SPATIALITY OF DIASPORA: REPRESENTATION OF HOME ON URBAN
STREET IN THE CASE OF BEYOĞLU, İSTANBUL


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# ABSTRACT

## SPATIALITY OF DIASPORA: REPRESENTATION OF HOME ON URBAN STREET IN THE CASE OF BEYOĞLU, İSTANBUL

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Elaborated on the notion and the production of diaspora as space through the tactics of territoriality that surface in the practices of everyday life, this research posits the idea of home embedded in the essence of the diaspora in its focus. It argues that through the ways of operating in the city, the diasporic subject represents the idea of home in urban space, and thus appropriates it by bending the territorial boundaries and blurring the distinction between us and them. Drawing on go-along interviews as an ethnographic research tool conducted in Beyoğlu, İstanbul, it traces the spatial reflections of the idea of home for Syrian diaspora on the streets of Beyoğlu. In the analysis of the go-along interviews, a multi-scalar sense of home constructed in the spatial encounters with Beyoğlu Urban Site is revealed. Such differentiated senses of home for the diaspora community show not only that the idea of home is associated with the idea of a homeland but also indicates that it can be associated with the built environment, social environment, feelings or moment. On the relationship between the diaspora and urban space, this research further aims to contribute to the spatial dimension of diaspora that seems to be neglected in the literature of urban design by questioning the role of the inhabited urban space in the homemaking practices of diaspora.

Keywords: diaspora space, home, everyday life practices, tactic/strategy, urban space

# ÖZ

## DİASPORANIN MEKANSALLIĞI: BEYOĞLU, İSTANBUL ÖRNEĞİNDE KENTSEL SOKAKTA EVİN TEMSİLİ

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Gündelik hayatın pratiklerinde su yüzüne çıkan bölgesellik taktikleri üzerinden diaspora mekanı kavramı ve üretimi üzerine yoğunlaşan bu araştırma, diasporik kimliğin özünde yer alan ev fikrini odak noktasına yerleştirmektedir. Diasporik öznenin, şehirdeki faaliyet biçimleriyle, kentsel sokakta ev fikrini temsil ettiğini; haliyle, kentsel mekandaki bölgesel sınırlarını bükerek ve biz ile onlar arasındaki ayrımı bulanıklaştırarak kentsel mekanı kendileştirdiğini savunmaktadır. İstanbul, Beyoğlu İlçesinde yürütülen etnografik saha çalışmasıyla, Suriye diasporası için ev fikrinin Beyoğlu sokaklarındaki mekansal yansımalarının izini sürmektedir. Yapılan görüşmeler sonucunda, Beyoğlu'nda mekansal karşılaşmalarla üretilen ev anlamının çok ölçekli olduğu ortaya çıkmıştır. Diaspora topluluğu için bu şekilde farklılaşmış ev anlamları sadece ev fikrinin anavatan fikriyle ilişkili olmadığı, aynı zamanda yapılı çevre, sosyal çevre, duygular veya anlarla bağdaşabileceğini göstermektedir. Diaspora ve kent mekanı arasında ilişki üzerine ise, bu araştırma ayrıca, diasporanın ev kurma pratiklerinde yaşadığı kentsel alanın rolünü sorgulayarak, kentsel tasarım literatüründe ihmal edilmiş görünen diasporanın mekansal boyutuna katkıda bulunmayı amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: diaspora mekanı, ev, gündelik hayat pratikleri, tactik/strateji, kentsel sokak

to the Sun and Eeyore.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABBREVIATIONS

UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees)

# CHAPTER 1


# INTRODUCTION


"The Savage Is No Longer Out There But Has Invaded Home."

(Lavie & Swedenburg, 1996, p.2)


Humanity is built upon migration. Throughout history, the extensive relocation of humankind has frequently culminated in dramatic demographic transitions. Whatever the past reasons fueling this movement it is clear human migration is a never-ending process; shaping the identity of global society with its own dynamics. With the rise of nation-states and homogenous sovereign territory as a form of political organization, ideologies aimed at identifying and eliminating those defined as *different* from the boundaries of the nation-state have been instrumental in state-building processes. When forming spatially conceived hierarchical binaries of the world *here* and the world *out there*, such ideology also simply assumes that *they* are supposed to be *there* and *we* are supposed to be *here* (Lavie & Swedenburg, 1996, p.1). Yet, the state territoriality that constantly imagines home as a homogenous population is challenged by the tactics of human territoriality, which defines home as the opposition of *us* compared to the *other*. While recent migration history, filled with intense movement across seas, blurs the boundaries between *us* and *them*, the discussion on the changing nature of territorial boundaries becomes even more central in the social sciences and humanities exploited by "spatial turn".

