanks to the waterworks. What else did the springs across Thrace that fed Lake Terkos unleash? How did the waterworks transform its environs and the relations of places and things? If 'cosmopolitan' Pera was dependent on the water of Terkos, which it obviously was, what else did this dependence produce? If Terkos gave its water to Pera, what did Pera give back? With these questions in mind, the rest of the chapter will concentrate on how the relations between various humans and animals, as well as various humans and water sources, were reconfigured with the installation of the waterworks.

⁴⁹³ BOA, HR.SYS 1337/48 (October 5, 1855); BOA, HR.SYS 1354/27 (October 30, 1855); HR.SYS 1354/28 (October 31, 1855); HR.SYS 1354/31 (November 4, 1855). In fact, trying to provide for the needs of the British and French soldiers, the government was forced to divert the existing sources from the local populations, which caused food riots. See Rosenthal, *The Politics of Dependency*, 12.

⁴⁹⁴ BOA, A.}DVN.DVE 9/13 (22 Şevval 1263 [October 3, 1847]); BOA, A.}DVN 73/96 (22 Safer 1268 [December 17, 1851]); BOA, A.}DVN 84/29 (4 Rabiulahir 1269 [January 15, 1853]).

Old and New Actors in Terkos Fauna: Fishers, Ichthyologists, Picnickers, and Hunters

In October 1893, the Ministry of Public Security (Zabtiye Nezareti) received a request from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to grant permission for Dr. Franz Steindachner, the renowned Austrian zoologist and the director of the zoological collections of the Museum of Natural History of Vienna (Naturhistorisches Museum),⁴⁹⁵ to visit Lake Terkos, in order to observe its native fish. The Ministry of Public Security unwillingly accepted the request but assigned a soldier to escort Steindachner in his observations around the lake, and specifically ordered that this foreign visitor should not be allowed to fish, and rather should be handed samples that were already caught. Even though there is no further account of the type of fish collected by Steindachner from the region of Terkos, we know that this internationally acclaimed expert of ichthyology returned home from his expedition around Istanbul with sixty-eight specimens in forty species, the expenses of which he himself covered.⁴⁹⁶ While certainly not constituting a major event in the region's natural or social history, Steindachner's visit marks a period that witnessed the flourishing of new forms of interest in the region's fauna, and hints at the introduction of new actors into the existing relations of humans and animals, partially triggered by the Terkos waterworks.

As already mentioned, Terkos already had ties to Pera through its pasturelands and animals, which were brought to Pera in order to feed the European residents of the district. Boars were not

⁴⁹⁵ One of the few documents found in the Ottoman state archives concerning this visit prematurely identifies Steindachner ("Doktor Mösyö Firenc Estayn Dahter") as the director of the museum, of which he became the interim director in 1896, and then appointed as the full director in 1898, a post he held until his death in 1919. See BOA, DH.MKT 131/11 (1 Rabiulevvel 1311 [September 12, 1893]); and BOA, BEO 280/20955 (13 Rabiulevvel 1311 [September 24, 1893]). For Steindachner's bibliography, see Paul Kähnsbauer, "Intendant Dr. Franz Steindachner, sein Leben und Werk," *Annalen des Naturhistorischen Museums in Wien* (1959): 1-30.

⁴⁹⁶ Dr. Frani Ritter v. Hauer, "Notizen Jahresbericht für 1894," *Annalen des K.K. Naturhistorischen Hofmuseums*, (1895): 30-31. During the same expedition, he also visited Izmit, Eskisehir, Izmir, Edirne, Dedeğaç, Salonica, Skopje, and Prizrend. See Kähnsbauer, "Intendant Dr. Franz Steindachner," 6.

the only animals around Terkos that were affected by the region's developing ties to Pera. Situated on a lake basin with several rivers and being close to the Black Sea, the villagers in Terkos were actively engaged in fishing for a long time. Evliya Çelebi (1611-1682), the famous Ottoman traveler, noted the fishing weirs (*dalyan*) installed in the lake.⁴⁹⁷ In the nineteenth century, some of this fishing was done under the auspices of Bezm-i Alem Valide Sultan Waqf, which owned several land plots around the lake.⁴⁹⁸ And perhaps also suggested by Steindachner's visit, the lake was quite rich in fish varieties.⁴⁹⁹ Even in the 1940s, reports stated that the lake was home to a panoply of fresh-water fish.⁵⁰⁰ The waterworks, however, threw age-old fishing activity in the lake into a controversy. For in 1887, the Ministry of Pious Foundations accused Compagnie des Eaux of harming the profits the Bezm-i Alem Waqf had made out of fishing. The ministry argued that the company's closing of the lake's outlet to the Black Sea in order to increase the lake's water capacity had reduced the amount of fish available to catch.

Indeed, the company's contract with the Ottoman state granted the right to change the course of several rivers, and the topography of the Terkos lake basin—a right the company used extensively.⁵⁰¹ As part of its topographical transformation, the company hastily completed the millenia-old job of the water flowing from the Balkan Mountains: blocking the narrow strait between Lake Terkos and the Black Sea. The work of the water was of course slow and

⁴⁹⁷ Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi 1. Kitap Topkapı Sarayı Kütüphanesi Bağdat 304 numaralı yazmanın transkripsiyonu – dizini*, ed., Robert Dankoff, Seyit Ali Kahraman, and Yücel Dağlı (Istanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2006), 285.

⁴⁹⁸ Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*, 56.

⁴⁹⁹ The British Museum inventories feature a couple of fish varieties collected from Terkos Lake as well, sold to the Museum by Alexander van Millingen, professor at the Robert College in Istanbul, famed for his works on the historical topography of the city. See Albert C. L. Günther, *Catalogue of the Fishes in the British Museum*, vol.5 (London: Order of the Trustees, 1864), 429.

⁵⁰⁰ Saadi Nazım Nirven, *İstanbul Suları* (Istanbul: Halk Basımevi, 1946), 196.

⁵⁰¹ BOA, İ.DH 847/68050 (29 Rabiulahir 1299 [March 20, 1882]).

unintentional; it was a result of the materials being carried along the water and piling up at the edge of the lake. The company's move, on the other hand, was sudden and intended to turn the natural lake into a fresh water reservoir, reducing the saltiness and limiting the loss of water to the tides between the lake and the sea.

The conflict was eventually resolved by an agreement between the ministry and the company, as the latter was granted the exclusive rights and concessions to fish in the lake, in return for an annual fee of two hundred *kuruş* to be paid to the ministry.⁵⁰² This settlement did not satisfy many of the villagers, however, as their individual activities in the lake were restricted by this agreement. Indeed, the archives contain many complaints coming from the villagers who had previously worked with the waqf, which entailed fishing in the lake and then paying taxes, a practice now subjected to the restraints and, according to the villagers, excessive fees by the company.⁵⁰³

Thus, fishing in Terkos became increasingly dependent on the decisions of an international company whose headquarters was situated in Pera, and whose activities were determined by various other concerns than those of the local villagers. Compagnie des Eaux, which invested into the environment of Terkos in order to profit from its inanimate natural resources now expanded its domains into the world of the living, integrating the variety of fish found in the lake into its assemblage of concrete, steel, and water.

Obstructions put against individual fishing activity by the hands of the company looks much more significant when seen in the light of another concurrent phenomenon concerning the Terkos fauna: the development of leisure hunting. Again from Evliya Çelebi, we know that Terkos

⁵⁰² Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*, 117.

⁵⁰³ BOA, DH.MKT 1764/128 (11 Safer 1308 [September 26, 1890]); BOA, BEO 346/25932 (13 Recep 1311 [January 20, 1894]).

was an occasional hunting ground (*sayd-gâh*), especially for various types of ducks, geese, and swans; attracting even the attention of Sultan Mehmet II (r. 1444-46, 1451-81), who had hunted in the area before the conquest of Constantinople.⁵⁰⁴ But despite such precedence, Terkos had never become one of the most popular hunting destinations of the Ottoman elites residing in Istanbul before the late nineteenth century. Even though hunting expeditions into the outskirts of the city were commonplace, small forests (*koru*) used as hunting grounds with specifically built mansions in the much closer vicinity of the city, where the imperial household had the exclusive right to hunt, were the predominant hunting geographies of the Ottoman capital.⁵⁰⁵

However, towards the end of the nineteenth century, I argue, the increasing integration of Terkos into the urban imaginations of the elites of the nineteenth century, thanks to plans to install waterworks around the region, triggered a new interest shown to this area as a favorite place for leisure hunting. Terkos, and especially Karaburun, were particularly fruitful grounds for the passage of quail, which had never been a popular game bird for the Ottomans because it was considered too small to hunt, but now attracted new as European hunting fashions began to take root in Istanbul, especially among the elites resident in Pera and Kadıköy.⁵⁰⁶ Gradual deforestation due to urbanization, combined with excessive hunting, resulted in a decrease of the number of local game birds towards the turn of the century, and drew the attention of hunters and enthusiasts to northern shores of the city, which were the passing grounds of migrant species.⁵⁰⁷ With

⁵⁰⁴ Evliya Çelebi, *Evliya Çelebi Seyahatnâmesi*, 220, 236, 316.

⁵⁰⁵ Tülay Artan, “Ahmed I’s Hunting Parties: Feasting in Adversity, Enhancing the Ordinary,” in *Starting with food: culinary approaches to Ottoman history*, ed. Amy Singer (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2011), 95; Güler Yarcı, “Osmanlıda Avcılık Yasaları,” *Acta Turcica* 1, no. 1 (January 2009): 125; Selim Somçağ, “Avcılık,” in *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 1994), 427.

⁵⁰⁶ Somçağ, “Avcılık,” 426-429; Tchihatchef, *İstanbul ve Boğaziçi*, 95-96.

⁵⁰⁷ Somçağ, “Avcılık,” 427.

engineers, chemists, physicians, and company officials who were in close contact with foreign legations flowing to Terkos from the 1870s onwards, the region was gradually put into the hunting and leisure map of Istanbul's environs.

After breakfast we shouldered our guns and sallied forth. The weather was still very cold, with a strong, bitter north wind, blowing in from the Black Sea. We walked along the north shore of the lake for about two miles, and then came up to a large patch of open water, and this was literally swarming with wildfowl. There must have been millions of them.⁵⁰⁸

In the words of Charles Cooper Penrose Fitzgerald, a British naval officer stationed in Istanbul in 1879-1880, Terkos provided the perfect environment for hunting especially in the harsh winter conditions, when “[each] succeeding shot put up some more birds, and they all [escaped to the Black Sea]; but when they got [there], they apparently found it was too rough for them, for they all came back again... Truly they were between the devil and the deep sea.”⁵⁰⁹ While it was the British Consul who recommended him Terkos for hunting escapades, the region was yet to be well-known by the resident European community of the city, manifested in the troublesome journey of Fitzgerald's party who spent three days to cover thirty miles, frequently getting lost along the way. Increased interest in the region due to the activities around Terkos water gradually made the vicinity a more familiar destination for visitors looking for recreation, and, once construction began, picnickers thronged the area with the aim of reveling in the spectacles provided not only by nature but also by the construction itself, as a manifestation of the wonders of modern technology.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁸ Admiral Charles Cooper Penrose Fitzgerald, *From Sail to Steam, Naval Recollections, 1878-1905* (London: E. Arnold, 1916), 65.

⁵⁰⁹ Fitzgerald, *From Sail to Steam*, 66.

⁵¹⁰ Kazgan and Önal, *Istanbul'da Suyun Tarihi*, 37.

Indeed, after the opening of the waterworks, Ottoman officials began to receive an increasing number of requests for foreign subjects for permission to hunt around Terkos, probably inspired by the accounts of the fellow members of their social circles who were commissioned in the region in order to work for the project. The largest group of people that frequented Terkos with the intention to hunt was the members of the foreign diplomatic legations resident in Pera. The archives show that German, Swedish, and Italian ambassadors, the British military attaché, and their entourages, visited, hunted, and fished in and around Terkos.⁵¹¹ Leisure hunting in Terkos became such a feature of the period's elite culture that caricatures in the satirical press ridiculed it.⁵¹²

Another *beastly* link formed between Terkos and Pera was the increasing popularity of live quails, caught in big numbers with the help of hunting nets around Terkos and Karaburun, and sent to Pera's Fish Market to be sold in the charcuteries that catered for Pera's 'cosmopolitan' community.⁵¹³ And one of the biggest retail stores of the city, Baker Department Store (*ticarethanesi*), located in Galata and selling expensive guns, outfits, gears and accessories imported from various European countries, catered for the enthusiasts of hunting.⁵¹⁴ Hunting trips to the region were made easier especially for a larger community of enthusiasts as the Rumeli Railways was launched in 1871, which not only gradually connected the empire to European capitals, but also the Ottoman capital city to its suburbs, and the station of Çatalca, opened in 1872, provided a relatively easy access to Terkos.⁵¹⁵

⁵¹¹ BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 186/74 (8 Şaban 1320 [November 10, 1902]); BOA, Y.PRK.ASK 222/27 (21 Recep 1322 [October 1, 1904]).

⁵¹² Reproduced in Kazgan and Önal, *İstanbul'da Suyun Tarihi*, 94.

⁵¹³ Somçağ, "Avcılık," 427.

⁵¹⁴ Maison Baker, *Catalogue général illustré* (Constantinople: Imp. du Levant Herald, 1908).

⁵¹⁵ Vahdettin Engin, *Rumeli Demiryolları* (Istanbul: Eren, 1993), 108. It was also very common for the (temporary) residents of the European legations and other elites in Tarabya to ride to Terkos

Waterworks, in the end, had left its mark on the various forms of interconnections among humans and animals as a new form of dependence was created between the city and its northwestern periphery. Animals that were part of a relatively local economy mostly geared towards subsistence were made part of a regional, and even an international economy of large-scale profit and leisure. While the local villagers' autonomous access to their natural environments had been put into increasing control and limitations, Pera's 'cosmopolitan' community became more and more present in the area's food chain, as their interest and contact with the birds, boars, and fish of Terkos expanded. The impact of Terkos waterworks turned out to be crucial for the remaking of the human and animal relations in the region.

This is a reminder that the celebrated diversity and the formation of elite urbanities in the fin-de-siècle Pera were not restricted to the *jardins*, but moved in between places, and affected larger geographies than the district boundaries. Just like the water of Terkos was a vital resource upon which Pera's elite spaces depended, rural areas of Terkos provided leisure spaces and animals for the newly emerging tastes and hobbies of those elites, as physical and—it must be said—*deadly* manifestations of elite cosmopolitanism. These hunting parties constituted another channel of interdependence between 'cosmopolitan' Pera and 'peripheral, rural, natural' Terkos, challenging the dichotomous positioning of those geographic and cultural entities, and leaving footprints on the environment. Following Lefebvre, the hunting grounds of Terkos could be said to be part of the "urban fabric," which "does not narrowly define the built world of cities but all manifestations of the dominance of the city over country,"⁵¹⁶ as it was the same dialectical process that marked

through the Belgrad Forest. See, for example, Henry Morgenthau, *United States Diplomacy on the Bosphorus: The Diaries of Ambassador Morgenthau, 1913-1916* (Princeton: Gomidas Institute, 2004), 370.

⁵¹⁶ Henri Lefebvre, "From the City to Urban Society," in *Implosions/explosions: Towards a Study of Planetary Urbanization*, ed. Neil Brenner (Berlin: JOVIS, 2014), 37.

the countryside of Terkos as a leisure ground also limited the villagers' access to their natural surroundings. The limited sociability of *jardins*, in a sense, were exported to Terkos rural, in exchange for the water that would flow in the taps of private bathrooms, and for birds to be sold in the markets of Pera.

Changing the Flow

With the increasing presence of Pera in Terkos through the material and spatial reconfiguration caused by the waterworks, the villagers living around the lake not only witnessed their access to the animal world being restricted, but their ability to use their domestic water sources, as well as to protect their immediate surroundings from the harmful impacts of water, also diminished (fig. 14). This was a stark contrast to the waters under the auspices of pious foundations, which left the local control and maintenance of waterworks to villagers, who had been exempted from certain taxes and levies in return of their regular efforts.⁵¹⁷

The villagers of Celep and Pınarhisarı (Hisarbeyli), two neighboring villages close to the southern shores of the Lake Terkos, more directly and acutely felt the severe impact of the newly installed waterworks. A memo sent to the Ministry of Interior Affairs in 1887, only two years after the water of the lake began to be pumped to Pera, informed the bureaucrats of the Ottoman capital that many fields, including farms and meadows of these two villages, were flooded, causing huge material loss. The memo went on to quote the harmed villagers accusing the water company of the floods.⁵¹⁸

⁵¹⁷ Gülfettin Çelik, *İstanbul Su Külliyyatı XIV: Vakıf Su Tahlilleri, Su Hukuku ve Teşkilatı* (Istanbul: İstanbul Araştırmaları Merkezi, 2000), 86-87. See also Alan Mikhail, *Under Osman's Tree*, esp. chapter 1, for a study of the local dynamics of irrigation in Ottoman Egypt.

⁵¹⁸ BOA, DH.MKT 1448/55 (1 Muharrem 1305 [September 19, 1887]).

As we have seen, the waterworks had blocked the natural passage between the lake and the Black Sea to make the former a ‘natural’ reservoir. However, soon after the waterworks began to operate, with heavy rainfalls and melting of the snow in the Balkan Mountains in spring, the excess water flowing into the lake could not have found an output, and flooded the nearby villages of Celep and Pınarhisari. As Stéphane Castonguay notes, in various geographies of the world, villagers in riparian settlements tend to develop mechanisms to cope with recurring floods as “structural elements of the landscape.” But in many cases, extreme events are “constructed” through mediation by external forces that alter the landscape, which increase the vulnerability of the local human and nonhuman populations.⁵¹⁹ A series of documents in the Ottoman state archives bear witness to the multi-year struggle of the villagers, especially of Celep, trying to draw the attention to their newly constructed vulnerability, and to be compensated for the material loss they had to endure because of the company’s operations.⁵²⁰ The Ministry of Interior Affairs and the Şehremaneti seemed to be sympathetic to the claims of the villagers, yet the company insisted that it could not be accused of wrongdoing for the right to change the topography of the lake was given to it by the concession contract of 1882.⁵²¹ In 1889, the municipality sent its chief engineer Monsieur Leclerq to the region to craft a report about the situation. His report found the claimants right and suggested that the company should compensate the damages of the villagers.⁵²² In the meantime, new petitions kept coming regarding the periodical floods.⁵²³ The archives lose track of the petitioners by 1890, probably suggesting that the company finally sought to compensate the

⁵¹⁹ Stéphane Castonguay, “The Production of Flood as Natural Catastrophe: Extreme Events and the Construction of Vulnerability in the Drainage Basin of the St. Francis River (Quebec), Mid-nineteenth to Mid-twentieth Century,” *Environmental History* 12 (2007): 820-44.

⁵²⁰ BOA, DH.MKT 1512/56 (4 Şevval 1305 [June 14, 1888]).

⁵²¹ Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*, 44.

⁵²² BOA, DH.MKT 1603/74 (9 Recep 1306 [March 11, 1889]).

⁵²³ BOA, DH.MKT 1612/45 (1 Şaban 1306 [April 2, 1889]).

damages caused by the waterworks. However, this did not mean its harmful impact on the lake's environs ended; on the contrary, as reports from as late as 1912 and 1913 suggested, yearly floods continued to ruin the surrounding fields, which were turned into swamps when the water fell back in summer, and polluted the lake as it brought waste from the land.⁵²⁴

The villagers and their habitat became part of this convoluted story of infrastructural and environmental connections in other ways, too. One such issue was the limitation of their access to several of their traditional water sources, the local, small torrents that fed Lake Terkos, which were now to be collected by the company in order to reach to the necessary levels of water distribution for the city. In 1888, the inhabitants of Karaca, Ormanlı, Pınarhisarı, Belgrad, and Çiftlikköy villages wrote a joint petition to the Ottoman authorities, stating that if the company was to use the entire water of Kuşkaya, a local water source used by these villagers, nine water mills located in the villages would become obsolete, their corn fields and orchards would dry, and their animals would die of thirst.⁵²⁵ A similar complaint was made by the residents of the village of Terkos in order to protect their right to use of Karamandere, one of the biggest rivers in the region, which provided for their “necessities of life” (*havâyc-i zarûriye*). Once again, the villagers were told that the concessions agreement had given the company the right to collect the water of these local sources when deemed necessary. Luckily, the actual operations on the river had yet to begin, and that the company was responsible to provide the necessary reserves for the needs of these villagers.⁵²⁶

Whereas the villagers eventually failed to alter the course of the waterworks, they proved themselves to be a force that needed to be dealt with by the state and company authorities. And by

⁵²⁴ Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*, 44-5.

⁵²⁵ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁵²⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 1690/24 (24 Cemazeyilevvel 1307 [January 16, 1890]).

their constant petitioning for compensation for their material loss and access to nearby water sources, they became a much more central part of the company's economic projections and concerns than the poor populations of Pera and its surrounding areas, who, as we have seen, were to a great extent completely ignored by the water network installed by the company. Nevertheless, the altered land and waterscapes of Terkos, which limited the villagers' access to their immediate surroundings and curbed their part in the formation of new material assemblages, eventually forced many inhabitants to seek opportunities elsewhere. As Nazım Nirven noted in 1946, the population of the villages around Terkos actually dropped in the decades after the waterworks began to operate.⁵²⁷

Water as a Threat

I have explored how rural Terkos, with its water sources and animals, was gradually closed to the interaction by the locals, yet increasingly opened to Pera's 'cosmopolitan' urban community, in the wake of the construction of the Terkos waterworks. But this is not to say that the transformation of Terkos into an elite leisure grounds was a straightforward development. On the contrary, the construction of the waterworks and the resulting interest in Terkos created a lot of distress on the part of the Ottoman security establishment, which tried to control the movement of people around the regions where its risk-assessment was of highest levels.