Often in the aftermath of protracted conflict a "refugee crises" will emerge, whereby the displaced population is forced to confront the permanency of residing in camps that were constructed with a temporary intent. Meanwhile, as host populations attempt to confine the massive influx of refugees within these fluid and emerging camps, urban spaces present a remarkably effective means to absorb the populations.

For many of those displaced, despite any acknowledged or unacknowledged vulnerability, urban space represents a way to escape the stigma of "refugeeness", by empowering the displaced with a means of reproducing the meaning of home and constructing a sense of us.

Within this context, this research takes an interest in tracing the spatial reflections of Syrian refugees inhabiting Turkish cities since the onset of the Syrian Conflict in 2011, as they reproduce the meaning of home through the appropriation of urban space and construct a sense of *us* in opposition to being labeled as *other*. While the study's initial emphasis intended to elaborate demographic, economic and social structuring during their elongated "guestship", it seems that the accompanying spatial structuring conveying the sense of home and us is worth to document regarding the discussion of who belongs to us and who belongs to the other, which is deeply rooted in the foundations of nation-states. Hence, in order to contribute to filling such a gap in the literature, while essentially focusing on the relationship between sense of home and urban space through the framework primarily guided by Avtar Brah's "diaspora space", this research elaborates upon the everyday life practices of Syrian refugees in urban space, as the meaning of home is re-questioned. While theoretically endeavoring to establish a comprehensive and consistent framework to comprehend how Syrian urban refugees appropriate urban space in a way to construct the meaning of home, the research maps their homemaking practices in urban space.

## 1.1. Terminology

For the sake of clarity, terminology that is employed in the legal and academic literature for migration studies is important within the context of this research. Although it is not the legally correct use of the term, this research uses refugee[1] as an

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[1] As stated in 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees published by UNHCR, "the term "refugee" shall only apply to any person who: As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. For the purposes of this Convention, the words "events occurring before 1 January 1951" shall be understood to mean

umbrella term to refer to Syrians who crossed the Syrian border to seek shelter in Turkey in the aftermath of Syrian conflict in 2011, and urban refugee[2] as those who have subsequently inhabited urban areas.

However it should be noted, that while a signatory of the Convention Relation to the Status of Refugees (also referred to as the 1951 Refugee Convention) Turkey does not recognize Syrian "refugees" in the legal sense due to the geographic and temporal limitation clause, which grants refugee status only to persons displaced as a result of events before 1951 in Europe. Thus, the initial reaction of the Turkish government was to refer to such refugees as "guests", thereby excusing any legal responsibility under international law for those who seek permanent protection from the Turkish State. However, due to the drastic increase in people crossing the Turkish-Syrian border in such a relatively short time, and pressure from the EU Accession process, the legal status of those initially labelled "guests", was changed to "temporary protection" by the adoption of a new Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) in 2013, and additional legislation in 2014 (Köşer Akçapar & Şimsek, 2018).

"The foreigner is first of all foreign to the legal language in which the duty of hospitality is formulated, the right to asylum, its limits, norms, policing, etc. He has to ask for hospitality in a language which, by definition is not his own, the one imposed on him by the master of the house, the host, the king, the lord, the authorities, the nation, the State, the father, etc. This personage imposes on him translation into their own language, and that's the first act of violence. That is where the question of hospitality begins: must we ask the foreigner to understand us, to speak our language, in all the senses of this term, in all its possible extensions, before being able and so as to be able to welcome him into our country?" (Derrida, 2000, p.15).

Grounding on Derrida's views on the question of the foreigner, hospitality begins with language that is imposed on the foreigner's identity. What sets out the

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either: (a) "events occurring in Europe before 1 January 1951"; or (b) "events occurring in Europe or elsewhere before 1 January 1951"."
[2] UNHCR's policy on refugees in urban areas, published in 1997 does not provide a clear and legal definition of the term "urban refugee".

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rules of hospitality and hostility is the insinuation of the words that are assigned to define who is foreigner.  As such, the migration history of Turkey is notable for the abundance of Turkish vocabulary referring to outsiders.[3] Whether the legal terminology or the vernacular, for refugees accepted to Turkey over time, as Derrida points out, what is relevant is how they are treated; that is who is included or excluded from the society in terms of civil, social and political rights.  In the case of Syrians, whether it is "guest" or "person under temporary protection", the status given to them is inherently ephemeral – a "temporariness" for social and, thus, spatial positioning of Syrians within the community. Therefore, within the context of this research, Derrida's question of foreigner seems to translate as: What if the foreigner's territory of inhabitance is no longer foreign to it, would the foreigner still be a foreigner in the place that defines it as such?