The northwest of the imperial capital, both in Byzantine and Ottoman times, had been outside the reach of the central security apparatus. Byzantines had to abandon their long water infrastructure due to the frequent "barbarian" attacks in the eighth century.⁵²⁸ Ottomans, on the other hand, had coded the region as a hotbed for "banditry," with stories of robbery, kidnapping,

⁵²⁷ Nirven, *İstanbul Suları*, 194.

⁵²⁸ Cyril Mango, "The Water Supply of Constantinople," in *Constantinople and its hinterland*, 17.

and murder swarming the imperial archives.⁵²⁹ As the empire's borders shrank and its territorial integrity was put under greater stress in the nineteenth century, this area gained another level of significance in terms of the security of the capital, making the Ottoman rulers most probably feel what their Byzantine predecessors had felt during centuries of attacks against the city. As Tchihatchef noted,

It is interesting that the successive emperors that governed Constantinople tended to artificially reproduce the great defense line of Balkan Mountain Range. Emperor Anastasius, for instance, built a wall between Silivri and Terkos Lake, the ruins of which could still be observed. This was in a sense the last wall after the Balkan Mountains, and the city walls of Constantinople and the Palace constituted the inner walls, so that the emperor's residence was surrounded by four concentric walls.⁵³⁰

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Silivri–Terkos, or Çatalca–Terkos line once again gained the quality of being the last defense line of the empire. Indeed, only a few years after the first concessions to bring water from Terkos was granted, during the infamous Russo-Turco War of 1877, Russians passed the south of Terkos and stopped at Saint Stefano, present-day Yeşilköy, forcing the Ottomans to accept the bitterest of agreements.⁵³¹ The memory of this most humiliating defeat was too close to home when the actual installation of the waterworks began a few years later, and it hugely influenced the way Ottoman authorities tried to monitor the situation, which manifested itself in multiple layers.

The first was a result of the uneasiness of the authorities on the influx of foreign engineers and other workers to this region, and they tried to implement a strict surveillance of their actions. The surveillance attempts included the building of a military outpost with the explicit aim of

⁵²⁹ For example: BOA, C.DH 205/10242 (29 Zilhicce 1255 [March 4, 1840]); BOA, A.}MKT.MVL 1/19 (8 Muharrem 1260 [January 29, 1844]); BOA, A.}MKT 141/80 (25 Şaban 1264 [July 27, 1848]); BOA, A.}MKT.MVL 93/27 (22 Rabiulahir 1274 [December 10, 1857]).

⁵³⁰ Tchihatchef, *İstanbul ve Boğaziçi*, 7, n.9.

⁵³¹ Şükrü Hanioglu, *A Brief History of the Late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008), 121.

watching the movements of foreigners employed by the water company.⁵³² The Ottoman security establishment also tried to assign soldiers to every group of engineers who traveled in the region in order to map the topography. In one specific instance in 1884, the Ministry of War (Harbiye Nezareti) sent a request to the Ministry of Interior Affairs to give a detailed account of the places the company engineers were supposed to map, and especially whether those places were around the defense zones.⁵³³ The latter responded that the engineers' route did not coincide with the military zones, but the Ministry of War wanted to be sure, and it assigned a "control commission" that would have consisted of one lieutenant colonel (*binbaşı*), one major (*kolağası*), and two captains (*yüzbaşı*). The commission was tasked to watch every move of the engineers, and its members were to be selected among the qualified personnel of the army, as they should have had the necessary skills in order to recognize what the engineers were actually doing.⁵³⁴

The congregation of engineers in the region, and the interest of foreigners to Terkos as a leisurely space also created a security concern on the part of the Ottoman state for potential imposters who "pretended to be engineers." The company engineers were asked to carry with them at all times licenses (*tezkire*), proving that they were in fact engineers commissioned by the company. The same document that ordered the engineers to carry these licenses with them also stated that foreigners who wished to hunt in these environs should get permits from the Ministry

⁵³² BOA, Y.A.HUS 284/67 (10 Cemazeyilevvel 1311 [November 19, 1893]).

⁵³³ As these regions, through expert reports and newspaper articles, became part of the capital city's 'remapped' geography in this period, there was also a hectic activity of actually mapping the area pursued by the Ottoman state, the water company, and foreign powers. These maps, including the ones that outline the waterworks, had no resemblance to the waterworks plans done by the Ottoman engineers in the earlier centuries. Whereas the latter had lavishly illustrated depictions that isolated waterworks and their end points (usually the palace), the new maps of the region were much more simplistic in their artistic dimensions but much more detailed in the information they contained, and they functioned to homogenize the space and to turn the land into an analytical geography of resources, liabilities, and assets.

⁵³⁴ BOA, Y.MTV 15/90 (22 Zilhicce 1301 [October 13, 1884]).

of Foreign Affairs first.⁵³⁵ The state was obviously wary about the potential presence of foreign agents using the authority possessed by the experts in the field in order to wander relatively freely in the military zones very close to Istanbul, gathering important information about the capital's defense lines. The fact that this same document brought together two seemingly different issues would also suggest that in the minds of the Ottoman authorities, too, the newly earned popularity of Terkos as a hunting ground was tied to the construction of the waterworks. Another document forbade all hunting activity close to the military zones around Çekmece and Terkos lakes.⁵³⁶ And finally, engineers' own security when working in the fields was also a cause of concern.⁵³⁷ All of these should be seen in the light of the recent studies of late Ottoman security apparatus, explored by Néomi Levy-Aksu and İlkay Yılmaz, whose research, in different ways, show the extent to the Ottoman state tried to control human mobility and to monopolize the knowledge of space in the late nineteenth century.⁵³⁸

But most importantly, the biggest security risk unleashed by the construction of the Terkos Waterworks came from the water itself. Opening a continuous stream that poured from the northwest periphery to the urban center, to the water fountains of 'cosmopolitan' gardens, embassies, as well as barracks and other state institutions, put all of these places at risk potentially carried by water. State authorities got extremely apprehensive about a possible contamination of

⁵³⁵ BOA, Y.A.HUS 284/67 (10 Cemazeyilevvel 1311 [November 19, 1893]). Authorities always tried to control and monitor hunting activities, and carrying licenses for hunting was not confined to foreigners. However, in their case, they had to obtain permissions from the Foreign Ministry, and there was a specific sensitivity towards their movements around military zones. See Yarcı, "Osmanlıda Avcılık Yasaları," 127.

⁵³⁶ BOA, BEO 131/9798 (11 Cemazeyilahir 1310 [December 31, 1892])

⁵³⁷ BOA, DH.MKT 1463/45 (28 Safer 1305 [November 15, 1887]).

⁵³⁸ Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Asayiş*; İlkay Yılmaz, *Serseri, Anarşist ve Fesadın Peşinde, II. Abdülhamid Döneminde Güvenlik Politikaları Ekseninde Pasaport, Mürür Tezkeresi ve Otel Kayıtları* (Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, 2014.)

Terkos Lake and connected waterways, either by a disease outbreak or conscious human intervention. The water was something to protect, but it was also to be protected from, a risk, an imminent danger from the heart of the country to the heart of the city. Bulgarians, in particular, were the object of a great deal of anxiety, especially after an autonomous Bulgarian principality in 1878 emerged as the single most powerful entity in the Balkans.⁵³⁹ The Bulgarian workers (together with the Armenians) employed in the railroads were fired and Bulgarians in the working in the waterworks were closely monitored.⁵⁴⁰ Furthermore, Bulgarian subjects were prevented from acquiring land around Terkos on security grounds.⁵⁴¹ More crucially, the Ottoman authorities were repeatedly informed by the supposed presence of Bulgarian militants who were seeking to poison the Terkos water.⁵⁴² In order to prevent such outside intervention, a permanent military and police staff, a total of three hundred armed personnel, were stationed around the lake and the company's facilities in Terkos.⁵⁴³ In several instances over the years there were some legitimate concerns regarding the cleanliness of Terkos water. Even though the company and state authorities were not entirely successful in keeping the water pure and clean, no cholera outbreak could justifiably be connected to Terkos water (though Terkos vicinities were affected by cholera in 1912), scientific studies did not show any positive results, and there was no evidence of conscious intervention from outside with the intention to contaminate the water.⁵⁴⁴

⁵³⁹ Hanioglu, *Late Ottoman Empire*, 133-134.

⁵⁴⁰ BOA, DH.MKT 664/52 (8 Zilhicce 1320 [March 8, 1903]).

⁵⁴¹ BOA, DH.MKT 258/18 (6 Muharrem 1312 [July 10, 1894]).

⁵⁴² BOA, DH.MKT 664/52 (8 Zilhicce 1320 [March 8, 1903]); BOA, Y.PRK.ZB 33/57 (9 Recep 1321 [October 1, 1903]). The "vicious Armenians" (*Ermeni fesedesi*) were also targeted as a potential risk group for the waterworks, in the wake of the occupation of the Ottoman Bank and the following massacres against the Armenians of Istanbul in 1896. BOA, A.}MKT.MHM 631/27 (12 Cemazeyilahir 1314 [November 18, 1896]). For the occupation, see Eldem, *Osmanlı Bankası Tarihi*, 231-234.

⁵⁴³ BOA, DH.MKT 793/58 (22 Şaban 1321 [November 13, 1903]).

⁵⁴⁴ Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*, 129-138.

However, those who feared of Bulgarian intervention must have felt bitterly vindicated when in November 1912, during the First Balkan War, the Bulgarian army indeed occupied Terkos, and temporarily obstructed the water flowing to Istanbul.⁵⁴⁵ All official reports and newspaper accounts about this episode underlined the importance of the waterworks for the security of the capital when they talked about the occupation of Terkos.⁵⁴⁶ Overall, the security concerns around Terkos, generated by the waterworks, had to some degree realistic projections towards the future, as soon to be seen in the Bulgarian occupation. But these concerns were also used as a pretext for the Ottoman state to increase its control and surveillance over a region that was very close to the center of its power, but had been somewhat outside of its complete authority. Thanks to the material and ideological investment into Terkos, the state was now much more able in controlling the immediate hinterland of its capital.

Conclusion: Nature's 'Cosmopolis'

Many engineers, integral members of Pera's 'cosmopolitan' community, commissioned to work in various projects in the Ottoman capital in the second half of the nineteenth century, were also asked to prepare reports and craft concrete proposals in order to provide better water supplies for Pera—as the Ottomans loved to 'recycle' the experts they had a temporary hold on. While they offered different solutions and uttered alternative sources, all of them, in their unique ways, offered to connect the peripheral environment to Pera in a better, more efficient, and extensive way. During the long years of discussions regarding the water problem of the district, the expert knowledge and material investment put into the making of Pera's urban spaces attempted to break through its

⁵⁴⁵ Ozan Tuna, "Çatalca Savaşı'nda Türk Donanmasının Desteği," *Studies of the Ottoman Domain* 6/10 (February 2016): 25-58.

⁵⁴⁶ "La Guerre d'Orient. Les Bulgares seraient à Derkos?" *Gil Blas* 13048, November 7, 1912; "La Turquie connaît un désastre pire que la défaite: l'épidémie," *Le Matin* 10492, November 18, 1912.

limits. Finally, with the start of the construction of the Terkos waterworks the material relations, expert knowledge, will to modernization, and ideology of progress, which were shaping Pera's urban spaces, poured into the rural periphery, devouring their "spatial barriers,"⁵⁴⁷ following the route opened by the construction of the railways. But this search for a more efficient and integral connection to the periphery resulted in a set of messy and unequal relations between the various human and nonhuman actors involved, from Terkos to Pera.

Not only did the power generated by water meet the basic requirements of the residents of firstly Pera, and then the rest of Istanbul, in unequal ways. What it further generated was connections between urban and rural that contributed to the formation of an elite class, which not only depended on Terkos water as a life necessity but flourished on its material networks and used it to increase its claim on land, either as part of the 'city' or 'nature,' whether through work or through leisure. The waterworks also caused crucial anxieties regarding security and invited a whole array of military infrastructure to the region that further transformed its social and physical landscape.

Pera historiography, in line with writing on other 'cosmopolitan' urbanities, has been marred by an over-reliance of the sources that exclusively dealt with the urban center, and an over-attention to the architectural façade of the district. Studying the sources produced outside Pera, with an attentive eye to the peripheral arrangements, situates the district within a wider network of humans and nonhumans. It helps us appreciate the fact that the fabric of modern, 'cosmopolitan' Pera was woven through the water of Terkos, mud of the riparian villages, fish of the lake, game stock of the surrounding lands, and the defense lines of an anxious Ottoman state, and invites us

⁵⁴⁷ Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography*, 412.

to explore other forms of diversities that the limited frame of cosmopolitanism not only excludes, but also actively obscures.

It is also crucial, following William Cronon and Timothy Mitchell,⁵⁴⁸ to keep in mind that Terkos as a space of ‘nature,’ categorically different than the rest of Istanbul, did not exist before its ‘discovery’ as a space of vital natural resources, biological diversity, and a wondrous terrain for hunting and leisurely promenade. Pera, too, depended upon this natural world of Terkos, as they co-constituted each other as seemingly distinct entities, even though they were actually part of a larger assemblage of environment, infrastructure, and technology. The waterworks that opened up the periphery into the leisurely attention of urban elites, the railroads that made it possible for them to enjoy the natural scenery and strolls in the woods, played important roles in creating and sustaining the divide.

And in the course of the installation of the waterworks and transformation of the region, the villagers were not passive recipients of the capital, expertise, and authority flowing from Terkos, and many of them rather resisted through their constant petitioning, while others finding employment in the project,⁵⁴⁹ as all of them claimed a place for themselves in the making of ‘cosmopolitan’ Pera, and in the formation of elite networks.

The history of Pera is about any and all actors along this assemblage; it is about the people of Terkos village who struggled for their “necessities of life,” as much as it is about the attendants of the ceremony at the Jardin des Petits-Champs, who celebrated the provision of their district with “the essential element to all life”—one man’s *havâyic-i zarûriye* is another man’s *l’élément essential*.

⁵⁴⁸ Cronon, *Nature's Metropolis*, 7-8; Mitchell, *Rule of Experts*, 35.

⁵⁴⁹ Yurdakul, *Aziz Şehre Leziz Su*, 208.

Chapter 4—By the Waters of Kasımpaşa: An Archival Archaeology of Pera’s Excremental Hinterland

Sewage is the river of [Kasımpaşa]. It flows from Pera, passes through here, and reaches the sea...
Hagop Baronyan⁵⁵⁰

When the Roman countryside had been ruined by the Roman sewer, Rome drained Italy, and when it had put Italy into its cloaca, it threw in Sicily, then Sardinia, then Africa. The sewer of Rome swallowed the world...
Victor Hugo⁵⁵¹

Yuvan sensed there was something funny with the sewers, he snitched, and was rewarded. It was May 25, 1885, and Yuvan, a migrant resident of Ottoman Istanbul, noticed some strange noises coming from the underground in the vicinity of the Beyoğlu Police Station, in the middle of Grand Rue de Péra. He alerted the police, who, upon inspection, found out that several men under arrest for charges of thievery and pickpocketing had attempted to escape from their cells. The method was simple yet effective. According to the police report written after the incident, the prisoners first dug out the stones of one of the water closets found in the jail using a steel knife, opening up a crack in the ground the size of a man, and then proceeded to the local sewer line of the building, and found their way into the main sewers by dismantling several stones with the help of two steel chisels. Had they not been caught, the official report stated, they would have continued to dismantle a few more stones through the sewers and eventually surface in an empty building that was part of the Mekteb-i Sultani complex, the Imperial High School/Galata Saray. The authorities

⁵⁵⁰ Hagop Baronyan, *Istanbul Mahallelerinde Bir Gezinti* (Istanbul: Can Sanat Yayınları, 2014 [1880]), 27.

⁵⁵¹ Quoted in Donald Reid, *Paris Sewers and Sewermen: Realities and Representations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 55.

rewarded Yuvan for his help,⁵⁵² though his name went unnoticed in the district newspapers, as *La Turquie* congratulated the Mutasarrif of Beyoğlu, Arif Bey, who claimed credit for the arrests.⁵⁵³

Prisoners trying to escape from the jail by way of sewers could serve as a good metaphor for those in Pera who were concerned on the state of urban affairs in the district in the 1880s—two increasingly troublesome public anxieties of the period coalescing in one unsuccessful attempt of prison break. During the last decades of the nineteenth century, Pera newspapers were enthusiastic about two distinct purification campaigns on their district, which, in the eyes of its opinion-makers, was an example to the rest of the late Ottoman Istanbul, but subpar according to the standards set by the European cities it so much envied. On the one hand, the police, the Sixth District, and the Şehremaneti cooperated (and many times competed) to ‘clean’ the streets of Pera from thieves, robbers, and beggars—whose numbers rose astronomically due to the influx of refugees after the Turco-Russo War of 1878. Newspapers were an active force in these attempts of purification with their repeated pleas to authorities as well as their constant reportage of daily crimes and their whereabouts, almost serving as a public branch of the police in its record-keeping of Pera’s geographies of crime and pauperism. Authorities were vocal, too, sending yearly reports, updates on their activities, crime statistics, and news of raids, gladly published by the district press.⁵⁵⁴

The other campaign involved fewer policemen and more manual laborers, engineers, and doctors, again with the vigorous participation of the press, and this campaign was more literal in its attempts to clean Pera: From the demolition of the medieval walls thought to obstruct the free circulation of air to the relocation of cemeteries seen as public health hazards, from the opening of

⁵⁵² It is unclear in which way he was rewarded. See BOA, Y.PRK.ZB 3/6 (10 Şaban 1302 [May 25, 1885]).

⁵⁵³ “Chroniques,” *La Turquie* 122, May 28, 1885.

⁵⁵⁴ For politics and technologies of security in the late Ottoman capital, see Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul’unda Asayiş*. For the ‘invisible’ role played by municipalities, see especially 180-187.

public promenades for healthy respiration to the efforts to find new sources for clean and potable water, the activities of construction and destruction in Pera in the second half of the nineteenth century were overwhelmingly tied to a hygienic discourse. And medicalization of the built environment, one might argue, was most evident in the many efforts and failures to establish a working sewage system.

The accentuated attention to the city's streets, resulting from the emerging ideas of the importance of urban circulation, the introduction of new transport systems such as tramways, and the commercialization of public spaces through the emergence of arcades, restaurants, hotels, also drew the attention of many commentators to what laid beneath the streets they strolled. The connection made by the contemporary observers between the transformation in the built environment and modes of transportation they witnessed above the ground, and the failures in the underground, was best exemplified by Dr. Margossoff in a piece published in *Journal des Travaux Publics de l'Empire Ottoman* in 1873.⁵⁵⁵ "When our fathers," Margossoff reminisced, "still addicted to the nonchalant habits of patriarchal life, [they] lived in a very limited material and moral sphere [and] could suffice with the imperfections of the streets of Constantinople." This could no longer be the case, he stated, for "the progress has violently broken through and has imposed on us the demands and necessities, feverish agitations of modern life." When all kinds of cars, omnibus, tramways "travel all over the city," and the conduits of water and gas "crisscross its soil," the condition of the roads, "with their more than primitive pavements and often uncovered sewers, puddles and precipices, revolting people and stray dogs, is a blatant violation to the progress." He argued that the pavement of the streets should go hand in hand with the installation of urban drainage, water supply, and sewage systems, accompanied with the lighting of main

⁵⁵⁵ Quoted in Caston, "Les exigences de la vie," 251.

arteries, cleaning of the streets from filth and dead animals, and “surveillance.” The urban space was considered as a comprehensive entity with over- and underground units, which could be dissected and fixed as individual yet interconnected parts—an assemblage of material fragments and mechanisms of social control.

This chapter explores how Pera managed its waste from the second half of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. It will show how waste, particularly human waste, came to dominate the debates of urban life in this period, and how it turned into a nexus through which issues of class, hygiene, and civilization were conjoined. In this capacity, waste has the potential to link the various infrastructure projects so far dealt with in this dissertation.

Three years prior to Margossoff’s article, the recently founded Civil Medical Council (Conseil Médical Civil – Cemiyet-i Tıbbiye-i Mülkiye) issued a report on the sewage infrastructure on the city, titled “Travail sur le Question des Égouts.”⁵⁵⁶ With a special focus on the conditions of the Sixth District, the report did not “hesitate to declare [that] *Galata and Pera form a vast urinal.*”

When the council, with no hesitation, declared that Galata and Pera were urinals, it was obviously using an analogy to make its point on the dire state of waste management in the district. Nevertheless, in order to follow the general thread in this second part of the dissertation focusing on material connections that took the story of the making of Pera out of district’s boundaries, in this chapter I propose to take the words of the council not only seriously but also literally and ask,

⁵⁵⁶ Conseil Médical Civil, “Travail sur le Question des Égouts présenté a l’Autorité Supérieure,” 1870. Quoted in “La Question de l’hygiène public,” *La Turquie* 85-86, April 10-12, 1879. The council was founded in 1869 within the Imperial Medical School (*Mekteb-i Tıbbiye-yi Şâhâne*) and was tasked with appointing physicians and pharmacists to municipalities, giving work permits to foreign health care professionals, and providing expertise to public health matters. See Nuran Yıldırım, “Sağlık Hizmetleri,” *Dünden Bugüne İstanbul Ansiklopedisi*, vol. 6 (Istanbul: Türkiye Ekonomik ve Toplumsal Tarih Vakfı, 1994), 403.

if Galata and Pera did indeed *form a urinal*, where the district's urine was dumped. The basic premise of this chapter is then to follow the—often unintended—connections made possible by the district's sewage, and to scrutinize what these connections made to Pera's material, or rather, *excremental* hinterland.