## 1.2. Problem Definition

According to the figures published by UNHCR (UNHCR, 2018), every two seconds, one person becomes displaced due to the actions of persecution and human rights violation. In 2017, the number of individuals who have been forcibly displaced has reached a peak point in human history. With an increase of 2.9 million people over the previous year, approximately 70 million individuals including 25.4 million refugees, 40 million internally displaced people and 3.1 million asylum-seekers have been reported forcibly displaced. For the year 2017, it has been recorded that more than half of the displaced population resides in urban areas (UNHCR, 2018) [4].

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[3] "The refugees that came to Turkey between 1912 and 1930 are called muhacir. […] Even more specifically, the refugees of the First World War are known as mubadil. The ones that fled from the Greek islands call themselves 'from-the-island'. These groups have Turkish origin and were directly accepted as Turkish citizens. […] The people with no connections to any state are referred as yurtsuz [stateless], and haymatloz is the name used for the people who escaped from German-speaking countries between 1937 and 1945. Chechens who fled to Turkey after 1994 are accepted as in 'refugee-like situation' by UNHCR." (Bedir, 2014)

[4] According to the available data, the refugee proportion in urban areas decreased to 58 per cent in 2017 from 60 per cent in 2016, for 83 per cent of the refugee population of 16.5 million refugees in 2017 in total.

As one of the relatively recent outbursts causing a great contribution to the millions of individuals to flee from their homelands, the Syrian Conflict in 2011 has been a major catalyst for a huge migration of the Syrian population within the country, and eventually towards neighboring countries, among which Turkey is one of the hosts. By hosting 3.5 million registered Syrian refugees, it still stands as the largest refugee-hosting country during the conflict.[5] However, the country's history of receiving refugees is not a new phenomenon. In fact, Turkey has notably inherited a tradition of receiving refugees from the Ottoman Empire, with the desire to create a "homogeneous sense of national identity in an otherwise ethnically and culturally diverse country" (Kirişci, 2003). From its immediate foundation in 1923 until the onset of the Syrian Conflict in 2011, Turkey has hosted roughly 1.6 million refugees, including Muslims who have started to return after the population exchange agreement with Greece in 1922, Turks from Bulgaria in the 1950s and later in 1989, and Kurdish population from Iran and Iraq in the late 1980s (Kirişci, 2003). One conclusion to be drawn from its history of hosting refugee populations is that Turkey is accustomed to migration practices and integration of arrived populations. Yet, the country's approach towards being a transit and host country for the 3.5 million Syrians has been quite different from previous experiences, due to the size and diversity of the population, as well as their ambiguous legal status. The initial assumption was that the temporary stay of the Syrian guests would only be in isolated areas such as tent cities established on the Turkish-Syrian border. Yet, the majority of arrived Syrians after 2011 have spread beyond the permeable boundaries of the camps towards urban spaces; blending into the crowd and becoming a reality of everyday life. Thus, it is abundantly obvious that the migrated Syrian population in the urban setting is no longer guest, but has become the stranger (foreigner in the view of Derrida), as Georg Simmel states, "who comes today and stays to-morrow" (Wolff, 1950, p. 402).

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[5] According to the data received from DGMM, as of February, 2018, the number of Syrian refugees under temporary protection in Turkey reached 3,531,416 of which only 8% resides in camps. That figures excludes the unregistered Syrians and Syrians living with residence permits (Köşer Akçapar & Şimsek, 2018).

**1.3. Research Question**

       This research emphasizes Syrians' disassociation from their homeland, on both an individual and collective level, and the construction of the meaning of home by forming a sense of us in urban spaces. In this context, it initially asks the following umbrella question to frame the conceptual space that it moves within: "**How is the idea of home represented by urban refugees?**"

       The framework attempts to answer this question based on the conceptualization of diaspora as space that is produced by those who inhabit it. Hence, embarking on the notion of diaspora, it also scrutinizes immanent bonds with the concepts of place, home, and everyday life. As it proceeds with a literature review, it seeks answers to the following questions on the related concepts shown in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Concepts and Sub-Questions of the Research

| Concepts | Sub-Questions |
|---|---|
| **Diaspora** | Is every migrated ethnic group diaspora? <br> Who is diaspora? <br> Where and when does diaspora begin and end? <br> Is diaspora a human community? Or, is it a place? <br> Is diaspora the one who lives it; or is it the one what is lived? |
| **Diaspora Space** | What is diaspora space? <br> When does a place of residence become 'home'? <br> Against what 'indigenous' is represented? |
| **Home** | What does home mean? <br> Where is home? <br> How home is defined in relation to who defines it? <br> How is the context of home formed? <br> When and how does home become home? |

**Table 1 (Continued).** Concepts and Sub-Questions of the Research

| Concepts | Sub-Questions |
| --- | --- |
| **Homeland** | How do the meaning of homeland and nation translate for diaspora community? |
| **Locality** | What is locality? How is locality produced as a status? Does locality refer to a specific place/location? |
| **Place** | How is place differentiated from space? In which sense place is different from location? How does a place become meaningful? |
| **Everyday Life** | How place is experienced? How are meaning and intimacy produced towards a particular place? How is the sense of home constructed? |

In a search of the answers to these questions, this research, thus, consists of five chapters. It starts with an introductory chapter, draws a theoretical framework, introduces the method, presents findings from site research with discussion of results, and concludes what is covered throughout the research and what contribution it may provide to urban design as an intermediary discipline.

## 1.4. Methodology

In order to provide a relevant answer to the research question, the literature on the notions of diaspora, diaspora space, and everyday practices is reviewed. Mainly focused on the scope of social and humanistic disciplines, the notion of diaspora is covered in the theoretical framework providing a sociological grounding, as well as the spatial connotations, of the term through the discussion on the notions of home, place and everyday practices.

Following the comprehensive theoretical framework, site research that employs a novel method providing a phenomenological sensitivity to the ethnographic research

tools is conducted in Beyoğlu Urban Site, İstanbul. As the site accommodates most of the Syrian population that arrived after May 2011, and already hosts various socio-cultural enclaves, it provides insight into the relationship between diaspora as a status and the urban space as its home. The go-along technique as a qualitative research tool allows exploration of the complex meaning of place within the everyday experience of urban space. It employs a phenomenological ethnographic method to investigate how urban refugees practice a sense of home in everyday life in urban space, by conducting walking interviews that shadow the daily routines of five participants. The affective bond that is formed between the participant and its immediate surrounding is thereby observed. Accordingly, the interviews are conducted depending on the preferences and needs of the participants.

### 1.5. Aim & Scope of the Research

Though previously confined to the dispersion of Jewish populations, and subsequently assigned Greek, Armenian, and African movements away from their ancestral lands, the term diaspora now covers many ethnic groups, nationalities and religions. However, this 'horizontal' scattering of the word, covering the mobility of many groups to many destinations, has been coupled with vertical leaps setting out the frameworks of other disciplines other than social sciences and humanities through the deployment of the word diaspora, which covers further discussions related to the phenomenon of migration.

Considering the embodied material and corporeal encounters within cities that are critical to the making of contemporary diasporic and transnational spaces and identities, urban studies is one of the fields where diaspora and urban space find a central place within the debate. Discussion on identity, multiculturalism, and cosmopolitanism are highly engaged with the multifaceted notions of transnationalism and diaspora in their relations to people and power. However, it is only very recently that their implications in spatial thinking have come to the frontlines.

In this sense, urban design, as a multidisciplinary field grounded in the relation of humans to their environment, seems to be ready to contribute to the literature on

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diaspora, and questions regarding the role of the inhabited urban space in the home-making processes of figures of immigration. Yet, despite the noteworthiness of home-making practices revealed in everyday life of people and places, the question of spatiality of diaspora in urban space seems to be documented solely in the literature of urban design. Therefore, this study aims to discover Syrian urban refugees' home-making practices in urban space, and contribute to urban design literature to provide a better understanding of the relationship between the human and its environment.

## 1.6. Research Structure

The **Introduction** presents a brief of the research. It respectively covers the terminology employed, defines the problem, and poses the questions that enable to draw a theoretical framework. It then proceeds to describe the adopted site research method, and presents the research scope in order to clarify expectation.

Chapter 2**,** lays out a **Theoretical Framework**, which is based on the conceptualization of diaspora as a space requiring elaboration on the concepts of home, place, and everyday life. It aims to interrogate how diaspora as space is produced by everyday life practices in and through urban space. It is comprised of three headings related to: the concepts of (1) diaspora, (2) diaspora space that is formed by the homing desire of the diasporic subject and the production of the sense of locality, and (3) everyday practices whereby the urban refugee displays a tactical resistance to constructing a sense of home in the urban space of the other.