This journey tracing Pera's sewage leads us in this chapter to a part of Istanbul that has so far in the dissertation made its presence felt in more subtle ways: Kasımpaşa. The quarter is one of the neighborhoods visited by Hagop Baronyan (1843-1891), arguably the most creative and influential humorist of the late Ottoman society, in his humorous treatise on Istanbul in the late nineteenth century, *A Walk in the Quarters of Constantinople*. Bordering Pera, Kasımpaşa had been one of the affluent neighborhoods of the Ottoman capital until the early nineteenth century. In the nineteenth century, and especially after the fire of 1821, the class composition of the inhabitants changed, in large part due to the presence of the growing Imperial Arsenal and the sizable working-class population it attracted.⁵⁵⁷ The working-class identity of Kasımpaşa was further strengthened as the first factories and modern industries were established along the Golden Horn shoreline, making the quarter especially prone to mass migration from other parts of the empire.⁵⁵⁸

In Baronyan's journey through Kasımpaşa we read how social differences among the various geographies in the Ottoman capital were marked on the city's topography: "Just like rose has its thorns, you cannot think of Kasımpaşa without the sewers. As those who love roses should

⁵⁵⁷ S. Faruk Göncuoğlu and Esma Kayar, *Denizcilerin Karargâhı Kasımpaşa* (Istanbul: Beyoğlu Belediyesi, 2012), 17. For the transformation of the Imperial Arsenal in the nineteenth century, see Akın Sefer, "The Arsenal of Ottoman Modernity: Workers, Industry, and the State in Late Ottoman Istanbul," (PhD diss., Northeastern University, 2018).

⁵⁵⁸ Sezer, *Kasımpaşa*, 127; Sait Türkhan, "19. ve 20. Yüzyılda Haliç'te Çevre Sorunları ve Deniz Kirliliği," *Toplumsal Tarih* 169 (Ocak 2008): 60-66; İlber Ortaylı, *İstanbul'dan Sayfalar* (Istanbul: İletişim Yayınları, 1995), 235.

endure their thorns, those who live in Kasımpaşa should show respect to the sewage.”⁵⁵⁹ And more strongly and dialectically, he says, “Sewage is the river of this quarter. It flows from Pera, passes through here, and reaches the sea...”⁵⁶⁰

No wonder the column Baronyan wrote for the Armenian periodical *Tatron*, which constituted the basis for his book, was initially called “Political Geography.”⁵⁶¹ What was present in the writings of Baronyan and in many other authors of the era, but mostly lacking in the modern scholarly work on Istanbul, is an eye for the political/social geography of urban development. While Baronyan and his contemporaries have been frequently cited in the urban historiography of Istanbul, the geographical power relations they drew upon between different parts of the city have often been overlooked.

This chapter, following the thrust of Baronyan’s words, continues the undertaking of the previous chapter in disentangling the *liquid-making* of Pera in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and *provincializing* Pera as the object of our historical inquiry. Accordingly, I first review the available literature on the historical sewers. As it soon becomes clear, the limited literature on the subject, especially with respect to the geographic distribution of sewers in Istanbul, invites the researchers to find unconventional sources to work with. In my case, I am helped by toponymy to discover the several routes taken by Pera’s sewage in the late nineteenth century. As these routes are located in the heart of Kasımpaşa, the remaining part of the chapter will explore how Pera’s waste—and its eventual disappearance—produced Kasımpaşa’s spaces, from its working-class neighborhoods to historical orchards.

⁵⁵⁹ Baronyan, *İstanbul Mahallelerinde*, 27.

⁵⁶⁰ Baronyan, 29.

⁵⁶¹ Kevork Bardakjian. *Hagop Baronian's Political and Social Satire* (Dphil diss., Oxford University, 1979), 13.

A Brief History of Sewers and an Overview of the Scholarly Literature

The nineteenth-century intellectuals and policymakers were fascinated with sewers as hotbeds of radical dissent and spread of diseases, as the subconscious of modern civilization, and the sign of progress and mastery over urban ‘nature.’⁵⁶² Though as William H. McNeill notes, sewers were by no means a recent invention, with the Cloaca Maxima—the central sewer of Imperial Rome—being one of the most admired marvels of engineering in the ancient world.⁵⁶³ While this much is evident from the archaeological record from all around the world, our knowledge of historical waste management systems is drastically limited, especially compared to the extended literature on water infrastructures.⁵⁶⁴ As environmental historian Joachim Radkau suggests, “It is not all that easy to uncover the history of how humans have dealt with sewage, which gets lost in the darkness of the latrines.”⁵⁶⁵ This is true for the historical sewage systems of Istanbul and other Middle Eastern cities in general, too. There is some written evidence concerning the continuation of the Roman tradition of waste-management in the Byzantine Empire, especially through legislation codes and building regulations; but it is unclear how effective these codes and regulations proved to be in Byzantium’s *long durée* in terms of organizing the built environment and daily life.⁵⁶⁶ As the distinguished Byzantinist Paul Magdalino complains about the dire state of the literature on sewers, “we do not even know whether the New Rome had a Cloaca Maxima.”⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶² Reid, *Paris Sewers and Sewerman*, 1.

⁵⁶³ William H. McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (Garden City: Anchor Press, 1976), 240.

⁵⁶⁴ Giovanni de Feo et al., “The Historical Development of Sewers Worldwide,” *Sustainability* 6 (2014): 3938.

⁵⁶⁵ Radkau, *Nature and Power*, 13.

⁵⁶⁶ De Feo, “The Historical Development of Sewers Worldwide,” 3957.

⁵⁶⁷ Magdalino, “Introduction,” 4.

Sewers began to leave more traces in the built environment and in archival records as we come closer to the modern age. While one factor in this change was no doubt the growing bureaucratization of states and the increase in archival documentation, the principal transformation had occurred in mentalities, a change described by Alan Corbin as “a collective hypersensitivity to odors of all sorts.”⁵⁶⁸ In Western Europe, starting roughly from the eighteenth century, dominant medical discourses have shifted in their emphasis on the importance of clean air, free of poisonous gases otherwise known as “miasmas,” which were believed to emanate from human and animal bodies and their bodily products⁵⁶⁹—as we have also seen in the discussion regarding the transformation of the Petits-Champs des Morts.⁵⁷⁰ Cesspools and primitive drains were targeted as fertile grounds for the advent of foul smells and thus miasmas, believed to cause deadly diseases.

While miasmatic theories had laid the groundwork for a change of attitudes towards the spaces of the dead and waste from the eighteenth century onwards, a new impetus in the nineteenth century came from bacteriology. As successive cholera epidemics swept across the Old and the New Worlds throughout the century, prolonged debates on the nature of the disease and how it spread shook the global scientific and public health communities. Even though the miasmatic theories did linger on into the twentieth century and influenced how people governed their dead and waste, the opposing camp, so-called “infectionism” was backed by the emergent field of bacteriology, proving that cholera and other contagious diseases were caused by microscopic life forms, or simply, “bacteria,” which spread through water and food contaminated by disease. Increasingly, therefore, the question of the sewers was less related to the smell they caused, for it

⁵⁶⁸ Alain Corbin, *The Foul and the Fragrant: Odor and the French Social Imagination* (Hamburg; New York: Berg Publishers, 1986), 4.

⁵⁶⁹ Inglis, “Sewers and Sensibilities,” 115.

⁵⁷⁰ See chapter 2.

was understood that the smell was not an indication of harmful miasma, but now an efficient regulation of waste and full access to clean waters came to be of prime importance. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, many cities in the Western and Northern Europe, as well as in America, established new systems of water distribution and sewage management, informed by this new understanding of the importance of networked sanitation.⁵⁷¹

“Black Channels” and Beyond: Istanbul’s Historical Sewers

Apart from some technical literature on the subject, Istanbul’s sewers have not been subjected to an even descriptive scholarship.⁵⁷² From Anatolian Seljuk and early modern Ottoman

⁵⁷¹ In England, it was Edwin Chadwick, a civil engineer and a “Benthamite reformist,” who was at the forefront of discussions regarding modern waste-management and public health in the 1840s. A believer of the “circulus theory,” Chadwick argued for the installation of an entirely novel infrastructure of sewage pipes and pumps utilized to create a much more powerful motion for water to carry refuse materials outside urban centers. These materials were then supposed to be sold to the farmers as fertilizers, or even processed in fertilizer plantations, which would increase the farming production to be sold back to urban populations, hence completing the “circulus.” See McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples*, 240. In France, it took the efforts of the famous prefect Georges-Eugène Haussmann, and his horde of engineers and workers, to completely overhaul the early modern sewers of Paris, under the orders of Emperor Napoleon III. For Haussmann, the modernization of the water and sewage systems was completely akin to the changes that took place in the city’s street-level with the purpose of creating a modern, functioning urban space with open arteries aiming to fulfill efficient circulation and control, of goods, bodies, and their bodily products. The modernizing rhetoric of Haussmann had its references from the antiquity and alluded to Cloaca Maxima, with the ultimate goal being the transformation of Paris into “the Imperial Rome of our time.” Tall and wide tunnels were built under the newly opened avenues of the Second Empire Paris, meant to collect waste, as well as to circulate water, telegraph and telephone wires, tubes for the postal service, and electrical cables. This meticulously planned and organized underground enabled tourists and enthusiastic visitors to take planned tours, though many of them left the sewers disappointed. The unruly character of the Paris sewers that had “connoted revolution, crime, and contagion,” manifested in and popularized by Victor Hugo’s *Les Misérables*, gave way to the image of an almost sterile accolade for modern urban planning and engineering. See Reid, *Paris Sewers and Sewermen*, 29-50.

⁵⁷² Istanbul Water and Sewer Administration (ISKI), founded in 1981, is an autonomous state body that is responsible for the management of water and sewage systems of the city, and it has been very active in publishing a collection of primary documents and secondary literature. Nevertheless, these collections are almost exclusively devoted to the city’s provision of clean water during the Ottoman reign. See Mustafa İnce, “İstanbul Su Külliyesi,” *Türkiye Araştırmaları Literatür Dergisi* 2, no. 4 (2004): 669-679, for an overview of the collection of primary documents. Similarly, the

periods, scattered evidence exists regarding extended drainage conduits, but there are not many traces of advanced sewage networks in geographies ruled by Turkish-speaking Muslim rulers.⁵⁷³ Most of what is written on the subject is intuitive, as illustrated by Veysel Eroğlu's overview of Istanbul's waste-management, which indicates that rainwater drainage and sewers constructed in Ottoman Istanbul had crossed the sea.⁵⁷⁴ Whereas there is a large body of work regarding the waterworks of early modern Istanbul, with specific references to the accomplishments of Mimar Sinan in terms of providing water to the imperial capital, there is to this date only some hearsay regarding most of the existing Ottoman sewage networks of the city being installed by this great architect.⁵⁷⁵ A scattered and partial network of approximately forty kilometers of historical sewers (twenty in the northern side of the Golden Horn, fifteen in the southern side, and five in the Anatolian side of the Bosphorus), elusively called "black channels" (*kara kanallar*), does exist. But it is unclear which parts of these sewers were built during the Byzantine and which were built during the Ottoman times, as they have not been subjected to a comprehensive archaeological inquiry.⁵⁷⁶ It has been argued that these sewers, at least part of them, were originally built as water

first book they printed, *Tarih Boyunca İstanbul Suları ve İstanbul'un Su ve Kanalizasyon Sorunu* was indicative of what was to come: Out of 230 pages of the book, only 10 were devoted to the sewers. See *Tarih Boyunca İstanbul Suları ve İstanbul'un Su ve Kanalizasyon Sorunu* (Istanbul: İstanbul Su ve Kanalizasyon İdaresi, 1983). Officials of the administration, which is a successor of Istanbul Municipality's Water and Sewage Department, which itself was founded after Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople was nationalized in 1933 and made part of the state structure claim that the administration does not hold any documents from the nineteenth century apart from maps and plans. This latter collection, however, was being transmitted to BOA, and was not available to the researchers at the time of the writing of this dissertation.

⁵⁷³ Gülşen Dişli and Zuhul Özcan, "Waste and Clean Water Systems in Anatolian Seljuk and Ottoman Period Hospitals," *International Journal of Academic Research* 6, no.3 (May 2014): 172.

⁵⁷⁴ Veysel Eroğlu, "İstanbul'da Atık Su Yönetimi," in *Büyükşehirlerde Atıksu Yönetimi ve Deniz Kirlenmesi Kontrolü Sempozyumu* (Istanbul: İstanbul Su ve Kanalizasyon İdaresi, 1998), 12.

⁵⁷⁵ See chapter 3 for an overview of this literature. R. Feyzi, "İstanbul'un Ortasından İstanbul'a Bir Bakış!" *Kişisel Arşivlerde İstanbul Belleği Taha Toros Arşivi*, accessed October 2, 2018, <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/38314212.pdf>.

⁵⁷⁶ DAMOC, *Master Plan and Feasibility Report for Water Supply and Sewerage for the Istanbul*

conduits and later turned to serve for sewage collection. Their sizes vary from thirty – forty centimeters to two meters, shaped in rectangular or square forms, and covered with cut stone. Some of them were in use as late as the 1970s and were considered to be largely in “good shape,” even though they were “partially filled with grit, requiring frequent maintenance.”⁵⁷⁷

Conventional histories of Istanbul’s sewage infrastructure jump from the “black channels” to the twentieth-century investments, largely bypassing any late Ottoman attempts to transform the city’s underground.⁵⁷⁸ Similarly, apart from some passing references concerning the Sixth District’s installation of sewers under some main streets as part of its modernization efforts,⁵⁷⁹ there has been no study devoted to Pera’s waste management, or a serious tackling of the question of sewers in the context of the district’s urban development. One exception of this is the plans for

Region, vol. 1 (Los Angeles, 1971), I-47. This 1971 report is the basis of our vague knowledge regarding the “black channels,” repeated in other works of scholarship. *Master Plan and Feasibility Report for Water Supply and Sewerage for the Istanbul Region* was prepared by an American consortium, DAMOC (Daniel, Mann, Johnson & Mendenhall/Alvord, Burdick & Howson /Motor-Columbus/Checchi and Company), under the authority of the Turkish Republic, the Istanbul Municipality, and the World Health Organization, and realized with funds made possible by a World Bank loan. The DAMOC Master Plan was based on a detailed survey of the city’s topography, water resources, waste production, as well as existing infrastructure, resources, and future projections, and it proposed a comprehensive strategy to be implemented.

⁵⁷⁷ DAMOC, *Master Plan*, vol. 3. Pt.1, II-1.

⁵⁷⁸ Accordingly, the first large-scale sewer project for the city is accepted to be prepared in 1919 in the wake of World War I, when the city was under the *de facto* occupation of the Allied forces. We know the existence of this plan thanks to a 1919 City of Istanbul map, which shows the proposed sewage system, to be implemented solely in the intramural Istanbul. It consisted of “mains, interceptors, lift stations, and screening plants. The collected sewage was to be discharged to the Golden Horn or the Sea of Marmara after coarse screening.” During the first decades of the Republican period, there were several European engineers commissioned to prepare master plans for water provision and sewage management. Dr. Wild, who later became the Building Commissioner of Berlin, served for a long time as the city’s primary authority of sewage planning until late 1930s, and prepared a new plan to serve Istanbul proper, Eyüp, Beyoğlu, Besiktaş, parts of Şişli and Ortaköy, as well as Üsküdar and some portions of Kadıköy. In the late 1950s, another German sewage expert, Dr. Dietrich Kehr was commissioned to oversee sewer management in Istanbul and to prepare a master plan. These plans constituted the basis of the DAMOC plan. See DAMOC, *Master Plan*, vol. 3. Pt.1, II-18-II-19 and *Tarih Boyunca İstanbul Suları*, 139.

⁵⁷⁹ Çelik, *Remaking Istanbul*, 58; Neumann, “Modernitelerin Çatışması,” 437.

“Existing Sewers” included in the DAMOC documents. These plans and accompanying tables show several sewage sections that were dated to 1870, 1870 - 1920, and 1910, as well as those for which “no information available (NIA).” Most of the last category should be assumed to date to early modern—and presumably earlier —period. The other pre-republican dates should be approached with caution and taken at best as approximates.

Osman Nuri’s *Mecelle-i Umur-u Belediyeye* offers some context for Istanbul’s changing relationship to waste in the nineteenth century. While similarly silent on actual projects, and unspecific regarding the spatial manifestations of sewage connections, his collection of successive regulations on urban governance manifests the official mindset in the period. During the Tanzimat period, regularization of street network and the cleanliness of streets and public spaces became important areas through which the reorganized state aspired to show its new, orderly face to the public and to the outer world.⁵⁸⁰ After several changes in the bureaucratic organization—a common theme of the Tanzimat era—waste-management was put under the responsibility of the Şehremaneti and district municipalities with the 1868 Municipalities Law.⁵⁸¹ Even before that, however, more localized interventions in how the authorities controlled the urban space involved a changing attitude towards the city’s relation to waste.

Commission for the Order of the City (Intizâm-ı Şehir Komisyonu), authorized by the Ottoman state, convened in 1856 and composed mostly of the wealthy landowners of Galata and Pera, gave an outline on how the urban governance in Istanbul had to be transformed.⁵⁸² The commission urged the state to be granted full responsibility and complete financial autonomy

⁵⁸⁰ Çelik, *Remaking Istanbul*, 42.

⁵⁸¹ Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyeye*, 912.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, 1278.

regarding several urban matters, but they prioritized sewers and sanitation.⁵⁸³ Similarly, when the Sixth District was founded one year later, the primary aim of this first modern municipal governance was stated as “the organization of streets, that is, arrangement (*tesviye*) of waterways and sewers, and their maintenance in a good quality at all times, their disinfection and cleaning, and in all ways facilitating the passage on the streets.”⁵⁸⁴ Sewage was framed as a problem not only because it was seen a health hazard, but also as a potential impediment to efficient public circulation.

Right in the wake of the Hocapaşa Fire in Aksaray in 1865, which gave the authorities an opportunity to plan and build an entire quarter from scratch according to the new principles of regularization of street network and order, a new commission was formed, this time under the name of the Commission of Street Improvement (Islahat-ı Turuk Komisyonu), which once again strongly avowed the importance of sewers. The charter that delineated the commission’s duties indicated that the reconstruction of the pavements and sewers were under the commission’s responsibility.⁵⁸⁵ And its first recorded mandate was on the organization of sewers, which stated “unless there are grand sewers beneath the streets, no matter how well pavements are made, as sewers are constantly opened, pavements get broken; and water and mud cover the streets in the aftermath of heavy rains; therefore it is necessary to first build grand sewers, before embellished pavements.”⁵⁸⁶

⁵⁸³ Neumann, “Modernitelerin Çatışması,” 432.

⁵⁸⁴ Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 1307-1308. Indeed, the nineteenth-century municipal organizations across the world were very much shaped by the city authorities’ desire to better organize—and in many cases to monopolize— water distribution, sewage systems, and street circulation. See Christopher Otter, “Cleansing and Clarifying: Technology and Perception in Nineteenth-Century,” *The Journal of British Studies* 43, no. 1 (January 2004): 41.

⁵⁸⁵ Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 945.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 951.

Overall, an increasing sophistication of official regulations and codes regarding buildings, streets, and public spaces is palpable from the late nineteenth to the early twentieth century, which pays special importance to sewers. With the newly devised building codes, it became necessary for proprietors to apply the municipalities for permission, to make sure the maps of the area and plans of the proposed buildings were prepared, and to commission engineers to oversee the construction. The Building Code (*Ebniye Kanunu*) of 1891 dictated that a neighborhood as an administrative unit might only be formed if the proposed area had a police station, a primary school, and its streets were paved together with proper sewers. The code gave the responsibility for installing main collector sewer lines to municipalities or private companies that were granted concessions, but particular lines that connected to these main collectors were to be established by property owners.⁵⁸⁷

In accordance with these administrative guidelines and priorities, the Sixth District did indeed prioritize its investments into opening and maintenance of sewers in Galata and Pera. Once again thanks to Osman Nuri, we know that in 1868, the amount of money spent by the municipality on sewers and pavements was 280,000 *kuruş*, ten percent of its total budget, and the third biggest expenditure item after the salaries of its officers and the lighting of the streets.⁵⁸⁸ After the formation of other district municipalities and with the growing capacity of the Şehremaneti, a similar emphasis on sewage was felt in other parts of Istanbul as well. Writing in hindsight and with his unceasing modernist and municipal zeal, Osman Nuri claimed in 1914 “There is no question that in the past Istanbul was a hundred times dirtier than the present day. Because a city

⁵⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 1703-1704.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 1334.

that has curved streets without any pavements, sewers, and naturally without any sun and light, cannot be clean (*nezafete sahip olamaz*).”⁵⁸⁹

In reality, however, the archival documents reveal that the standards put by these successive codes and decrees were rarely implemented, especially because the municipalities were devoid of funds and personnel to oversee the building activity in a rapidly growing imperial capital/capitalistic port city. When one leaves the sphere of official codes and regulations and continues to weave through the diverse array of sources, it becomes obvious that the city’s relation to its waste was much more complicated and messier than the linear story Osman Nuri preferred to tell, and the later twentieth-century accounts settled with.

Topography and Toponymy of Regulating Pera’s Waste

Despite the existence of a long series of documents on state and municipal attempts to regulate waste, it is very rare to find documents that deal with the sewage question as a geographical one. Sewers appear in official documents almost exclusively as causes for distress, when certain nodes or edges in the sewer network stopped functioning, as they got full, clogged, erupted, leaked, and caused putrid smells. There are virtually no surviving plans or maps devoted to illustrating the city’s sewage system as it *existed* in the nineteenth or early twentieth century. There was similarly no citywide operation to install new sewers, which would have potentially left more documentary evidence on the vestiges of medieval and early modern sewers, and on what had been planned to install.

As a remedy to this lack, I offer here to use toponymic evidences creatively in order to reveal the topographical connections that were translated into connections of waste between different parts of the town, making it possible to frame the question as a spatial and geographical

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., 911.

one. To put it differently, such a look into the toponymy discloses how certain parts of the city served as edges that connected unequal geographies through a network of urban waste.