Chapter 3, the **Method,** introduces street ethnography as a qualitative research tool, where phenomenology and ethnography meet from an urban design perspective. It interrogates homemaking practices of urban refugees within the urban space of their everyday lives. It proceeds by presenting the historical background of the research site, Beyoğlu Urban Site, İstanbul, and follows with findings from field observation, and later the limitations encountered during the research.

Chapter 4**, Site Research** takes initial support from the theoretical framework and method, and provides an on-site look at the everyday life practice of Syrian urban refugees by investigating the relevance of the assumptions. It presents the field notes

from the on-site interviews, and supports the findings with visual materials. It ends with an intermediate conclusion that evaluates the results and validity of the assumptions.

Chapter 5, the **Conclusion** summarizes the overall findings and provides a final discussion on the concept of diaspora as a space and the immanent relation between diaspora and urban space. As the final endeavor, it also presents further discussion topics to which it contributes.

# CHAPTER 2

# THEORETHICAL FRAMEWORK

Diaspora, among many others, with a major expansion in its meaning and scope in the second half of the 20th century, has become one of the notions extensively employed in contemporary migration studies on the relation of migration to space. Deriving from the Greek -dia (across) and speirein (to scatter) – dispersion-, it innately refers to the geographical scattering of a population over space (Bonnerjee, 2010). In spatial thinking, the verb "to scatter" connotes a center, and a movement originated from the center to the periphery. Embodying the notions of home as the center and of the journey away from home, it happens to exist since antiquity and has become an intensively debated phenomenon since then. In that sense, as an innate consequence of human mobility, diaspora owes its historical continuity to this continuous relocation. Therefore, it would not be delusional to claim that diaspora communities as the cradle of conceptual and theoretical debates will shape future international relations; and, hence, it is not shocking that it is popularized as the outcome of an analytical refinement in social sciences and eventually in humanities, and loses the initially designated meaning and context: "[…] the term that once described Jewish, Greek, and Armenian dispersion now shares meanings with a larger semantic domain that includes words like immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest- worker, exile community, overseas community, ethnic community." (Tölölyan, 1991, p.4). Referring to the expanding meaning and the danger of emptying out the concept, Cohen radically criticizes the advertising uses and exemplifies "In January 2007, Taiwanese architects undertook the task of turning a living space into a hyperreal diaspora. In February 2007, a Dutch non-governmental organization advertised for a person from the Dutch–Somali diaspora who had expertise in accountancy and auditing. Two months later a touring company in the USA called 'A Journey through

two diasporas presented a first-half act, Curry Tales, which explored identity, nationalism, fertility, love, hunger and globalization. More conventionally, the second half act, called Griots t'Garage, celebrated 500 years of music in the African diaspora." (Cohen, 2008, p.8).

Within a context of such a study, which focuses on transnational migration and its relation to urban space in a nutshell, and in the times when diaspora as a status becomes available to anyone who lives outside the ancestral homelands; the theoretical framework of this research embarks on the need of an up-to-date review of the contextuality of the term. However, considering the abundance of taxonomy studies in academic literature, it is hard to assume either historical (classical diaspora and modern diaspora) or thematic (labor diaspora, trade diaspora, victim diaspora) categorizations are effective to describe whether a migrant community is a diaspora. Therefore, for the question of whether Syrian refugees in Turkey can be tagged as such, it presents a theoretical framework on the changing characteristics of diaspora that are thought to be mandatory in the formation of diaspora communities, such as forced migration.

## 2.1. The Original Diaspora: The Jewish Dispersion

Apparently, the literature on diaspora indicates that research on diaspora, which does not mention its roots in Jewish history, is not acceptable, and the one that only mentions Jewish diaspora is not satisfactory to convey its contemporary context. As such, Cohen (2008) states its classical meaning was systematically extended in which it began to refer the Africans, Armenians and the Irish, and later, Palestinians. Therefore, in order to understand both the current meaning of the concept of diaspora and the characteristics of today's diaspora communities, it will be useful to look at the emergence process of the concept.