A case in point is Çukur, a street with a name that means “hole” or “pit,” located on the western bank of Grand Rue de Péra, in a close proximity to the British Embassy in Tepebaşı. While the word “çukur” did connote different things in different contexts, Ottoman archives suggest that the “çukur” frequently meant to indicate cesspools.⁵⁹⁰ In this context, the word “çukur” signified a primitive solution to the problem of waste, a basic alternative to proper sewers, a purposefully created feature to the urban texture meant to collect human waste and to be regularly emptied.

The semantic relationship between the Çukur Street and sewers was grounded on material reality. A series of documents from the early twentieth century show that the residents of the street were troubled with the lack of sewage infrastructure. They wrote a joint petition in 1905 to the Şehremaneti to ask for the installation of a closed sewer to their street, and they even agreed to raise funds among themselves in order to pay for the construction.⁵⁹¹ The request was justified not

⁵⁹⁰ In one document dated to August 31, 1857, the Artillery Commander was ordered to prevent the dumping of “improper materials such as [animal] intestines and leathers to the newly added pit (*çukur*) to the training grounds (*talimhane*)” located close to Taksim, in order to “avert rotten smells disturbing the neighboring households.” See BOA, A.}MKT.NZD 160/58 (17 Zilhicce 1271 [August 31, 1855]). Similarly, a document from 1898 indicates that the residents of Cami-i Şerif Street of Kasımpaşa’s Hacı Hüsrev neighborhood were using several pits (*çukurlar*) in the absence of proper sewers (*esas lağım olmamasına mebni*), and funds were needed in order to remove the materials that caused the emanation of smells from those pits. See BOA, DH.MKT 2146/82 (26 Recep 1316 [December 10, 1898]). Popular columnist Basiretçi Ali observed that one of the biggest obstacles for the city’s sanitation was “opening of pits, [contents of] which soon go bad and spread the rot (*ta’affinat*) to their surroundings, violating the freshness (*ciyadet*) of air... It is true that the Şehremaneti installed some sewers for buildings in the newly opened streets. But it seems like these sewers were only for these large streets. Houses on other streets are not connected to these sewers. There, people still dig pits.” See Basiretçi Ali Efendi, *İstanbul Mektupları*, ed. Nuri Sağlam (Istanbul: Kitabevi, 2001 [1873]), 137.

⁵⁹¹ BOA, Y.A.RES 145/68 (15 Safer 1325 [March 30, 1907]); BOA, DH.MKT 1140/57 (26 Şevval 1324 [December 12, 1906]). Lévy-Aksu notes the high number—relative to its geographic size—of watchmen assigned to Kamer Hatun neighborhood, probably another indication of the

on the grounds of a universal public health concern or general urban necessities that supposedly dictated how modern urban infrastructures should function. It was rather based on the particular—and unequal—topographical relations between Pera and its surroundings. The documents pertaining to the case clearly indicate that it was “filth/excrement coming from Pera” (*Beyoğlu’ndan gelen müzahrefat*) overwhelming the narrow and primitive sewage line already existing in the street. It is also suggestive that in these documents Beyoğlu was identified as a separate place, a different quarter, even though Kamer Hatun neighborhood where Çukur Street was located was very close to the heart of Pera, only five minutes walking distance to the British Embassy in Tepebaşı. This separation was the making of topography and class and was partially due to how the quarter’s infrastructure worked and/or failed, following topographical curves and class lines. In the eyes of the residents of Kamer Hatun neighborhood, the problem of waste that occupied their physical spaces was not of local origin, but rather forced onto them by the inhabitants of Pera. Pera was where the waste material was produced; Çukur Street was where it flowed through. As Richard Evans puts it, “Environmental pollution was an aspect of social inequality. Its history, and the history of how it was perceived and tackled, was closely enmeshed with the history of class relations.”⁵⁹²

Though the waste flowed through Çukur and other streets from Pera, its final destination was not those narrow streets, unless they got clogged in primitive sewers or piled up on the surface. Due to Pera’s uphill location, its waste, both through open streams and underground sewers, flowed to its downhill neighborhoods. While the east bank of Grand Rue de Péra had its sewers

geographic importance given to the quarter bordering the affluent Pera. See Lévy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul’da Asayiş*, 314.

⁵⁹² Richard J. Evans, *Death in Hamburg: Society and Politics in the Cholera Years* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 111.

run towards Galata and Tophane, the waste of Pera's western quarters was supposed to find its way into Kasımpaşa, as Baronyan observed humorously.⁵⁹³

Kasımpaşa basin was composed of several small rivers and even smaller torrents. One of the two most prominent rivers was Baruthane. Fed by several little streams, the river had a Northeast-Southwest direction, and its name was coined after a gunpowder factory (Baruthane/Fişenkhane) that was built close to the river's northern springs.⁵⁹⁴ The second one, Dolapdere, flowed in a northwest-southeast direction, and was in a much closer vicinity to the heart of Pera, taking its source from the north of Taksim and then forming an almost parallel route to Grand Rue de Péra. These rivers converged close to Kasımpaşa's shore to the Golden Horn, and together comprised the "Kasımpaşa River"—a toponym that the contemporary documents used very loosely, sometimes referring to the short distance the two rivers took together until they reached the Golden Horn, and sometimes to only one of them. This caused later accounts to refer to an almost mythical river the exact location of which was virtually impossible to pin down, as the rivers were covered in the twentieth century, and the local, everyday knowledge of them slowly vanished, as we will see later in this chapter.

In this valley shaped by several streams from uphill neighborhoods, another toponym dominates street registers and district plans: "Akarca." Meaning "small torrent" in Turkish, there are four streets of this name in and around the liminal geography between Kasımpaşa and Pera.⁵⁹⁵ The northernmost of them was Küçük (little) Akarca, a half-street/half-torrent passageway that

⁵⁹³ BOA, DH.MKT 1774/127 (11 Rabiulevvel 1308 [October 25, 1890]).

⁵⁹⁴ The river was formerly known as Kozludere. See Ayhan Han and Aleksandar Shopov, "Klâsik Dönem Osmanlı Mimarisinin Bir Örneği Olarak Piyale Paşa Camii ve Bostanı," (August 2015), 2, accessed September 19, 2018, <http://www.arkeologlardenregist.org/assest/images/Piyalepaşa%20Camii-rapor-DZ.pdf>.

⁵⁹⁵ See fig. 15, 16, and 17 for the locations of these Akarca streets.

connected Dolapdere to Tatavla Avenue. The second one was the Büyük (large) Akarca, a longer and wider street that served as a linkage again between Tatavla Avenue and Dolapdere. Close to the Kasımpaşa Mevlevi Lodge, Dolapdere and Tatavla Avenue converges into Kasımpaşa/Uzun Yol (*long road*) Avenue, and further into southwest meet with Kasımpaşa Akarcası, which connected Baruthane River to this convergence. This final junction took place approximately 700 meters away from Tepebaşı, almost in the same alignment with the British Embassy. And lastly, there was a smaller Akarca street, much closer to Pera than the others, starting from the corner of the Pera Palace and running through the Petits-Champs des Morts until it reached Kasımpaşa lowlands.

All of these *akarcas* functioned, in varying degrees and importance, to collect and direct waste materials and rainwater from uphill areas to the two southbound rivers of Kasımpaşa, as apparent from documents and maps from the period, as well as what their name suggests. The association of diseases with unregulated waste through these particular streets became especially pronounced in the case of these *akarcas*. In a treatise on the “State of the Public Hygiene in Constantinople,” submitted to Abdülhamid II in 1881, Doctor Spiridon Mavrogény, Chief Physician of the Sultan singled out *Kasımpaşa Akarcası (Acartza)*, as a particularly deadly site of “the last great epidemic of cholera”:

The sewers of Kasim Pasa and all the other populous and poor districts of the city and the suburbs, continue to exist as in the past, and to plague these unfortunate localities. One forgets completely the terrible murderous effects that these sewers had helped during the epidemic a very short while ago; a miserable oblivion is reestablished quite as before, and things are going on in their usual course, waiting for these frightful scenes to be renewed at the first harmful occasion. In the sloping road, called *Acartza*, which leads from Tatavla to Yenişehir, where the collector sewer of Pera ends, all this poor and populous district was decimated in the last great epidemic of cholera in a frightening manner. In this district, several doctors, intrepid and conscientious soldiers of humanity, voluntarily sacrificed themselves to fulfill their sacred duty.⁵⁹⁶

⁵⁹⁶ Mavrogény, *État de l'hygiene publique*.

In Mavrogény's scathing appraisal of the hygienic state of affairs of the Ottoman capital, we find a rare geographical insight on how Pera's waste polluted Kasımpaşa, and how this pollution was at the root of widespread disease during the cholera outbreak of 1865-1866. Furthermore, despite the increased attention to the sewers that resulted in stricter regulations and municipal investment in the previous years, in the eyes of Mavrogény things were going "in their usual course." The association of Kasımpaşa with Pera's waste was there to stay.⁵⁹⁷

Kasımpaşa: A Wasted Periphery

Kasımpaşa's topography-related problems with sewage were in fact old. In the 1770s, Kasımpaşa residents petitioned the government to complain about Tatavla's waste flowing into the rivers of Kasımpaşa, and the authorities responded by urging Tatavla residents to use the cesspools devoted to their usage, to refrain from polluting the rivers. But in the nineteenth century, with rapid urbanization in the uphill quarters of Pera and Tatavla, added to the industrial waste produced along the Golden Horn, rivers of Kasımpaşa, and the quarter's shores to the Golden Horn were overburdened by the amount of waste. The Navy Admiral (Kaptan-ı Derya), who had been responsible for the urban management of Kasımpaşa, led the efforts in the mid-nineteenth century

⁵⁹⁷ The neighborhood was not alone in its role to receive and discharge Pera's sewage, Galata and Tophane shared the burden, too. Galata especially received its part of attention as it was the center of financial power that enabled the rise of Pera, and its being confounded under the topography's encumbrance was seen unacceptable. The fact that this area was Istanbul's first contact with the outside world via its port also increased the importance of the sanitation in the eyes of the state and municipal authorities. The most fundamental intervention in Galata's underground of waste came with the work done by Société Anonyme Ottomane des Quais, Docks, et Entrepôts de Constantinople in the 1890s. BOA, Y.MTV. 138/83 (11 Şevval 1313 [March 26, 1893]); BOA, PLK.p. 3388; Alpaslan Demir, "Mice Problems in the Ottoman Empire and Mice Invasion in Tirhala in 1866," *IBAC 2* (2012): 655.

to tax Tatavla residents in order to use the revenue to clean “Kasımpaşa river,” which got clogged with mud and waste materials flowing from Tatavla after heavy rains.⁵⁹⁸

Excessive construction activity, concentrated in Pera and its northern extensions created an additional burden for the drainage channels, which were frequently obstructed by construction debris, as noted by Emel Soyer.⁵⁹⁹ One crucial event in this regard was the destruction of the Genoese Walls in 1864 as we have seen in chapter 1, which evidently generated a huge pile of debris. Even though most of this debris was used to cover the ditches of the walls in order to open up new streets, a large portion was added to the burden carried by the district’s sewers. What was also significant about the destruction of the walls was the uprooting of the physical impediments against Galata and Pera’s urban sprawl, which led to more constructions and more intensified settlement patterns in the area.⁶⁰⁰

Increasing population numbers also meant mounting levels of consumption and a rise in garbage produced by the residents of growing or emergent neighborhoods. Newly instituted horse-drawn tramways escalated the amount of animal feces that piled up in the newly opened streets that climbed from Galata to Pera, populated with new apartment buildings. One of the new services implemented by the Sixth District was the regular collection of the garbage of Pera and Galata with special horse-drawn cars. Two “garbage piers” were established in Galata and Kasımpaşa, the purpose of which was to load the garbage carried by these cars to barges, which would then unload their cargo of waste to the Sea of Marmara. But the carrying, loading, and unloading

⁵⁹⁸ BOA, A.}MKT 91/18 (11 Şaban 1263 [July 25, 1847]).

⁵⁹⁹ Emel Soyer, “18 ve 19. Yüzyılda Kasımpaşa Deresi İslah Çalışmaları,” *Toplumsal Tarih* 169 (Ocak 2008): 68.

⁶⁰⁰ Göncuoğlu and Kayar, *Denizcilerin Karargâhı Kasımpaşa*, 36.

activities in this process created additional waste to spread along Kasımpaşa, which caused distress among the quarter's inhabitants.⁶⁰¹

The distress was not limited to the Kasımpaşa's residents, and in fact, was much more pronounced in the district press of Pera. As part of a series of articles published concerning the sanitary conditions of the Ottoman capital, a report by the Civil Medical Council, originally written in 1870—and proclaimed that “Galata and Pera formed vast urinals”—was published in April 1879.⁶⁰² The stress put on the city's existing infrastructure, the report noted, had greatly grown due to “increasing immigration in the last few years.” The sewers, except in the parts in the newly founded quarters after the Hocapaşa Fire of 1865,⁶⁰³ were rudimentary and completely unhygienic. In many neighborhoods, the report continued, narrow channels with no walls and ceilings served as sewers, which often got clogged with “excremental materials.” In other cases, what served as sewage was just a “loose and permeable ground,” without any masonry work, which made the groundwater susceptible to the hazardous effects of waste. This disastrous state of the city's sewers struck the “poor neighborhoods first,” most notably Kasımpaşa, Yenişehir, Beşiktaş, and Ortaköy, with a “repulsive and pathetic spectacle of open streams strolling through narrow streets, of a blackish, stinky and slimy water, on the alluvial ground, transporting vegetable earth...” This, argued the report, not only caused the release of smells and gases dangerous for public health; it

⁶⁰¹ Türkhan, “Haliç'te Çevre Sorunları,” 64.

⁶⁰² Conseil Médical Civil, “Travail sur le Question des Égouts présenté a l'Autorité Supérieure,” 1870. Quoted in “La Question de l'hygiène public,” *La Turquie* 85-86, April 10-12, 1879.

⁶⁰³ For a very creative study of the urban transformation that followed the 1865 Fire, and especially of the concepts utilized by authorities and *Istanbulites*, see Güçlü, “Urban Tanzîmât.” For an imaginative and literary depiction of the sewers built in Hocapaşa, see Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, *Şipsevdi* (Istanbul: Everest Yayınları, 2011 [1911]). For a discussion of this passage, see Fatih Altuğ, “Modern Osmanlı Edebiyatında İstanbul (1870-1923),” in *Büyük İstanbul Tarihi*, vol. 7, ed. Coşkun Yılmaz (Istanbul: İBB Kültür AŞ, 2015), 164-165.

also ruined fertile grounds for agriculture. After laying out the present conditions of the city's sewers, the report continued by giving a list of solutions to the coming crisis of waste. Other than rather obvious suggestions to implement the state-of-the-art technologies for new sewers and their regular maintenance, what seemed to be essential for the management of waste was to follow, or to manipulate, the city's topography, in order to have efficient sewage mobility from the hills of the city to its plains. Luckily for Istanbul, the report indicated, in addition to the advantageous climate, its "hilly and rugged topography [possibly made it] the most privileged city in respect to good health," since the waste in the uphill, neighborhoods could easily find their way down the topography. What was a curse for Kasımpaşa was regarded as a blessing for "the city" in the eyes of the experts whose reports were publicized in Pera's press, situated in the hills looking down Kasımpaşa.⁶⁰⁴

Another report by the High Council of Health (Conseil Supérieure de Santé de Constantinople) appeared in *La Turquie* in March and April 1879, where the anxiety felt towards Kasımpaşa was extremely palpable.⁶⁰⁵ The report was very critical of the local authorities for the state of sanitary affairs in the city. Dissecting what they saw as unhealthy practices of waste-management, the council argued that the city was saved of being "literally decimated by epidemics" only thanks to "its excellent climate." The reason for the publication of these series, explained the newspaper, was neither to advertise nor to vindicate the doings of High Council of Health in the eyes of the public. It was rather meant to "unite the [council's] efforts with those of the press," in order to attract the attention of the authorities who were responsible to ensure the

⁶⁰⁴ The relative easiness of cleaning Pera should be compared with the difficulty of bringing water to the district, mentioned by virtually every expert report from the period. See chapter 3.

⁶⁰⁵ "Rapport Sur la l'Hygiene Publique à Constantinople, présenté au Gouvernement Impérial par le Conseil Supérieur de Santé," *La Turquie* 51-52, March 4-5, 1879.

city's health. Hence it was a clear manifestation of the role Pera's press strived to play in the reordering of the urban space and making of the public opinion regarding urban matters. The council, consisted of Arif Bey, Eşref Efendi, and Endazian Efendi, determined two distinct categories of nuisance for urban health: The first one consisted of road drains, sewers, public toilets, impure streams, stagnant waters, and other sources that would potentially produce infections; and the second one encompassed spaces and establishments that hosted or dealt with human and animal corpses, including cemeteries, abattoirs, butchers, leather workshops, tanners, and the like.

The report's section on sewers began in a very serious tone: "The capital and its suburbs are in the most deplorable conditions in the case of the sewers." In order to ameliorate this deplorable situation, they pleaded, the open sewers had to be replaced with vaulted sewers that are paved with impermeable stones, installed in a sufficient slope that would prevent any obstruction resulting from over-accumulation of excremental materials. Sewers had to be built in such a height to allow a sewerman to stand, and vents with iron gates installed at intervals of fifty to sixty meters in order to prevent the gas to burst or overflow.

This treatise on technicalities of a functioning sewage system was followed by the geographic particularities: "We call on all the solicitude of the authorities on the filthy stream, called 'Dere,' which runs through the district of Kasimpasha to flow into the Golden Horn near the arsenal." 'Dere,' meaning the "Kasimpaşa River," was seen as the most crucial place that needed intervention, as the paper noted: "Nothing would be more urgent than cleaning this part of the city, which could be a permanent source of more serious conditions for the unfortunate inhabitants of this populous district."

Given that there were actually nine years in between the two reports, the much more alarming voice of the 1879 report could be seen as a result of the additional burden put on Kasımpaşa, as the “sufficient slopes” through which the waste was to be discharged led Pera’s waste into its neighbor downhill in greater quantities.

Especially after the installation of Terkos waterworks and the start of a private subscription-based water distribution system, which meant flowing water for public buildings and households who could have afforded the subscription fee, the burden on the existing early modern sewers and cesspools largely increased. Pera periodicals and commercial yearbooks were filled with advertisements for modern technological appliances, such as private water closets, that targeted those households, promoting to increase personal consumption of water.⁶⁰⁶ Better provision of Pera with Terkos water coincided with gradual diminution of the district’s green spaces, as cemeteries that stretched between Pera and Kasımpaşa were either relocated outside Pera or were lost to development schemes and uncontrolled expansion of settlements.⁶⁰⁷ This meant that waste and rainwaters flowing through Pera, the total amount of which increased due to new waterworks, were less and less absorbed by the soil, and instead poured down unrestrained. What was especially striking and symbolic in this arrangement was the fact that Terkos waterworks, in its initial phase, did not mean to provide most of the households in Kasımpaşa, as only a few fountains were installed in this crowded and rapidly growing quarter.⁶⁰⁸

The combination of several infrastructural interventions in Pera’s urban space, regarded as the hallmarks of modernization and the necessities of modern civilization, thus resulted in the deepening of inequalities between two neighboring quarters not only via making Pera better off,

⁶⁰⁶ Baker, *Catalogue général illustré*.

⁶⁰⁷ See chapter 2.

⁶⁰⁸ See chapter 3, and fig. 13.

but also through worsening the material conditions of Kasımpaşa. Provision of clean water to Pera was translated into Kasımpaşa's *provision* of waste, mud, and debris.

Defeating the Disease with Infrastructure

What especially marked Kasımpaşa and triggered more drastic responses by the authorities was the threat of spreading diseases, and particularly, cholera, similar to other cases of urban transformation in the period, in Istanbul and elsewhere.⁶⁰⁹ Almost all documents from this period that deal with sewers and especially those in Kasımpaşa mention “preservation of public health” (*hifz-ı sıhhat-i umumiye*), which appears in the second half of the nineteenth century as a key phrase that not only manifested an anxiety towards urban conditions and health of bodies that populate the cities, but was also used to justify interventions in public spaces.

Kasımpaşa's stigma was stamped with the Cholera Outbreak of 1865, which was believed to have initiated from the arsenal,⁶¹⁰ and strengthened with the later cholera incidents,⁶¹¹ as well as other diseases, such as dengue fever.⁶¹² As the district attracted a lot of migrant workers—*bekârs*, literally meaning “bachelors”⁶¹³—living in cramped, unsanitary conditions, it was seen as particularly susceptible to being infected by diseases.⁶¹⁴ As Namık Kemal, one of the most

⁶⁰⁹ On Barak, *On time*, 189; Khaled Fahmy, “An olfactory tale of two cities: Cairo in the nineteenth century,” in *Historians in Cairo: Essays in Honor of George Scanlon*, ed. Jill Edwards (Cairo: American University in Cairo Press, 2002), 155-187.

⁶¹⁰ Koloğlu, “1865 Kolera Salgını,” 140.

⁶¹¹ BOA, DH. MKT 1385/80 (21 Rabiulevvel 1304 [December 18, 1886]); BOA, A.}MKT.MHM 596/27 (2 Muharrem 1313 [June 25, 1895]); BOA, DH.EUTHR 51/26 (24 Ramazan 1328 [September 29, 1910]).

⁶¹² BOA, DH.MKT 1655/127 (15 Muharrem 1307 [September 11, 1889]); Société Impériale de Médecine de Constantinople, *La fièvre dengue à Constantinople (été et automne de 1889)* (Constantinople: Imp. Zareh, 1890), 36.

⁶¹³ Işık Çokuğraş, *Bekâr odaları ve meyhaneler: Osmanlı İstanbulu'nda marjinalite ve mekân, 1789-1839* (Istanbul: İstanbul Araştırmaları Enstitüsü, 2016). See also Shirine Hamadeh's forthcoming work on bachelor quarters in the nineteenth-century Istanbul.