The first emergence of diaspora as a descriptive category simply hinges on the Babylonian exile of Jewish community in the sixth century B.C.; and, stemming from Jewish history, it is referred as a signifier of collective consciousness about scattering from the homeland and return. In that sense, in the center of the Jewish diaspora, Eretz

Israel as the political center where the Jewish community is concentrated is pointed out (Yaldız, 2013). Here, the emphasis on the existence of a political center is substantial for the conceptual preferences of the term. Marienstras (1999) indicates that by diaspora, the Jewish who left Eretz Israel is referred; whereas Galouth, or Golah, is used for the ones in the times that such a political center is absent, and represents the exile from the homeland, where the territorial sovereign power is lost (Yaldız, 2013). Concordantly, it is argued that Septuagint, the Greek translation of Hebraic Bible in the third century B.C, betokens a more divine meaning; which diaspora as the translation of the Hebrew word galouth, meaning "exile" or "banishment," are not sufficient to communicate these intrinsic meanings (Dufoix, 2013). However, in opposition to the association of diasporic identity formation of Jewish community with the geographical ties, Boyarin, D., & Boyarin, J. (1993, p.722) here crucially underline the fact that majority of Jews have voluntarily chosen to reside outside of this political center before its very destruction; and, state that in relation to the construction of Jewish identity construction, "diaspora is not the forced product of war and destruction". On the other hand, the literature on diaspora shows that collective consciousness is an unduly emphasized characteristic of diaspora (Safran, 1991; Cohen, 2008), thus, it can be argued that the diasporic formation of Jewish identity is, partially if not solely, based on the formation of collective consciousness through generations. In relation to the geographical and genealogical formation of the Jewish diaspora, the idea of return is another concept that is also manifested. Here, return, does not always have to imply a material presence in the homeland; it may be virtual or metaphorical as well. In reference to the views on what makes diaspora communities distinct from ethnic communities, Vardanyan (2016) points out that diasporans consciously resist the assimilation in the host country. Therefore, the assumption of return is also one of the characteristics of the Jewish diaspora. In the imagination of the return, there lies loyalty to the homeland; which perpetuates the diaspora consciousness through generations in spite of their absence in the homeland for thousands of years. Therefore, the foundation of the independent state of Israel in

1948, after a period of imagining the ultimate return lasting for thousands of years, is substantial in the formation of Jewish identity.

Criticizing its causality, Cohen (2008) states that the Jewish diaspora provides a framework where the similarities between the dispersions of African and Armenian communities and Jewish diaspora are compared, and, henceforth, labeled as 'victim' diasporas. As such, especially after 1960 onwards, the "importation from the religious realm into the vocabulary of the social sciences" (Dufoix, 2013, p.2) and through the inclusion of African and Armenian communities into diaspora sphere, the expansion in the meaning of the word influentially penetrates into academic discourses; and lead to include other ethnic migrant communities such as Greeks, Indians, Chinese, Kurdish, Palestinians and many others in the definition. However, the expansion in the context and meaning of diaspora comes hand in hand with a critical question, which requires a different approach than the classic associations: Is every migrated ethnic group diaspora?

## 2.2. Who is Diaspora?

The discussion of the above question, which the answer is clearly "no", can be examined through the contemporary approaches that are the milestones for what diaspora refers to under today's circumstances of transnational migration. William Safran, one of the most cited writers and considered to be one of the most competent in diaspora studies, emphasizes the nature of the concept rather than its content. In his essay "*Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths and Homeland*", and lists common characteristics of a diaspora group by discussing "how", rather than "what". By analogy, Safran (1991, p.83) asserts that diaspora has come to appear as a "metaphoric designation" for nearly all migrated ethnic groups who are adds-in to the host country[6]. Pointing out the disengaged meaning of the term from its initial designation, he, then, suggests putting limitations to the definition of diaspora to address the question of

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[6] Here, Safran makes an analogy saying that similar to the use of ghetto to refer "all kinds of crowded, constricted, and disprivileged urban environments" and holocaust tied to "all kinds of mass murder". (Safran, 1991, p.83).

differentiating, and, argues that expatriate minority communities having shared characteristics among themselves should be in the context of diaspora (Safran, 1991). Table 2 illustrates Safran's criteria set in his work. Seemingly, rooted from the characteristics of the Jewish diaspora, his criteria to recognize diaspora puts emphasis mostly on a communal level of consciousness about the idealization of ancestral homeland and the idea of *return*, accompanied by the feeling of rejection in the host country.

**Table 2.** William Safran's Criteria of Diaspora (1991)

| | |
|---|---|
| **1** | They, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original "center" to two or more "peripheral," or foreign, regions |
| **2** | They, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original "center" to two or more "peripheral," or foreign, regions |
| **3** | They believe that they are not—and perhaps cannot be—fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it |
| **4** | They regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return—when conditions are appropriate |
| **5** | They believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity |
| **6** | They continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship. |

Safran's definition clearly contours new claims to diaspora. However, as affirmed by himself, Safran's attempt to expand the context so as to conclude a frame

of reference for what it is does not "fully conform to the ideal type of Jewish Diaspora" (Safran, 1991, p.84), as it legitimizes the others.

Remarking the necessity of brutality in Safran's criteria that characterizes diaspora groups, Cohen (2008) critically argues that diaspora does not necessarily have to result from a victimizing occurrence as it was "Babylon for the Jews, slavery for the Africans, massacres and forced displacement for the Armenians, famine for the Irish and the formation of the state of Israel for the Palestinians". Apart from catastrophic origins that label the diaspora subjects as victims, he also provides a typology for the diaspora formation by means of labor, trade or imperial purposes as exemplifying empirical observations on diasporas communities such as "Cubans and Mexicans in the USA, Pakistanis in Britain, Maghrebis in France, Turks in Germany, Poles, blacks in the North America and Corsicans in Marseilles." (Cohen, 2008, p.5).

Building upon Safran's criteria and, Cohen (2008) concludes that the following features, shown in Table 3, are observed in many diasporas.

**Table 3.** Cohen's List of Common Features of Diaspora (2008)

| | |
|---|---|
| 1 | Dispersal from an original homeland, often traumatically; |
| 2 | Alternatively, the expansion from a homeland in search of work, in pursuit of trade or to further colonial ambitions |
| 3 | A collective memory and myth about the homeland |
| 4 | An idealization of the supposed ancestral home |
| 5 | A return movement or at least a continuing connection |
| 6 | A strong ethnic group consciousness sustained over a long time |
| 7 | A troubled relationship with host societies |
| 8 | A sense of co-responsibility with co-ethnic members in other countries |
| 9 | The possibility of a distinctive creative, enriching life in tolerant host countries |

Cohen (2008) states that his proposed subcategorization may not draw sharp lines and that the diaspora groups may change over time and show overlapping

characteristics with other sub-categories. As an example, Jewish diaspora can be regarded as the victim, labor and trade diaspora; which, however, puts the consistency of subcategorization efforts of the diaspora into question. Assuming that one diaspora community may be regarded under each thematic sub-category over the years, the theoretical framework set by Cohen suggests a limited understanding of the contemporary use of the word. Here, it would be purposeful to mention the importance of "time". Time is required to mention the sustainability of strong ethnic group consciousness, a fundamental parameter in order to, finally, call an ethnic migrant community diaspora. As Cohen (2008) states there must be a strong bond with the past and the present and future. Only then, the mobilization of diasporic consciousness through generations becomes speakable of in the formation of diaspora.

Based on the wide array of literature on the subject, two distinct conceptualizations on the contextual difference of diaspora stand out. In the classical sense, stemming from the Jewish diaspora, the use of the notion points out rather an obligatory traumatic origin of events causing the displacement of a community. It also indicates a diasporic structure erected upon a myth of homeland and the rejection by the host community. Whereas, the contemporary deployment of the diaspora in literature has a more positive resonance; that is, with the rise of globalization, it refers to not only the victim diaspora but also the appearance of a level of voluntariness in diaspora. As such, even if what it gradually evolves into is nothing but a "diaspora craze", it now goes beyond being only a descriptive category and happens to be an analytical tool to cognize the emerging forms of immigration and complex patterns of massive population movements.

Nonetheless, while embarking upon differentiating current entangled migration patterns from actual diaspora, it seems that diaspora in its current use and with exemplified categories still fails to achieve the objective in the sense of providing a luculent distinction. Correspondingly, within the context of this research discussing the relation of the diaspora with space (urban space in particular), and referring to its spatial connotations, more questions have been spawned regarding not only who but also what to be considered as such: Where and when does diaspora begin? Where does

it end? Is diaspora a human community? Or, is it a place? Is diaspora the one who lives it; or is it the one that is lived? These questions, which further feeds the uncertainty of the concept and the uncertainty of the boundaries of the word diaspora, form the basis of spatial discussions in relation to diaspora formation, which will be outlined in the following.