⁶¹⁴ Soyer, “Kasımpaşa Deresi,” 77-78; Dr. Louis Mongeri, *Études sur L'Épidémie de Choléra Qui a Régné a Constantinople en 1865 suivies d'un Appendice sur la Nature Contagieuse du Choléra*

prominent intellectuals of the late nineteenth century, wrote, “The cleanliness of a country is the greatest reason for its public health. This requires no other proof for anyone with a little intelligence, who notices the difference of harm caused by cholera on Balat and Kasımpaşa and on Beyoğlu and Büyükdere, every time it arrives at Istanbul.”⁶¹⁵ While provisional solutions were devised to ameliorate the situation, such as the basic cleaning of the bottom of “Kasımpaşa River” and the pools of the arsenal with dredger boats in 1868, grander schemes to transform the valley’s underground were being developed, too. The archives attest to several such attempts and their subsequent failures due to budgetary constraints during the 1870s and the 1880s.

Most of the plans had a basic outline: covering of rivers with concrete vaults in order to prevent overflows and the emanation of bad smells, and opening up frequent manholes alongside the rivers so that the wastewater would more easily find its way to the underground. Among these various plans and proposals, a couple of them deserve a closer look.

The first two of these plans are important in the way they reveal the intricate relations between Kasımpaşa and the international capital rooted in Pera, and between the histories of modernization of two parts of the city. As the budgetary limitations of the Ottoman state came more and more to light, two companies already operating on Istanbul’s infrastructure and located in Pera, Soci  t   des Tramways de Constantinople and Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople, gave proposals to cover the rivers. The former’s first proposal, given in 1873, demanded privileges for additional tram routes in Kasımpaşa and Galata in exchange for the cleaning of the rivers and

et des Devoirs des M  d  cins Sanitaires (Constantinople: Imprimerie de Castro, 1866), 17.

⁶¹⁵ Namık Kemal, *Osmanlı Modernleşmesinin Meseleleri: Siyaset, Hukuk, Din, İktisat, Matbuat. Bütün Makaleler*, vol. 1, ed. Nergiz Yılmaz Aydoğdu and İsmail Kara (Istanbul: Dergâh Yayınları, 2005), 247. “Bir memleketin tanzifâtı hıfz-ı sıhhatin a‘zam-ı esbâbındandır. Biraz akli olup da koleranın İstanbul’a her geldikçe Balat ve Kasımpaşa ile Beyoğlu ve Büyükdere’de gösterdiği tesirâtın farkına dikkat edenler için bu davaya başka bir delil aramak lâzım gelmez.” Original source: “Tanzifât ve tezyinât,” *İbret* 50 (10 Ramazan 1289 [November 11, 1872]).

covering of the rivers, as well as a total sum of eighty thousand liras.⁶¹⁶ Société des Tramways already accumulated some experience in constructing sewers, for it was given the responsibility to install and maintain sewage lines along the tramways.⁶¹⁷ The possibility to work with Société des Tramways for Kasımpaşa's rivers stayed on the table for around two decades, and even revitalized in 1893 with the institution of a special commission consisting of engineers of the Şehremaneti, the Palace, the Ministry of Trade and Public Works, the Sixth District, in order to investigate the feasibility of the company's covering of the rivers and opening up a new route on this newly created terrain.⁶¹⁸

As the negotiations with Société des Tramways did not come to fruition, the Ottoman state and the Sixth District Municipality were forced to mobilize its own resources, which continued to fail them. In the 1880s, even though the necessity to establish a much larger sewage infrastructure was accepted by various parties, the monetary amount needed for such a work was seen as beyond reach. This time it was Compagnie des Eaux de Constantinople's turn to intervene, which, over the course of five years, proposed different schemes to undertake the planned large-scale works. What they demanded in return varied: an extension of its concession to operate the Terkos waterworks, an exemption from the 2.5% share they were required to pay to the Şehremaneti out of their annual revenues; monopoly over the city's entire water distribution systems; and the supplying of coal from the mines of Ereğli in the Black Sea region. Even though these proposals did not go through either, they still shed light on the ambitions to transform the Kasımpaşa valley and the issues embedded in the process. According to the plans submitted by Compagnie des Eaux, the "Kasımpaşa River" was to be covered starting from Kasımpaşa Akarcası, where Dolapdere

⁶¹⁶ Soyer, "Kasımpaşa Deresi," 77.

⁶¹⁷ Ergin, *Mecelle-i Umûr-ı Belediyye*, 2403.

⁶¹⁸ "Dahiliye," *Tarik* 2467 (February 7, 1891), 2.

and Tavatla rivers merged; the sides of the rivers were to be bleached with lime; vaults were to be installed; and the sewer conduits were to be extended into the Golden Horn that would keep the shoreline as clean as possible (fig. 18). The company's chief engineer Paul Boutan, who, as we saw in the previous chapter, gave the celebratory speech in the opening ceremony for the arrival of the Terkos water to Pera, was the one who crafted the plans.⁶¹⁹

While negotiations and deliberations on various plans continued, the Sixth District built partial sewers and constructed of embankments on two sides of the "Kasımpaşa River" in 1886, in order to prevent further pollution. Boutan's plans constituted the basis of another proposal that came ten years later, this time by a German engineer, A. Jasmond, a professor at the Imperial School of Fine Arts.⁶²⁰ Jasmond repeated the observations of his predecessors, that the Kasımpaşa valley was in a wretched state in terms of sanitation due to the lack of a regular sewage infrastructure, mostly caused by the uncontrolled flow of waste and rainwaters into the district's rivers.

The Baruthane River was relatively clean, according to Jasmond, but its waters lost their purity as they merged with Dolapdere, which carried the wastewaters of Feriköy, Pangaltı, and Pera. The diagnosis was once again geographically informed: "We see, therefore, that these districts, by leaving their fecal material in Dolapdere, turn Kasımpaşa into a foul place and a source of mephitic miasmas." The situation became so dire, according to Jasmond, that Kasımpaşa's sanitary question became an issue concerning the entire Ottoman capital, if only the plans to directly connect Pera and Pangaltı to the sea through a central sewer, bypassing Kasımpaşa, had been realized before. Now that Kasımpaşa had already an "infected underground," such a single

⁶¹⁹ BCA, 230.0.0 /68.2.1 (May 8, 1884).

⁶²⁰ BOA, Y.A.HUS 275/120 (28 Zilkade 1310 [June 13, 1893]).

regulator would prove to be insufficient, hence a larger network of sewers had to be established. Thus, according to Jasmond's plan (fig. 19 and fig. 20), Dolapdere and Baruthane were to be equipped with collecting sewers, whereas their convergence through the "Kasimpaşa River" was to be completely covered and replaced by a new avenue, under which the main sewage would flow. Houses built on two sides of "Kasimpaşa River" were to be expropriated to open the ground for the new avenue, and the lands that stood in between Baruthane and Dolapdere were to be reclaimed in order to create a "flower garden." The sewage system Jasmond proposed was supposedly based on the previous work he did in Gebweiler [Guebwiller], a small town in Alsace, as another case for the traveling nature of the nineteenth-century engineering expertise.

Another French engineer, Berthier, revisited this line of plans for the sewage of Kasimpaşa, inaugurated by Boutan and continued by Jasmond. Berthier was already a known figure among the infrastructural cadres of the Ottoman and Istanbul public works establishment, and was later commissioned for the Hamidiye Waterworks, the special project of Sultan Abdülhamid II (r. 1876 – 1909) to bring potable water from Kemerburgaz to Istanbul.⁶²¹ It looks like this familiarity with Berthier made the authorities prefer his service to that of Jasmond.⁶²² The project commissioned to Berthier did not have a radical difference than what was proposed by Jasmond. The map created for it, however, provides an additional value for the historian, as it shows the existing sewers as of March 1894 (fig. 21). Accordingly, parts of Dolapdere and Sakızağacı had some form of sewers already in place, though it is unclear when they were built, or what form of sewage infrastructure

⁶²¹ For an analysis of the Hamidian politics of charity through the case of waterworks, see Nicola Verdareme, "Monuments to charity: Water infrastructures in the Hamidian period" (PhD diss., Freie Universitaet Berlin, 2018).

⁶²² BOA, Y.PRK.BŞK 32/46 (26 Muharrem 1311 [August 9, 1893]). BOA, İ.HUS 16/160 (3 Rabiulevvel 1311 [September 14, 1893]).

they signified. But it is likely that these were the sewers the Sixth District had built in 1886, which proved to be insufficient and required the development of new plans.⁶²³

These projects, no matter the extent to which they received state support, pursued by private interests, and designed by European expertise, did not come to fruition. The rivers continued to flow openly and to be fed by uncovered sewage streams of Pera and Pangaltı.⁶²⁴

A partial covering of the “Kasımpaşa River” was finally realized during Cemil Topuzlu’s term in the Şehremaneti, after the Committee of Union and Progress (CUP) took over the empire’s government. Topuzlu, the “legendary” mayor of Istanbul, served two terms during the 1910s. In his first, short tenure in the office, he led an across-the-board campaign to clean the city, prioritizing the installation of “scientific” sewers, which inspired the famous phrase by Bernard Lewis: “The Young Turks [CUP] may have failed to give Turkey constitutional government. They did, however, give Istanbul drains.”⁶²⁵

The Şehremaneti, under Topuzlu’s orders, finally managed to partially cover the “Kasımpaşa River” with stone vaults as a temporary solution to the waste crisis in the quarter in

⁶²³ BOA, İ.HUS 16/160 (3 Rabiulevvel 1311 [September 14, 1893]).

⁶²⁴ Soyer, “Kasımpaşa Deresi,” 80-81.

⁶²⁵ Bernard Lewis, *The Emergence of Modern Turkey*, 2nd ed. (London; Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), 228. This statement was made famous for urban historians by Zeynep Çelik’s quotation: Çelik, *Remaking Istanbul*, 32. Prior to the infrastructural intervention in Kasımpaşa, Topuzlu’s ‘experts’ prepared reports, like the ones who came before them. What was different in this case, however, was the fact that the Ottoman experts, Celal Esad and Ahmet Cevdet, visited Paris, Berlin, Bucharest, Marseille, Budapest, Zurich, and Vienna, and observed various techniques and policies of sewage removal, rather than the other way around. The reporters, while specific on some implications of their study for Istanbul, such as their warning to not let Pera’s sewers to flow into the Golden Horn due to potential health hazards, nevertheless urged the Şehremaneti to commission “two or three foreign experts, competent in sewage construction, to prepare a scientific study and maps for Istanbul’s sewers.” See Birge Yıldırım, “Belediye Başkanı Cemil Topuzlu’nun İstanbul’u Dönüştürme Uygulamaları” (master’s thesis, İstanbul Teknik Üniversitesi, 2009), 17-22.

1911-1913.⁶²⁶ Indeed, in the 1926 Pervititch plans, the “Kasımpaşa River” is shown to be replaced by an extended Uzun Yol Avenue, whereas Baruthane and Dolapdere—with a reduced length—continued to flow into Kasımpaşa.⁶²⁷ These rivers were eventually completely covered in the twentieth century, leaving the district’s future residents dubious about what laid beneath their streets.

Disrupted Urban Ecologies/Memories

Şennur Sezer (1943-2015), a famous author who spent her childhood in Kasımpaşa, recalls in her memoirs seeing a “vault” separating several orchards and “supposedly covering a river,” the name or the function of which she “honestly did not know.” This must be the vault that was constructed in order to partially cover Baruthane River, which is also shown in the DAMOC plans. “A similar vault,” Sezer continues, “was on the street that is now called Bahriye. This street used to be called Uzun Yol. In this street, apparently, the ‘Kasımpaşa River,’ also known as Kozluca, had flowed. It was covered from Dolapdere to the Golden Horn with a concrete structure, which was introduced to us as a sewer.”⁶²⁸

Sezer’s confusion regarding the river names is no doubt an indication of a largely interconnected valley that was composed of small rivers. But it also signals the transformative impact modern infrastructural work left on the geography of a neighborhood, and how it interrupted the residents’ sense of historical urban continuity. *Tonoz*, the concrete vaults serving as covered sewers, replaced the rivers, and the rivers turned into reminiscences of a lost memory, *the names and the functions* of which were covered by concrete.

⁶²⁶ Cemil Topuzlu, *Prof. Dr. Cemil Topuzlu Tarafından Beyoğlu Halkevinde 11-3-1944de verilen 32 Sene Evvelki, Bugünkü, Yarınki İstanbul Mevzulu Konferans* (Istanbul: İstanbul Ülkü Basımevi, 1944), 27.

⁶²⁷ See fig. 16.

⁶²⁸ Sezer, *Kasımpaşa*, 35-36.

Whereas the unregulated nature of Pera's and other surrounding, uphill neighborhoods' waste had a constitutive impact on Kasımpaşa, the partial regulation of the sewers and the delayed covering of the river system, too, had unforeseen results for the ecology of the lands that stretched between Kasımpaşa and Pera. From the early modern times onwards, just like Pera was seen as a land of cemeteries and vineyards, Kasımpaşa had been distinguished with an abundance of orchards and gardens, supplying vegetables and fruits to the Ottoman capital.⁶²⁹ Continuing a tradition that went on well into the twentieth century, the gardeners working on these orchards relied on the waters of the rivers of Kasımpaşa.⁶³⁰ While there is no study available on the fertility of the arable lands that had existed in the valley, following Radkau's advice to "always pay attention to the cycles of nutrients";⁶³¹ it would not be far-fetched to assume that Kasımpaşa and Pera had already formed an informal recycling arrangement, a *circulus* in which Pera's sewers functioned as fertilizers flowing with the help of the rivers into gardens and orchards that populated Kasımpaşa, which in turn supplied Pera its produce.

Ayhan Han and Aleksandar Shopov, in their study on Piyale Paşa—the only orchard in Kasımpaşa that survived to the twenty-first century—contend, "even though Kasımpaşa's location in the river valley implies wealth, this historically has not proven to be the case... Because the [Kasımpaşa] river carried the wastewaters, garbage, and the smell of the neighborhoods situated in Pera and Tatavla into the valley."⁶³² Han and Shopov are no doubt correct; the neighborhoods up the hill did adversely affect Kasımpaşa valley through the waste carried by streams, marking

⁶²⁹ BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ 7/15 (29 Zilhicce 1300 [October 31, 1883]). See fig. 16.

⁶³⁰ DAMOC, *Master Plan*, vol. 1, II-22.

⁶³¹ Radkau, *Nature and Power*, 15.

⁶³² Han and Shopov, "Klâsik Dönem Osmanlı Mimarisinin," 2. This orchard has been a target of most recent projects of urban transformation and land development. See "Tarihi Bostan Yıkılıyor," *Birgün Newspaper*, June 4, 2015, accessed November 24, 2017, <https://www.birgun.net/haber-detay/tarihi-bostan-yikiliyor-82198.html>.

the latter as a region of physical and social filth, as this chapter has so far explored. However, one must also situate the spatial production of Kasımpaşa though exploring what the streams flowing from Pera made possible. As Christopher Otter argues, the conventional urban historiography that only criticizes metropolitan politics on the grounds “of preventing the production of a clean, clear city” tends to ignore “the positive operation of power.”⁶³³ Hence the power of Pera’s sewers should be framed in these ‘positive’ as well as ‘negative’ registers. We should understand that what the sewage did was not only limiting Kasımpaşa’s growth and wealth. Pera’s waste, I contend, had contributed to the making of an ecosystem that fed on it for the agricultural production in Kasımpaşa.

The emergent threats of cholera and other contagious diseases in the nineteenth century had no doubt put this production under risk, too, as many of the purification processes implemented for recycling waste in European cities were not present for the waste dumped on Kasımpaşa’s arable lands. Still, the insistence on covering the rivers in the valley that began in the late nineteenth century and was realized gradually throughout the twentieth century, rather than their effective regulation and sanitation, also meant drying the veins that gave life to the greeneries of Kasımpaşa. Covering the rivers not only opened up new avenues, it also expropriated lands that belonged to the orchards lined up alongside the rivers.⁶³⁴ These new lands were developed for further settlement and urbanization, thus fostering the damage given to the orchards. The 1870 report by the Sanitary Council charged the open streams for the loss of alluvial soils that would otherwise be valuable for agricultural production. Elimination of these open streams, however, fulfilled alongside other formal and informal interventions in the liminal geography between

⁶³³ Otter, “Cleansing and Clarifying,” 63-64.

⁶³⁴ AK, Hrt. 5557 (5 Şubat 1295 [February 17, 1880]).

Kasımpaşa and Pera, ended up threatening the urban agricultural production even more, until its virtual vanishing in the twentieth century.

The gradual disappearance of orchards should be seen in conjunction with the destruction of the cemeteries between Kasımpaşa and Pera, which conversely left the former even more open to flooding and the overflowing of the rainwaters from the uphill quarters, as the destruction of green spaces also meant the loss of soil that could have absorbed the waters, and the trees that could have slowed them down. As early as the 1930s, residents Kasımpaşa talked of their district in a nostalgic tone, lamenting the loss of green spaces: “The people of the old Kasımpaşa were lucky lads. We do not have all the promenades they used to have to breath some clean air.”⁶³⁵ As Kasımpaşa did not have any public gardens before the twentieth century, what the author lamented in this quote must have been the loss of cemeteries, orchards, and other irregular green spaces scattered along the rivers. Indeed, even the disappearance of rivers, which “used to flow pure and clean in the old days and is now desperately covered,”⁶³⁶ became an object of nostalgia. While it is obvious that the purity and cleanliness of Kasımpaşa rivers had been very questionable since the eighteenth century, one can sense in these nostalgic statements a larger feeling of deprivation of an ecology that once defined the quarter. Once again, infrastructural work presented as a remedy to urban crises resulted in the closure of spaces that provided open and green venues especially for the lower classes of the region.

Conclusion: Excremental Hinterlands and Sensory Borders

This pattern of urbanization and waste regulation that gradually resulted in the loss of—admittedly not very pure—waters and green spaces in the quarter left a recurring problem of floods

⁶³⁵ Sadi Abaç, *Kasımpaşa'nın Tarihiçesi* (Istanbul: Bozkurt Matbaası, 1935), 21-22.

⁶³⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.

well into the twenty-first century.⁶³⁷ And the association of Kasımpaşa with troublesome sewers persisted. Many commentators who observed the dire situation of the sewage in Kasımpaşa continued to see the fault in Pera, as did Hagop Baronyan. In 1911, Ahmet Şerif, the reporter of the Anadolu newspaper, visited the district, and wrote how sewage and its associated dangers were spatially manifested in the quarters of the poor:

As if Beyoğlu and the other side [Tatavla] dominate this poor creature [Kasımpaşa], preventing it from breathing. Now I understand why one sees sewers everywhere [here]. The entirety of Pera's sewage and the dirt of other upland neighborhoods are flowing to Kasımpaşa. Many of the residents of Kasımpaşa are migrants from other parts of the country; many were manual laborers, such as porters.... It is these reasons that make Kasımpaşa such a despicable place. And what do the two district municipalities, the Sixth and the Seventh do to prevent this? Nothing, obviously!⁶³⁸

What becomes apparent in the words of Ahmet Şerif is that the mutual dependence between Pera and Kasımpaşa was understood not only topographically, but also hierarchically. Pera's "domination" prevented Kasımpaşa's development and made it a "despicable" place. While he stated obvious resentment towards Pera's burden on Kasımpaşa's environment, a derisive language towards the latter was also palpable. Similarly, "the torrents of Kasımpaşa," observed Doctor Mavrogény, and especially "the monster sewer" of Akarca/Acartza,

... stink the surrounding atmosphere, in which live a crowd of inhabitants, mostly Muslims, huddled on top of each other in low and narrow houses, [which] are scarcely bordered by verdant arches, not even willow trees, and [with] tall pits, which disgust the sight, offend the sense of smell, and poison the blood of the poor and miserable populations, who are put to the rank of pariahs of the Indies by the carelessness of the different municipalities.⁶³⁹

⁶³⁷ Sezer, *Kasımpaşa*, 165.

⁶³⁸ Ahmet Şerif, "Başşehirin Latif ve Zarif Manzaraları: Köprü'den Kasımpaşa'ya," *Tanin* 1071-1072, July 1, 1911. Quoted in Sezer, *Kasımpaşa*, 167. While Ahmet Şerif's resentment towards the bachelors is no way similar, his vivid account of how sewage became spatially distributed through the spaces of poverty is reminiscent of Friedrich Engels's vivid account of Manchester's slums. See Friedrich Engels, *Condition of the Working Class in England*, 1845, accessed September 30, 2018, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/condition-working-class-england.pdf>.

⁶³⁹ Mavrogény, *État de l'hygiène publique*, 11.

Mavrogény's statement is another proof for the active role senses, and especially smell, played in the transformation of Pera and its hinterland in the discursive as well as material terrain. Together with Ahmet Serif's, it also manifests the paradox of middle-class commentators, municipal reformists, and policy-makers of the era. On the one hand Kasımpaşa was put under spotlight and offered various solutions to its sanitary and aesthetic problems, it was, on the other hand, subject to a discriminatory discourse and a set of spatial and administrative barriers that were thought to contain its "despicable" conditions, understood in sanitary as well as social terms. The attempt to contain these conditions was especially significant, as the nineteenth-century bourgeois relationship to waste itself was a growing effort to "render [it] socially invisible (that is, invisible to the eye and inoffensive to the nose)."⁶⁴⁰

From the early nineteenth century onwards, the fluid borders of Kasımpaşa and Pera were considered as a zone to be closely monitored,⁶⁴¹ and in time this fluidity was replaced with a stricter demarcation between two distinct urban identities. Kasımpaşa was seen as an administrative problem as well as a social one, and frequently moved between the jurisdictions of different municipalities, hence Ahmet Şerif's and Mavrogény's references to the municipalities' lack of concern for the situation in the quarter. As the first functioning district municipality in the empire, the limit of the Sixth District's purview was a constant issue of contention. In its initial formation, the Sixth District did not include the quarter in its administrative boundaries. When criticized because of this decision in the first Ottoman parliament, Meclis-i Mebusan, the president of the parliament Ahmet Vefik Pasha defended the administration by stating "the demands of Beyoğlu would be too luxurious for Kasımpaşa—a locale for the poor."⁶⁴² And when Kasımpaşa was in

⁶⁴⁰ Inglis, "Sewers and Sensibilities," 105.

⁶⁴¹ BOA, C.ZB 64/3199 (19 Safer 1230 [January 31, 1815]).

⁶⁴² Quoted in Ortaylı, *İstanbul'dan Sayfalar*, 235.

fact included under the Sixth District precinct, the move was seen by Pera's papers as a necessary burden to be carried in order to modernize their immediate neighbor.⁶⁴³

While companies, private investors, and the municipality used infrastructural investments and land development in order to diminish the physical barriers for the circulation of capital, they also made and remade the district's social and cultural boundaries. While this is obvious in the case of Kasımpaşa and Pera in the later decades of the twentieth century, when the passage between two very close neighborhoods became an increasingly arduous task as a result of large avenues rupturing through the middle of the topography,⁶⁴⁴ the precursors of this phenomenon were evident in the late nineteenth century as has been shown in chapter 2. When the debris of the Tünel was dumped over the Petits-Champs cemetery and turned this part into a high-class, gated *Jardin*, an age-old passageway from the shores of Kasımpaşa to the hill of Pera was blocked, and a recreational ground for the lower classes was destroyed. This was preceded by the opening up of the tramline in the vicinity, which increased the mobility between Pera and Eminönü, but diminished that of Pera and Kasımpaşa.

As a conclusion, it is crucial to see the growing association of Kasımpaşa with the unregulated waste in the second half of the nineteenth century in conjunction with these other spatial developments. With the rapid urbanization, growing middle-class sensibilities, and increasing water consumption, Pera's waste increasingly found its way down to Kasımpaşa. This occurred at the same time it became gradually more difficult for Kasımpaşa residents to move up the topography and come to Pera, because of the spatial and class barriers. In the end, one special form of mobility, that of bodily products, was developed at the expense of another, that of the

⁶⁴³ "Chronique," *La Turquie* 252, April 25, 1871.

⁶⁴⁴ Göncuoğlu and Kayar, *Denizcilerin Karargâhı Kasımpaşa*, 18.

bodies themselves. As Harvey contends, following Mary Douglas, transferring waste to other localities as “‘matter out of place’ cannot be separated from claims about the impurities and dangers of ‘people out of place.’”⁶⁴⁵ Kasımpaşa was framed as Pera’s *sensory other* and *excremental hinterland* through these physical and discursive techniques. It became the embodiment of waste that Pera’s elites agonized to get rid of.⁶⁴⁶

Edhem Eldem states that Pera’s surrounding neighborhoods, Kasımpaşa and Tophane, “were virtually untouched by the development and changes of the period.”⁶⁴⁷ In light of the multilayered connections explored in this chapter, however, we must contend that Kasımpaşa’s ‘isolation’ was not the natural state of affairs, and rather was actively constructed by interventions in the built and natural environments of Pera and its surroundings. These interventions, while creating a sense of social isolation and cultural difference among these regions, actually connected them in material ways and created stronger interdependencies.

And while Pera itself was wary of the risk of sanitary and social pollution that might have emanated from its neighbor, Pera’s otherness within the larger Istanbul was also occasionally framed in such terms, especially in the early republican nationalist discourse. After all, it was Pera’s waste that polluted Kasımpaşa in the first place. As the archetypical case of this trope, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu wrote in his novel *Hüküm Gecesi*: “Beyoğlu opens up like a large sewer ready to swallow all the dirt of a long winter night...”⁶⁴⁸ For both the contemporary

⁶⁴⁵ Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography*, 368.

⁶⁴⁶ In this vein, it is also noteworthy that some groups of artisans were located along Kasımpaşa’s rivers where “Pera’s sewage flowed into.” Letter from R.G. Watson to Mr. Barron, 25 Dec. 1869. Quoted in Ergun Türkcan, “İngiliz Konsolosluk Raporlarına Göre: 110 Yıl Önce İstanbul’da Çalışma Hayatı,” *Tarih ve Toplum* 2, no. 11 (November 1984): 323.

⁶⁴⁷ Eldem, “Istanbul,” 204.

⁶⁴⁸ Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, *Hüküm Gecesi* (Ankara: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1966), 105.

reformists and the later generation of nationalists, sewers provided a sensory field through which anxieties over urban differences and class conflicts were constituted and expressed.

This chapter has traced, in topography and in chronology, the excremental connections the nineteenth-century Pera formed with and relied upon its eastern neighbor, Kasımpaşa. Through an archival digging, it has shown how waste linked not only different parts of the city, but also different local and international actors; anxieties and expertise; medical and security concerns; senses and class sensibilities; failures and unexpected outcomes. These spatial, material, and discursive links are revealed especially when we attempt to provincialize Pera—to conceptualize it as one particular part of a larger history and geography, one important node—itsself consisting of countless nodes—within a wider network of living and nonliving things, as a complex and unequal ecology.

Conclusion

“Constantinople survives more as a concept than a reality,” wrote Robert Ousterhout, of the city’s Byzantine fabric and its archaeological heritage.⁶⁴⁹ As I conclude this dissertation, I find it rewarding to contemplate Pera’s place in relation to this—no doubt manufactured—duality of concept and reality that Ousterhout proposes. Pera’s existing built environment—its ‘reality’ if you will—is perhaps the closest, among all quarters of Istanbul, to its perceived heritage—its ‘concept.’ While this is increasingly prone to change in the twenty-first century, Pera/Beyoğlu’s fin-de-siècle architectural landscape is still very much intact, especially relative to other parts of the city. Its streets, filled with the first apartment buildings of Istanbul, are now home to boutique design stores, capitalizing on the nostalgic effect of the architecture, even though it has commonly been subjected to very flawed renovation practices. Many of its arcades (*pasaj*) are still serving visitors, though of course the origins of those visitors have considerably changed in the last ten years, as well as in the last hundred. The Pera Palace, “the luxury and historical hotel of Istanbul,” now part of a Dubai-based hotel chain called Jumeirah, continues to host the wealthiest of such visitors. The Tünel, now almost 144 years old, is still operating between Galata (now Karaköy) and Pera, carrying thousands of *Istanbulites* and tourists each day, loudly publicizing itself as the “world’s second oldest and shortest subway.”

Not everything survives, naturally. The Jardin des Petits Champs is no more. After several layers were built upon it in the last fifty years, its space was finally turned into another *park*, albeit a different kind, a carpark—manifesting the changing priorities of city-planning in one and a half centuries. The rest of the cemetery had already been eradicated from the landscape in the early

⁶⁴⁹ Ousterhout, “Rediscovery of Constantinople,” 205.

twentieth century. Still a part of the Beyoğlu Municipality, Kasımpaşa's residents' physical ties to their uphill neighbors have been even more severed as a large boulevard, a massive underground parking garage, and a large sports complex are now occupying the borders between the two areas. The name of Terkos is still carved in the district's topography, but no longer with its monumental fountains, rather attached to the name of a cul-de-sac full of run-down stores and sellers that sell off-brand or defective clothes. However, the Beyoğlu Municipality is still located in the impressive neoclassical building designed by the architect Giovanni Batista Barborini and built between 1879 and 1883,⁶⁵⁰ as, as an allusion to its origins in the 'cosmopolitan' epoch, it still refers to itself as the Sixth District—even though it has been held by the conservative/Islamist parties for more than two decades. The visual traits of the 'cosmopolitan Pera' are still there for those who are looking for them.

Nevertheless, I concur with the Ousterhout's statement for the case of Pera, and I even argue that Pera's survival as more of a concept than a reality is even more pronounced than that of Byzantine Constantinople. 'Cosmopolitan' Pera, is an idea, a concept. It is an *archive*, à la Edward Said,⁶⁵¹ formed by generations of scholars, amateur historians, literary authors, visitors, and policymakers who capitalized on this archive. It is an archive sustained, to some extent, by the endurance and tangibility of its fin-de-siècle built environment, making it possible in the twenty-first century to use its spaces for a commercialized nostalgia. This archive is not necessarily full of lies or falsehoods. It is, however, a limited frame, which structures the way we look at the district's history, geography, and layers of social topography. It is a frame that excludes a large part of Pera's complicated past, leaving behind *a concept, more than a reality*.

⁶⁵⁰ Albeit with a completely incongruous annex floor built on top of the original structure, perhaps as a middle ground for our false dichotomy of "concept" and "reality."

⁶⁵¹ Said, *Orientalism*, 41-42.

The archive of ‘cosmopolitan’ Pera is created by physical archives, too. State documents, private collections, bank records, among others, are used to tell different stories of Pera’s past, as this dissertation has done. One particular kind of archival material that was frequently consulted in this work and in others too is maps and plans of late nineteenth-century Pera. A critical reflection on the way we use them, I think, is helpful to understand how this archive is being constructed and reconstructed, and to offer some potential ways to deconstruct the archival frame within which the study of Pera has been limited for so long.

Two visual sources have been particularly productive for the historians working on the nineteenth- and twentieth-centuries city: the d’Ostoya Map of 1858-1860 (fig. 9), based on the initial findings of the Sixth District’s cadastral survey, and the Goad Insurance Plans of 1905-1906 (fig. 4), which was an outcome of the 1870 Fire, as well as the rapid growth of the district, that had prepared the grounds and the necessity for the development of the insurance sector in Istanbul.⁶⁵² The former has been especially helpful in order to visualize the district’s spatial order before the radical interventions in the built environment as well as the devastation came with the 1870 Fire. The latter, on the other hand, is a detailed representation of the outcome of a fifty-year process of modernization, under the aegis of novel practices of local governance, the impact of foreign companies, and the Tanzimat principles of order and reorganization, right before the empire went into its final decade of war and disintegration. In a sense, these two maps roughly mark the temporal borders of the most popular periods for the study of Pera, its *belle-époque*. I argue that they draw the contours of its spatial borders, too.

⁶⁵² Murat Güvenç, “The Pervitich Maps: An unfinished research project for Istanbul,” in *Jacques Pervitich sigorta haritalarında İstanbul = Istanbul in the insurance maps of Jacques Pervitich*, ed. Seden Ersoy, Anadol Çağtay, and Müsemma Sabancıoğlu (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı, Axa Oyak, 2000), 12.

On the d'Ostoya Map, Pera's borders are extended into Kasımpaşa thanks to the almost uninterrupted presence of the Petits Champs des Morts, from the hills stretching towards the Golden Horn, but Kasımpaşa is not visualized, and Galata, Pera, and Pangaltı [Pancaldi] are presented in a vacuum. In the Goad Plan the picture is more drastic. During the roughly thirty-five years after the drawing of the d'Ostoya Map, the Petits-Champs des Morts had almost completely disappeared, and now the Jardin des Petits-Champs constitutes one of the easternmost border points of Pera. Without the presence of the fluid passageway granted by the cemetery, any trace of Kasımpaşa had completely evaporated from the representation. On the other side, Tophane is represented in a *terra incognita* way—marked as “Quartier Turc: Maisons d’habitation en bois et en briques” (Turkish quarter: Wooden and brick dwellings)—even if they were part of the same administrative unit of the Sixth District.⁶⁵³ In these maps and plans Pera is abstracted from its hinterland and demarcated in accordance with the social and class contours.

This abstraction is especially arresting if one compares them to the plans prepared for the failed proposals to cover the rivers and install a sewage network in the Kasımpaşa valley in the late nineteenth century. More important than the policy details of these failed plans, I think, is to explore how these most detailed illustrations of Pera's excremental hinterland manifested the way in which experts imagined the geography that encompassed Kasımpaşa, Pera, and the northern suburbs of Tatavla, Feriköy, and Pangaltı. Especially striking is the Jasmond Plan of 1893, which represents the region holistically, extended from Golden Horn to the northern hills of the city, in an interconnected geography, composed along the drainage lines. Here, unlike d'Ostoya and Goad plans, the topography dictates the representation. The drainage zone of Kasımpaşa stretches from

⁶⁵³ See Levy-Aksu, *Osmanlı İstanbul'unda Asayiş*, 363-398, for a close study of the social composition of Tophane and the Ottoman state's attempts to give order to the neighborhood. For the control of the border between Pera and Tophane, see especially 393.

the middle of Grand Rue de Péra to the Golden Horn (this drainage zone was almost identical in the 1971 DAMOC Plans). A wider and interconnected geography is represented, made possible by environmental and infrastructural connections, of rivers and sewers, of hills and drains, of springs and estuaries. Sewage and its visual representation follow, but also disrupt, the borders created by the built environment and class manifestations in the urban space.

Of course, this more inclusive representation did not translate into the disappearance or the resolution of the unequal power relations that were inherent in the making of this represented geography. What was literally, as well as symbolically, true in this sense was the notice of location that accompanied the date and signature, put right under the map's scale in the lower right corner: "Pera." This little note was not only an indication of where this one particular map was created: These maps were created in Pera, by the expertise hosted and financed in Pera, in order to serve primarily the interests of the elites of Pera.

Whilst not falling into the illusion that these maps are objective representations of the regions in question, it is essential to recognize the historiographical value of incorporating them into the study of Pera. They not only provide valuable historical information regarding the district's environment and infrastructure; their utilization also manifests a shift in our approach to the history of the district. The conventional study of Pera and Galata, reflecting its isolated treatment of geography, its emphasis on the façades of Grand Rue de Péra, and the lopsided importance it has given to the spaces of commerce and culture, has almost exclusively relied on documents such as the cadastral map of d'Ostoya and the insurance map of Goad. These have naturally been used in this dissertation, too, and they continue to provide essential insights regarding the district's built

environment and property relations. But, they, just like any other map, are “selective”⁶⁵⁴ in their approach to representing a spatial terrain, and reflect the way in which their creators and commissioners saw and represented the selected geography, and as such, they have influenced the way their—changing—audiences imagined the particular geography of Pera.⁶⁵⁵ The Goad and d’Ostoya maps, while valuable in themselves, fail to shed light on how Pera relied on various material arrangements and continuities on space; and this failure, I argue, has shaped the historical writing in return, cementing its isolationist narrative even further.

The call to integrate the insights of infrastructural maps into the study of Pera is, on the one hand, methodological. These maps provide a critical perspective into the ways in which Pera’s real and envisaged, environmental and material hinterlands were illustrated, and open the way for a more complex, nuanced understanding of how the material world of Pera and its connected geographies were built in the late nineteenth century. It is, on the other hand, also metaphorical. Not all studies would make justified use of such visual sources, and that is fine. What is more crucial, I contend, is to open the historiography of Pera to other forms of representations, frames, and archival reconstructions to break the discursive and material contours within which the history of Pera has been narrated. This is in large what this dissertation has tried to do.

Over the course of this dissertation, I have offered two main critical interventions in Pera’s historiography. The first, what might be called a *diachronic* intervention, has aimed to show the accumulation of spatial layers and episodes of destruction, revealed through the histories of

⁶⁵⁴ İlhan Tekeli, “Maps as an instrument for people to know, to control and to interpret their environment,” in *Jacques Pervititch sigorta haritalarında İstanbul = Istanbul in the insurance maps of Jacques Pervititch*, ed. Seden Ersoy, Anadol Çağtay, and Müsemma Sabancıoğlu (Istanbul: Tarih Vakfı & Axa Oyak, 2000), 8.

⁶⁵⁵ John Pickles, *A History of Spaces: Cartographic Reason, mapping and the geo-coded world* (London: Routledge, 2004), 5; Matthew H. Edney, *Mapping an Empire: The Geographical Construction of British India, 1765–1843* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), 17.

infrastructure, on which Pera's modern history, as well as historiography, were built—*creative destruction*. The demolition of the medieval Genoese Walls was used to open up new spaces for “debt-financed infrastructural urban development,”⁶⁵⁶ strengthening the ties of an elite network among its landowner members as well as with the financial institutions and the district municipality. As chapter 1 has shown, the demolished Genoese fabric also prepared the ground for the construction of a new interest, scholarly as well as popular, in the history of the district. This interest, initiated by a philological analysis of the Latin inscriptions salvaged from the walls, engendered the appropriation of the district's Genoese heritage at the expense of its Ottoman period, which aligned this history-writing project with the municipality's claims for more autonomy, as well as with the nascent discourse on Pera's cosmopolitan difference.

This discourse had a spatial component, manifested in the spaces of difference that distinguished the district from the rest of Ottoman Istanbul, such as the Tünel and the Jardin des Petits-Champs. As chapter 2 has explored, there was an inherently material connection between these two new spaces created respectively in 1875 and 1880. The Tünel, the construction of which resulted in the expropriation of several houses and shops between Galata and Pera, also contributed to the transformation of the district's old Muslim cemetery, the Petits-Champs des Morts/Küçük Kabristan, into a gated garden with theater halls and a restaurant, through the dumping of its debris on the upper end of the cemetery. Marking the district's most valuable area, this garden soon became one of the symbols of Pera's social difference, surrounded by luxurious hotels, and situated conveniently against the picturesque vista of the ‘old-city,’ spatially reinforcing the divide between the two sides of the Golden Horn. It also solidified the borders between Pera and Kasımpaşa, replacing the fluid passage provided by the cemetery. The cemetery's multitude of guests, a diverse

⁶⁵⁶ Harvey, “Right to the City,” 29.

group of lower-class people, animals, the living, and the dead, were not among the usual clientele of the new garden, nor they were the usual actors or subjects of the modern histories of Pera.

The second critical intervention by this dissertation is a *synchronic* one, which has explored the variety of geographies beyond the isolated boundaries of Pera that were connected to the district's growth in the second half of the nineteenth century through infrastructural and environmental links—*provincializing Pera*. As chapter 3 has shown, the Terkos Waterworks, which began providing water to Pera in 1885, with an exclusive opening ceremony symbolically held in the Jardin des Petits-Champs, altered human and nonhuman geographies of Terkos. As the flow of water was intervened, villagers' access to their traditional water sources were limited, the adverse effects on excess water on their lands increased, and their fishing activity obstructed; the Ottoman army, hunters, and picnickers poured into the area, mapping the environs of Terkos as a geography of risk as well as of natural leisure.

The unequal entanglements created by this infrastructural intervention in Istanbul's countryside moved back to Pera by underlining and furthering existing inequalities among the populations residing in and around Pera, most prominently Kasımpaşa. Increasing water consumption in Pera, among all the other factors that went into the fastened pace of urbanization in the district, added to its sewage burden, carried mostly by Kasımpaşa, a dependency that was explored in chapter 4. Whereas no major sewage project could be realized over the course of the nineteenth century, sewers stayed on top of the agenda of state authorities, local policymakers, medical experts, and private companies. As Pera's sewage, sometimes in constructed sewer lines, and sometimes via streets and uncovered waters, found its way into its neighbor, the latter was increasingly identified with Pera's excremental hinterland in the written word, in medical authority, in vision and smell, in the underground, and by the waters of Kasımpaşa. Just as the

ambition to provide Pera with the empire's first centralized water system remade Terkos, the sewage of Pera reproduced Kasımpaşa's spaces in myriad ways.

The attempt to provincialize Pera's place in history through exploring the infrastructural and environmental its connections to Terkos and Kasımpaşa, manifested in Part II, does not translate into the diminishing of the agency for Pera's elites. In fact, it presents an even larger geographic extent in which they were active in shaping urban and environmental spaces. However, it also shows that the spaces of these wider geographies were central to Pera's making, and nonhuman actors were active, alongside Pera's elites, in assembling 'cosmopolitan' Pera.

All of these chapters could justifiably be developed into full-scale monographs in their own rights—the histories of water, sewage, transportation, and land appropriation in late nineteenth-century Istanbul. But my intention has been different. With all of the histories and geographies I have dealt with, my aim has been to disentangle the meta-narrative of cosmopolitanism as an explanatory frame to understand late nineteenth-century urban experience. I contend that whereas the critiques of cosmopolitanism have already pointed out to the limitations and the upper-class bias of this frame, dismantling this discourse through underlining its embedded weaknesses is not enough for the task of spatializing the history of cosmopolitan urbanities.

One needs to look, as I have tried to do in this dissertation, at the material conditions of possibility for the spaces framed as cosmopolitan to come into place, and a multitude of material and environmental effects they produced. To put it another way, it is not enough to point out who could not have belonged to the celebrated cosmopolitan diversities of the late nineteenth-century Mediterranean cities. We must explore the ways in which the production of those cosmopolitan spaces actually formed connections and created diversities beyond the multilingual communities that have been overrepresented in the literature, at the same time breaking other connections or

rendering them invisible. We must, as I have shown in this dissertation, think environmental and material foundations that give ways to ideas of cosmopolitan lifestyles.

I began my research for this dissertation a couple of years after the 2008 Financial Crisis, in a time when, I now see it more clearly, the international hegemony of liberal democracy, with “multiculturalism” being one of its most fashionable brands and catchwords, had already begun crumbling. Back then, I found it much easier to be critical about cosmopolitan nostalgia, for all the reasons that have been mentioned over the course of this dissertation. As I write down the final pages of this work in November 2018, however, I feel increasingly unsettled for being critical of a concept that has been already under attack by nativist, nationalist, and religious ideologies and movements, which, all around the world and in Turkey, have been rampant. What is the use, I ask to myself, to criticize an already weak concept, a source of nostalgia for the existence of multilingual, multireligious, multiethnic communities, sharing the same spaces and transgressing the borders of their linguistic, religious, and ethnic communal bonds, in a time when it is becoming increasingly difficult and dangerous to advocate for such transgressions?

This question brings me back to where this dissertation began: to the words of Gustave Flourens, the radical cosmopolitan, who published his manifesto/newspaper, *L’Avenir*, in a printing house in Pera on the Spring of 1866. I found the sole issue of *L’Avenir* approximately one year ago, in October 2017, during my research in *Bibliothèque nationale de France*. In the same week I was in Paris, I also found out that the United States government had put a ban on visa applications in its legations in Turkey amid ongoing diplomatic strife between the two countries, two months before my return to Seattle after a long absence for dissertation-writing. This move was preceded by a “travel ban” for several Muslim-majority countries, and a “laptop ban” for

flights from several other Muslim-majority countries, including Turkey. The ‘refugee crisis’ of Europe and the anti-immigration discourse have already been on a critical level. So much, it seemed, for transgressing boundaries; it was getting harder and harder to get regular visas to cross physical borders, let alone transgressing the mental ones, and it was getting personal, too. In this context, reading the manifesto of Gustave Flourens, produced in an urban setting celebrated for its assumed cosmopolitanism, offered a path forward.

The manifesto of Flourens was on the one hand in line with the literature on Pera’s cosmopolitanism. The district’s urban conditions allowed and attracted a French biologist—a professor at Collège de France no less—to come to Pera and publish a newspaper with the word “cosmopolitan” attached to its title.⁶⁵⁷ On the other hand, however, in the eyes of Flourens, cosmopolitanism for Pera, unlike the contention of this established literature, was not a sociological reality, but rather a project, something to be “created,” and the city provided the best environment to bolster this dream. Here the narrative of cosmopolitanism ceased to exist as a limited explanatory tool to describe a historic urban setting, and rather turned into an ongoing

⁶⁵⁷ Flourens, following his brief sojourn in Pera and using the acquaintances he made there, moved to Athens, where he published another newspaper, *L’Orient, justice pour tous (The East, justice for all)*. His radical activities followed his intellectual production: soon he found himself as a guerilla leader in the Cretan Revolt 1866-1868 against the Ottomans. He later joined the Garibaldian militancy in Italy, through the network he formed in Crete. When he went back to Paris in the late 1860s, he became an outspoken critique of the Bonapartist regime, while at the same time writing extensively on “the Eastern Question,” in a continuous show of support and solidarity for the radical networks across Mediterranean. Finally, during the Paris Commune of 1871, he quickly proved himself to be one of the leaders of the insurrection, and later killed during the siege. See F. Maurel, *Notice nécrologique sur Gustave Flourens, membre de la Société d’ethnographie* (Paris: Bureaux de la Société d’Ethnographie, 1872); Leon Kallivretakis, “Gustave Flourens (1838-1871) et la Grèce 1983,” (PhD Diss., Sorbonne University, 1983); Taner Timur, *Yakın Osmanlı Tarihinde Aykırı Çehreler*, (Istanbul: İmge, 2016), 65-77; Ahmet Şamil Gürer, “Tanzimat Döneminde Sarıyerli Hoca Sâdık Efendi Vakası,” *Turkish Studies - International Periodical For The Languages, Literature and History of Turkish or Turkic* 9, no.7 (Summer 2014): 41-50.

project, an idea to be actively pursued. This vision did not owe its existence to the city, but there it gained a vantage point because it was situated in this already diverse urban setting. It was his call to action for a cosmopolitanism of “the people revolted by the present misery and deep degradation of such a vast portion of the humanity.”⁶⁵⁸

Hanging onto the nostalgia of assumed cosmopolitanisms of mythical urbanities has not been effective in keeping the recurrence of nativist, nationalist, and religious ideologies at bay. If the late nineteenth-century urban experience is to be excavated for an emancipatory political reference, such a reference must be situated in the potentialities that experience opened up for figures like Gustave Flourens who were attentive to the misery of their times, easily observable in Pera and other urban centers of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East. Ignoring the utopian projects, unrealized dreams, and immature potentialities that figures like Flourens found in those spatial and material assemblages, in favor of the assumed sociological realities of Pera’s cosmopolitanism or the other urban centers of the Eastern Mediterranean, translates into a limited historical frame. This frame fixates, reifies, and sanctifies an urban texture, which had been carved out of unequal spatial and geographical relations that destroyed in order to create, displaced in order to place, and polluted in order to cleanse.

Walter Benjamin contended that the “epic element” in history-writing had to be replaced by the “constructive element.” Only then, he argued, “[t]he immense forces which remain captive in historicism’s ‘once upon a time’ are freed.”⁶⁵⁹ I have tried here to attend the constructive elements in Pera’s history, from the destruction of the medieval walls to the construction of an underground funicular, which triggered other developments that constructed the modern fabric and

⁶⁵⁸ Flourens, “Notre Programme.”

⁶⁵⁹ Walter Benjamin, “Eduard Fuchs: Collector and Historian,” trans. Knut Tarnowski, *New German Critique*, no. 5 (Spring, 1975): 29.

identity of the district often in unexpected ways, and free the material mobilities and environmental entanglements from the static imagery of Pera's "once upon a time," or in the words of one of the founding texts of that trope, "the times that will not come back."⁶⁶⁰ I have, in my limited way, attempted to name the "unnamed drudgery of [the] contemporaries,"⁶⁶¹ humans and nonhumans, the living and the dead, whose toll went into assembling 'cosmopolitan' Pera.

⁶⁶⁰ Naum-Duhanî, *Geri Dönmeyecek Zamanlar*.

⁶⁶¹ Benjamin, "Eduard Fuchs," 35.

Figures



Figure 1. C. Stolpe, *Plan de Constantinople avec ses faubourgs, le port et une partie du Bosphore*, 1882. [Repository: SALT Research].

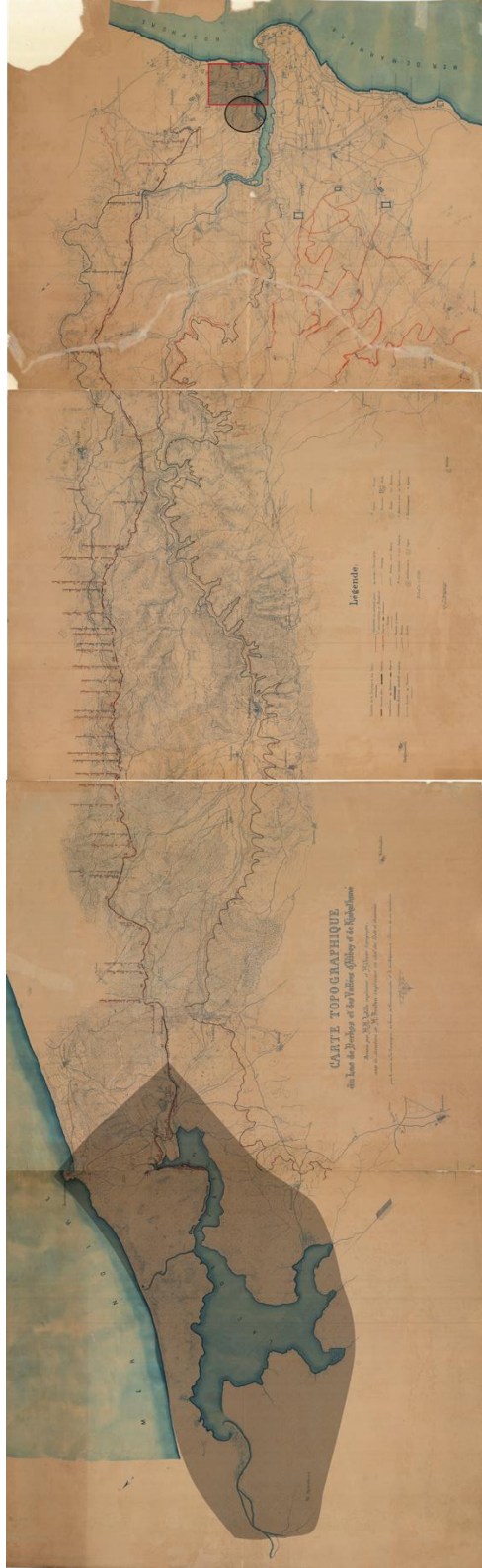


Figure 2. The geographies of “Assembling Cosmopolitan Pera”
Approximate territories under scrutiny in Pera, Kasimpaşa, and Terkos (from right to left) are highlighted. Base map: Hubner and Boutan, *Carte topographique du lac de Derkos et des vallées d'Alibey et de Kiahathane*, AK, Hrt. Gec. 1875, 1877, 1878, 1879.



Figure 4. Newly opened or widened streets in the immediate aftermath of the demolitions of the Genoese Walls
Shown with red lines. Base map: Charles E. Goad, *Plan d'assurance de Constantinople*, vol. 2: Pera & Galata. Index (London, 1906) [Repository:
IFEA, SALT Research].

۱۵ تموز (چهارشنبه) — آلمانیا اوردولنده اكمال
تعمیر ائنگ اوزره ۱۹ عثمانی ضابطی برینه کیشترلدر .
۱۶ تموز (پنجشنبه) — مجلس مبعوثانک هیئت عمومی سنده
کرید مسئلهسی موضوع بحث اولارق وطنپرورانه نظرلر ایراد
اولونش وقایه تک نتیجه اجرا آنه انتظار ایله سی قرار
لاشدیریشدر . بالاخر مذهبای حریت ایلام وارامنه ویریلجک
مشاعات حقهدهک نظامنامه لایحهسی مذاکره ایلدیشدر .
کریده حایه برجه نیکین یونان بارغاندن طولای
باب عالی طرفندن فرانسه ، انگلتره ، روسیا وایتالیا دولترنه
کوندریلن بر تیلیفنامهده یاراق مسئلهسی تحق ایلدوبده
دولتر تمهاتای ایضا ایله مرزسه حقوق حاکمینی محافظه ایچون
دولک عثمانیه تک بالذات آغاز تدابیره مجبور اولاجی بیان
اولونشدر .
۱۷ تموز (جمعه) — قره حصار صاحبده بووک بر
حریق ظهور ایلدردک ۱۵۰ قدر بنا یانمشدر .
۱۸ تموز (جمعه ایرتیمی) — فرانسه سفیری موسیو
پومیار حضور شاهانهیه قبول اولونارق اعتبارنامهسی تقدیم
اینشدر .
مجلس مبعوثانک هیئت عمومی سنده عسکرلرک مبعوثلی
مسئله سنه دائر مذاکره و معرف نظراندن بر استیضاح
وقوع بولمشدر .
شهر امین حازم بک استعفا ایتمشدر .

عسا کر عثمانیه طرفندن بریجه روسی یارباش و دات شاهانه
حاضر بولونمشدر .



۱ — اتاق سراسیمه کیک تیکلری وقت و زماننده کورده باندک ایچون
باب عالیته ارتقای کاق مبعوثلی هیئت وکلاجه استیضاحلاری ...

التجا وتماماً سلطنتدن فرانت ایلمشدر . برینه اون دوت
باشنده اولان احمد میرزا شاه اعلان اولونش وحدت سنی
سببیه عضدالملک نائب تعیین ایلدیشدر .
ومزو جوارنده کاش رسدخانه تک مدیری مشهور پروفور
ماتوچی وقت ایتمشدر .
۵ تموز (پنار) — عثمانی مبعوثاندن مرکب اولان
هیئت لوندربه واصل اولمشدر .
اسپانیا پرنسلسندن آفونس دوپوربون ، اسپانیا
فرانک موافقتی استیصال ایچکسری برنسس به آفریس
دوقوربوع ایله نشالاندیغندن طولای « اینفات » عنوانندن
محروم ایلدیشدر .
جوقریته ویریلن لقب شهردر . [Infant]
اونه دلیری اسپانیا تختنه ادعای استیغاق ایلدن دون
قارلوس دوپوربون وقت ایتمشدر .
۶ تموز (پنار ایرتیمی) — مجلس مبعوثانک هیئت
عمومی سنده استانبول ولایتی تشکیلاتنه دائر اولان قانون
لایحهسی موضوع بحث اولمشدر .
لوندرددهک هیئت مبعوثان عثمانی انگلتره قرالی طرفندن
قبول اولونشدر .
۷ تموز (سالی) — مجلس مبعوثانده جینتر قانونی
لایحهسی مذاکره ایلدیشدر .



۲ — لکن بر درلو طالع یازد اولدایچوردی ؛ باتندن هر هانکی طرفه
دورین توجیه ایلیسه بر قلمست کورولچوردی ؛ تیکهیه دائر هیچ بر
اماره بوقدی . هیئت وکلا بو مشغولینده ایکن طیفات سبانه بر ووا
ظهور ایندی بولون حالا کیدیدور



۳ — استانبولده دعا یوکسک بنا بوقدی ، ایقل قولسنگک بالیاچه
درسمانه چلیبه غلظه قولسنگک اوزرنه برچینتدیریلیمسی حقیقتک
تشکیف بر وایه قارشلی اثری متیایمسن مرکب ۱ تیکهیه رد ایلدیدی .
تبیعت مجلس وکلاجه بر بولنده طولانسی فراتیق اولدی .



۴ — مجلس وکلاجه بعدما غلظه قولسنگک العقاد اینسته
قرار ویریلدی .
اوراده دورینتله اتاق تدقیق ایلدردک بسن محظوظلری کشف
ایلدیمیچیکارنه قائل ایلدیر . فقط یا شغف بصرن ه یا خود دورینتک
قولسنگکدن هیچ بر تم کورده درلر . وغلظه قولسنگک ارتقای ده کاق
اولدیفته مکر ایندی .

Figure 5. The Eiffel Tower on the Galata Tower?
Vignette in Şehbal 9, August 1, 1325 (August 14, 1909)

“İstanbul’da daha yüksek bina yoktu. Eyfel kulesinin bi’l-mübâyaa Dersaadet’e celbiyle Galata Kulesi’nin üzerine perçinlettirilmesi hakkındaki teklif bir re’ye karşı ârây-ı mütekabiyeden mürekkeb ekseriyetle red edildi.”

N° D'ORDRE.	ANNÉE.	LOCALITÉ où la pierre a été trouvée.	NOM ou armoiries du Podestat.	NOM ou armoiries du Duc ou du Gouverneur.	EMPEREURS de Constantinople.	PAPES.
1	1323	Arab Djami	Pierre funéraire de Odon Salvago.		Andronic I, Paléologue.	Jean XXII.
2	1335	Tour de la rue Voivoda	Croix cantonnée de 4 B, dont les 2 de dextre contournés	Gènes.	Andronic II, Paléologue.	Benoist XII
3	1349	Tour à l'entrée de la rue Yuksek-Kaldirim		Giovani da Morta.	Jean I Paléologue et Jean Cantacuzène.	Innocent VI
4	1387	Hendek, 1re tour, près celle du Christ.	Rafael d'Auria.	Antoniotto Adorno.	Jean Paléologue seul.	Clément VII
5	1397	Hendek, dernière tour du côté de Cassim-Pacha.	Barré de 7 pièces.	Gènes.	Manuel II, Paléologue.	Benoist XIII
6	1400	Moum-Hané, au bas du mur (inscription bouchée à la chaux).	Filipo de Franchi.	(Battista de Franchi élu par la Seigneurie qui avait chassé le gouverneur Français).	do.	do.
7	1404	Hissar dibi, N. 4 (tour appartenant aux RR.PP.Lazaristes).	Jean Sauli.	Le Maingre de Boucieuli.	do.	Innocent VII.

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N° D'ORDRE.	ANNÉE.	LOCALITÉ où la pierre a été trouvée.	NOM ou armoiries du Podestat.	NOM ou armoiries du Duc ou du Gouverneur.	EMPEREURS de Constantinople.	PAPES.
8	1435	Tour, rue Stoupoudji, N. 5 et 7	Stefano de Marinis.	Un seul émail plein (pour éviter les armes de Milan).	Jean II Paléologue.	Eugène IV.
9	1441	Tour, en face les Messageries Françaises rue Tabak-Hané N. 7.	Nicolas Antoine Spinola.	Thomas de Campo Fregoso.	do.	do.
10	1442	Hendek, maison de Ali Effendi en face le poste des zaptiés.	do.	do.	do.	do.
11	1442	Hendek, 2me tour après celle du Christ.	do.	do.	do.	do.
12	1443	do.	Boruel de Grimaldi	Rafael Adorno.	do.	do.
13	1445	Rue Kalé, sur la tour.	Balthazar Maruffo.	do.	do.	do.
14	1446	Porte Moum Hané.	do.	do.	do.	do.
15	1447	Rue Keumurdji, N. 5, sur le mur.	Luchino de Facio.	Giano de Campo Fregoso.	do.	Nicolas V.
16	1448	Rue Halil Pacha, No. 45, (Haviar Han) sur le mur, dans un magasin.	Benoit de Vivaldi.	do. (il paraît que la nouvelle de sa mort était ignorée à Péra)	Constantin Dragosès, Paléologue.	do.

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N° D'ORDRE.	ANNÉE.	LOCALITÉ où la pierre a été trouvée.	NOM ou armoiries du Podestat.	NOM ou armoiries du Duc ou du Gouverneur.	EMPEREURS de Constantinople.	PAPES.
17	1452	Maison Mayer, dans l'enceinte de la tour du Christ.	Jean Lomellini.	Pierre de Campo Fregoso.	Constantin Dragosès, Paléologue	Nicolas V.
18	sans date.	Moum Hané, au dessus de la porte de la Cité Française.	En l'honneur de Balthazar Maruffo.			
19	do.	Azab Kapou, au dessus de la porte.	Croix cantonnée de 4 B, dont les 2 de dextre contournés	Gènes.	?	?
20	do.	Hendek, tour en face le poste des zaptiés.	Spinola.	Gènes.	?	?
21	do.	Hôtel de ville (Han Franchini.)	Marinis.	Fascé de 6 pièces, au chef chargé d'un lion passant.	?	?
22	do.	Porte Haryb.	Fascé de 6 pièces, au chef chargé d'un lion passant.	A l'aigle contourné, au vol abaissé.	?	?

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Figure 6. Launay's list of salvaged inscriptions

Marie de Launay, "Notice Sur Le Vieux Galata (Pera des Genoïs)" *L'Univers: Revue Orientale, Politique, Scientifique*, no. 2 (1875): 110-112.

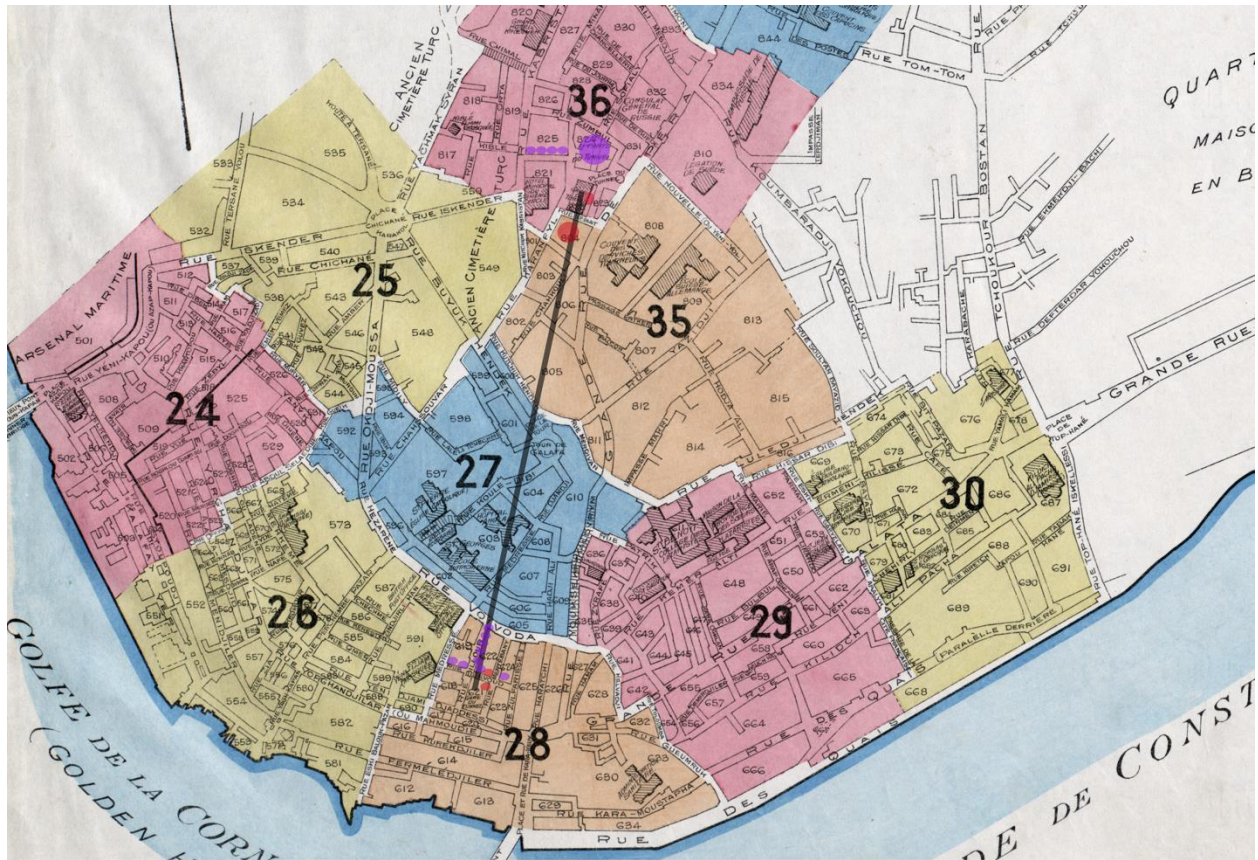


Figure 8. Hereditaments of the Constantinople Land and Building Society in relation to the route of Tünel
 Purple dots indicate the properties owned by Charles Helbig, red dots indicate the properties of Camondos, as of 1879. Black line shows the approximate underground route of Tünel. Base map: Excerpt from Charles E. Goad, *Plan d'assurance de Constantinople*, vol. 2: Pera & Galata. Index (London, 1906) [Repository: IFEA, SALT Research].



Figure 9. Count G. D'Ostoya, *Plan Général de Galata, Pera et Pancalti*, 1858-1860 (Istanbul, 1860)
[Repository: Atatürk Kitaplığı, SALT Research].



Figure 10. *Cadastré de la Ville de Constantinople: VI. Cercle Municipal*
"Rue Glavany & Place Abdul-Aziz" (Istanbul: Şehremaneti Hey'et-i Fenniyesi, 1876). AK, Hrt.Gec. 1963.



Figure 11. The proposed plan for a municipal garden in Tepebaşı
BOA, ŞD 2423/1 (11 Muharrem 1297 [December 25, 1879]).





Figure 12. The location of the Jardin des Petits-Champs

Shown with light green. Base map: Excerpt from Count G. D'Ostoya, *Plan Général de Galata, Pera et Pancalti, 1858-1860* (Istanbul, 1860)
[Repository: Atatürk Kitaplığı, SALT Research].



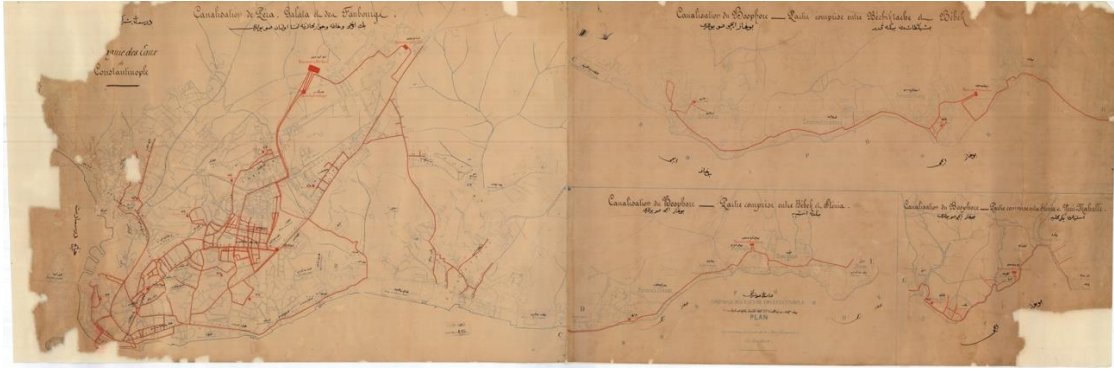


Figure 13. *Canalisation de Pera, Galata, et des Faubourgs*
AK, Hrt. 5783.

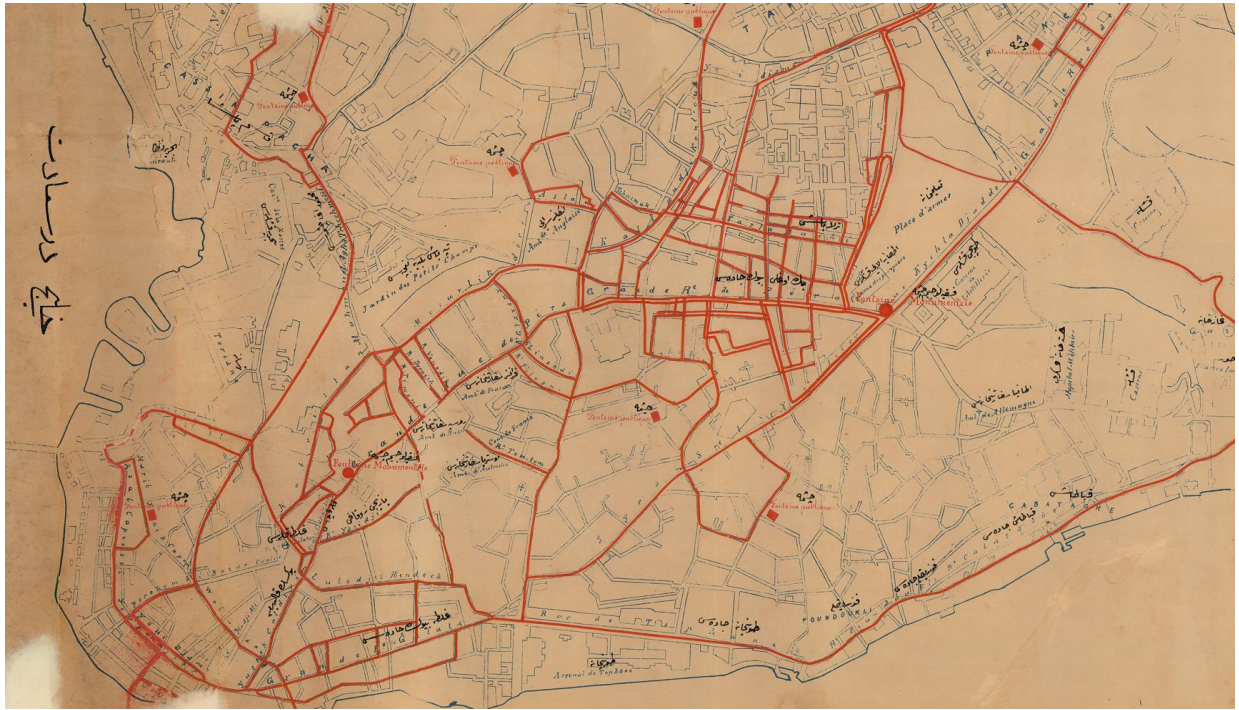




Figure 14. Locations of complaints concerning the Terkos Waterworks
 Blue dots indicate issues of access, red dots indicate issues of flooding. Base map: Çatalca Nahiyesi. AK, Hrt. 943.

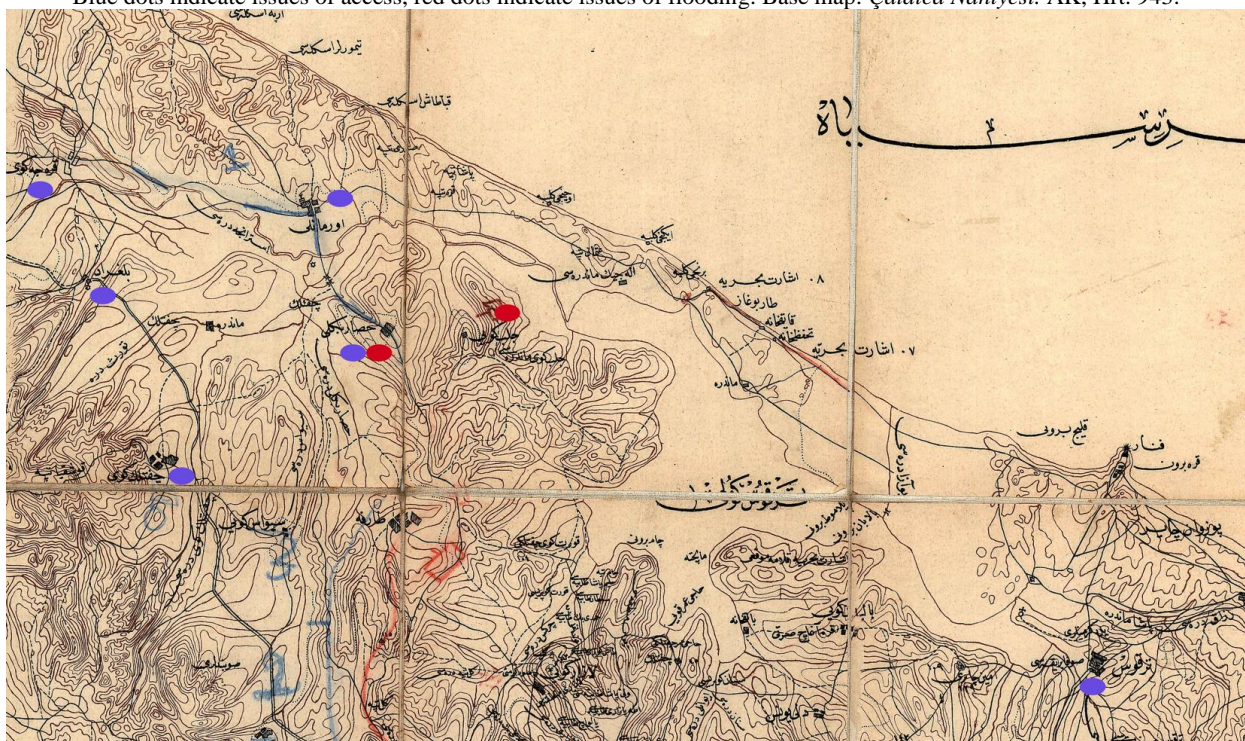




Figure 15. Büyük Akarca and Küçük Akarca, connecting to the Dolapdere River
 Base map: Jacques Pervitch, *Plan Cadastral d'Assurances*, plate 11 (Istanbul: Compagnies d'assurances en Turquie, 1926).
 [Repository: IFEA, Salt Research].

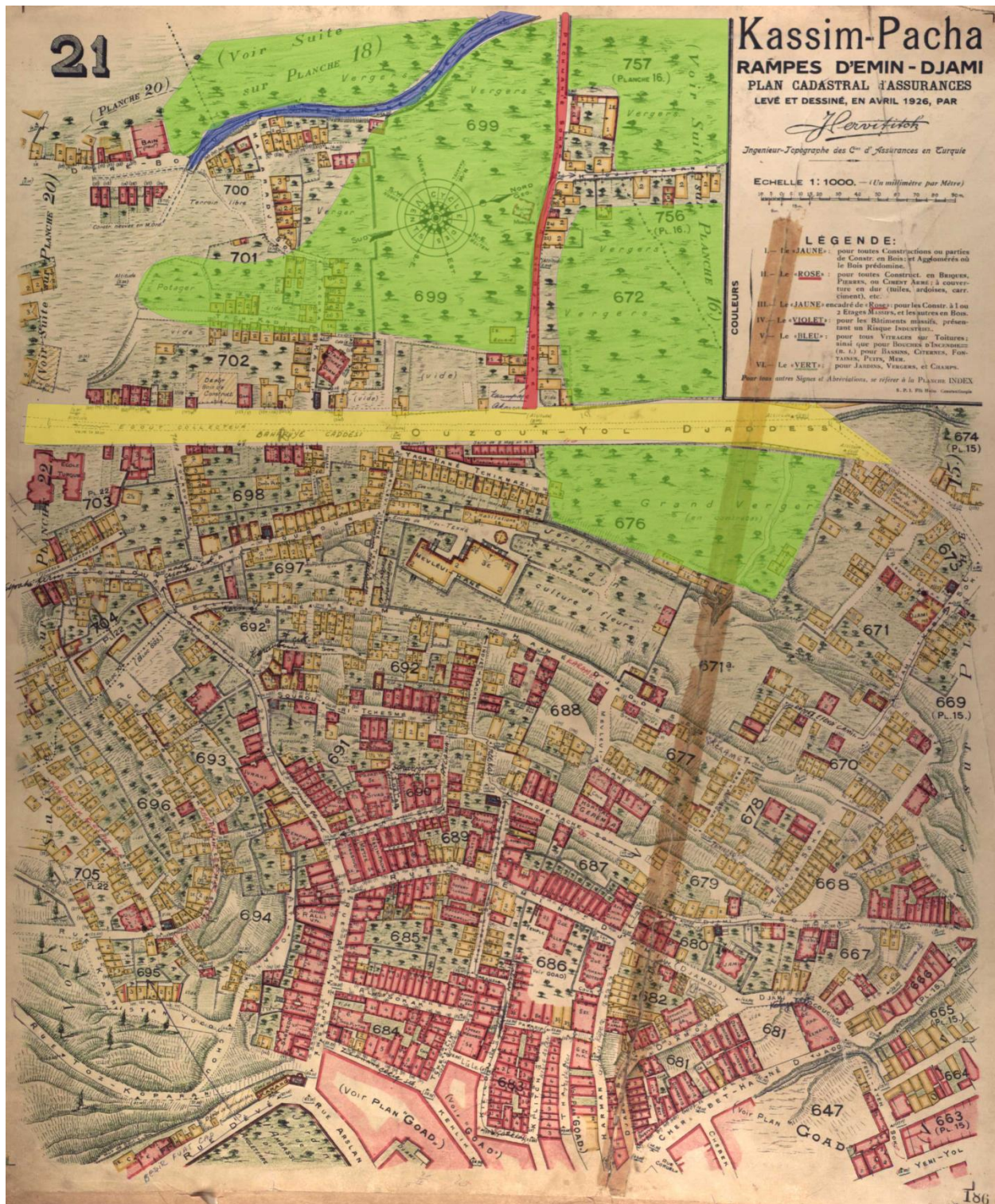


Figure 16. Baruthane River, Kasımpaşa Akarcası, covered sewers under Uzunyol Avenue, and Kasımpaşa's orchards. Shown respectively with blue, red, yellow, and green. Base map: Jacques Pervitch, *Plan Cadastral d'Assurances*, plate 21 (Istanbul: Compagnies d'assurances en Turquie, 1926). [Repository: IFEA, Salt Research]



Figure 17. Tepebaşı Akarcası

Shown with red. Base map: Jacques Pervitch, *Plan Cadastral d'Assurances*, plate 22 (Istanbul: Compagnies d'assurances en Turquie, 1926).
 [Repository: IFEA, Salt Research]

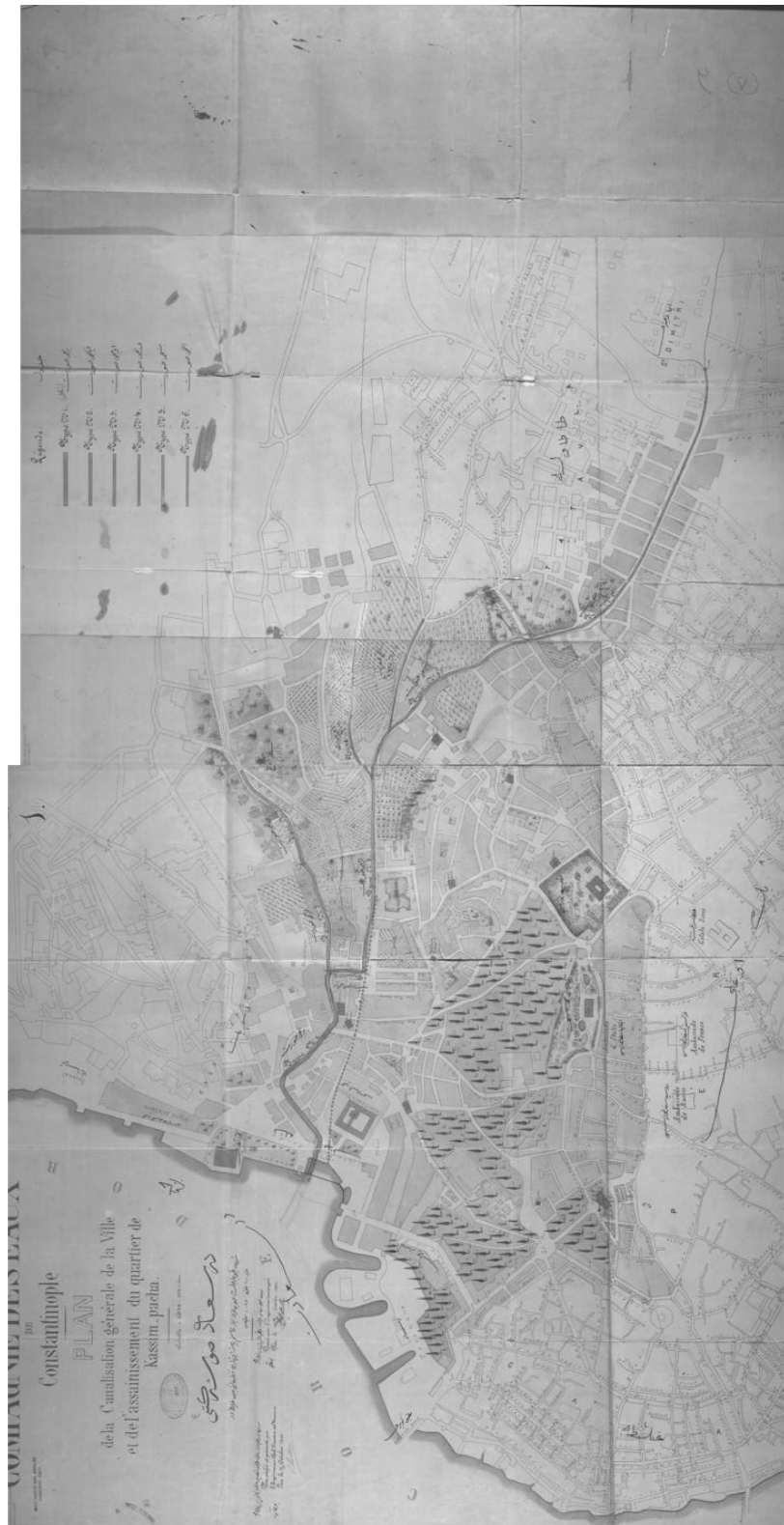


Figure 18. Paul Boutan, *Plan de la Canalisation générale de le Ville et de l'assainissement du quartier du Kassim-Pacha* BCA, 230.0.0/68.2.1 (May 8, 1884).



Figure 19. A. Jasmond, *Assainissement du ravin de Kassim Pacha*, plate 1 BOA, Y.A.HUS 275/120 (28 Zilkade 1310 [June 13, 1893]).



Figure 21. Berthier's proposal for Kasımpaşa's sewers
BOA, İ.HUS 16/160 (3 Rabiulevvel 1311 [September 14, 1893]).

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Haritalar (Hrt_Gec)

The Imperial Ottoman Bank Archives (*OBA*), SALT Research, Istanbul

The Istanbul Tünel Museum Archives, Istanbul

The National Archives of the United Kingdom (TNA), Kew
Foreign Office (FO)

The Prime Ministerial Ottoman Archives (*Başbakanlık Osmanlı Arşivleri, BOA*), Istanbul

Bab-1 Asafi Divan-ı Hümayun Kalemî (A.}DVN)
Bab-1 Asafi Divan-ı Hümayun Düvel-i Ecnebiye Kalemî (A.}DVN.DVE)
Babıali Evrak Odası Evrakı (BEO)
Cevdet Belediye (C.BLD)
Cevdet Dahiliye (C.DH)
Cevdet Zabtiye. (C.ZB)
Dahiliye Nezareti Mektubî Kalemî (DH.MKT)
Dahiliye Nezareti Sicill-i Ahval Defterleri Fihristi (DH.SAİDd)
Dahiliye Emniyet-i Umumiye Tahrirat Kalemî Evrakı (DH.EUM.THR)
Hariciye Nezareti Siyasi (HR.SYS)
İrade Dahiliye (İ.DH)
İrade Hususi (İ.HUS)
İrade Meclis-i Vala (İ.MVL)
Maarif Nezareti Mektubi Kalemî (MF.MKT)
Meclis-i Vala Evrakı (MVL)
Meclis-i Vükela Mazbataları (MV)
Plan-Proje (PLK.p)
Sadaret Mektubi Kalemî Evrakı (A.}MKT)
Sadaret Mektubi Kalemî Meclis-i Vala Evrakı (A.}MKT.MVL)
Sadaret Mektubi Kalemî Nezaret ve Deva'ir Evrakı (A.}MKT.NZD)
Şura-yı Devlet Evrakı (ŞD)
Yıldız Mütenevvi Maruzat Evrakı (Y.MTV)
Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Arzuhal Jurnal (Y.PRK.AZJ)
Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Askeri Maruzat (Y.PRK.ASK)
Yıldız Perakende Evrakı Zabtiye Nezareti Maruzatı (Y.PRK.ZB)
Yıldız Sadaret Hususi Maruzat Evrakı (Y.A.HUS)
Yıldız Sadaret Resmi Maruzat Evrakı (Y.A.RES)

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Nafia Vekaleti (BCA, 230)

Newspapers and Journals*

The Engineer
Fire and Water Engineering
Gil Blas
Journal de Constantinople
The Levant Herald
Le Matin
Şehbal
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The Times
La Turquie

* Reports and articles with known authors published in newspapers and journals are shown in the bibliography as separate items.

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2010: Boğaziçi University, B.A., Political Science and International Relations

2008: Institut d'Études Politiques, Bordeaux, Erasmus Exchange Student

Select Fellowships and Awards

2017: International Journal of Urban and Regional Research Foundation Writing-Up Grant

2017: UW the Graduate School Presidential Dissertation Award

2017: UW Near Eastern Languages & Civilizations Maurice and Louis Schwartz Endowment
Fellowship

2017: The Dr. Walter W. Ristow Prize Honorable Mention for the paper “Empire on a Board:
Navigating the British Empire through Geographical Board Games in the Nineteenth
Century”

2015: UW Simpson Center Summer Research Fellowship in Digital Humanities

2014: Koç University’s Research Center for Anatolian Civilizations Junior Residential
Fellowship

2014: SALT Research Institute Research Grant

2012: UW Hall-Ammerer-Washington Research Foundation Fellowship

Select Publications

2019: “Nature’s ‘Cosmopolitanism’: Villagers, Engineers, and Animals along Terkos
Waterworks in Late Nineteenth-Century Istanbul.” In *The Seeds of Power: Explorations*

- in the Environmental History of the Ottoman Empire*, edited by Onur Inal and Yavuz Köse. Winwick, Cambridgeshire: The White Horse Press, 2019. Forthcoming.
- 2018 “Caricaturizing ‘Cosmopolitan’ Pera: Play, Critique, and Absence in Yusuf Franko’s Caricatures, 1884-1896.” *Journal of the Ottoman and Turkish Studies* 5, no. 1 (Spring 2018): 7-32.
- 2018 “Empire on a Board: Navigating the British Empire through Geographical Board Games in the Nineteenth Century.” *The Portolan Journal* (Fall 2018): 27-42.
- 2016 “Drawing ‘Cosmopolitan’ Pera, Drawing on Yusuf Bey’s Caricatures.” In *Yousouf Bey: Charged Portraits of Fin-de-Siècle Beyoğlu*, edited by Bahattin Öztuncay, 63-79. Istanbul: Vehbi Koç Vakfı, 2016.
- 2016 “Tarihçi Kechriotis'in Tarihini Yazmak: Bir Başlangıç, Bir Deneme.” *Toplumsal Tarih* 272 (August 2016): 54-56.