**2.3. The Spatiality of Diaspora: Home as a meaningful place**

In spite of the metamorphosis of the contextuality of the term, the spatial metaphors embedded within the etymology of diaspora that is originated from the Greek diasperein, from –dia (across) and sperein (to sow or scatter), were always preserved. As priorly referred, it innately refers to the geographical scattering of a population over space (Bonnerjee, 2010), which alludes an origin where the population is dispersed from, a destination where it is dispersed towards and the movement between these two destinations. Yet, although the spatial discourses on diaspora are abundant in diaspora studies, the essential bound of space with diaspora is left neglected while the remarkable shift in its context is witnessed. As pointed out by Carter (2005, p.55): "*Space is invoked but often left un-interrogated*". He further argues that "the theoretical literature and empirical research on 'actual' diasporas and their specific geographies" do not overlap in a way to boost the "re-territorializing elements of diasporic practices".

The vocabulary of diasporic spatiality is bifurcated using metaphoric themes such as "roots/routes" (Gilroy, 1993; Clifford, 1994), Here/There (Clifford, 1994) and Grounding/Unmooring (Yeoh, 2001, cited in Bonnerjee, 2010) in the literature on diaspora studies. Signifying the contrast between being rooted in a particular space and staying away from the roots, such conceptualizations point out that diaspora is formed within this in-betweenness. In that sense, collective consciousness that underpins the diaspora formation is embodied in the everyday life discourses and practices through constructing the meaning of home in between there/homeland and here/hostland. In terms of the interrogation of space that is invoked in diaspora literature, what is valuable here is the exploration of the diaspora's intrinsic

relationship with space as the place from where the dispersion of the population is originated and towards where they disperse. Yet, what is still left un-interrogated in this theoretical framework is the diasporic practices that construct the in-between spaces of diaspora. Hence, it is abundantly apparent that, in terms of the questions raised earlier regarding what diaspora is about, there is a need for an understanding that approaches space by highlighting the simultaneity of the spatial dichotomies, and diasporic practices as what is constitutive of and is constituted by diaspora.

Here, based on two main arguments, Avtar Brah's conception of *diaspora space* mentioned in *Cartographies of Diaspora* seems fitting. As to Brah's understanding of diaspora, **(1)** the concept "offers a critique of discourses of fixed origins while taking account of a homing desire, as distinct from a desire for a 'homeland'", and by the notion of *diaspora space*, **(2)** she refers an inhabitation of space "(as distinct from the concept of diaspora) not only by diasporic subjects but equally by those who are constructed and represented as 'indigenous'. As such, the concept of diaspora space foregrounds the entanglement of genealogies of dispersion with those of 'staying put'" (Brah, 1996, p.16). Linking space and diaspora in a way to understand what translates the meaning of home in urban space for diaspora, her conceptualization favors an analytical framework to probe the spatial practices of dispersed populations.

Then, within the scope of this research, it is essential to define what the meaning home is for Syrian diaspora, how homeland is differentiated from home, to what extent they assume a return to the place where they define as homeland and home, and how they transform the diasporic space where they inhabit to convey the idea of home. Therefore, following these questions and in parallel with Brah's approach, this research proceeds with a further inquiry about the notions of homeland, home, and locality that are solely incorporated in the theoretical framework on diaspora formation.

## 2.4. The Idea of Home

Dispersion is the very first relation of diaspora with space that diaspora experiences. In the framework of a systematic causality; for the earlier examples of

diaspora derived from the Jewish dispersion, the scattering over space in the aftermath of a traumatic occurrence is noted as what characterizes diaspora communities. Yet, apart from its dispersion, diaspora establishes another relation with space, which might be the most dominant characteristic of diaspora communities what tags them as such: The strong desire to *return* to the homeland. Diaspora, as argued above, unlike other minority immigrant groups, is assumed to have a deep desire to return to the homeland from where it is scattered. Through the desire of return, diaspora keeps the collective memory of homeland vivid and kneads the diasporic identity around the homeland myth through idealizing its origins (Safran, 1991). Working on the concept of exile, Said (2000) argues that it is a discontinuous state of being which calls for an immediate restoration of the broken roots. The idea of the homeland that is internalized by the individuals living in the exile leads to a self-identification through space where they are historically rooted and invokes the traumatic event. The state of exile and constant reproduction of the myth of homeland make diaspora uninhabitable and reveal the desire to return. Concordantly, it may also be argued that the feeling of rejection by the hostland, as Safran indicates in his list of common features of diaspora communities, is a product of this deep desire to return, as it is a form of resistance to assimilation and not being alienated from the diasporic identity that is formed around the desire to return.

In the context of the relationship between diaspora and space, the diaspora that is constituted by the homeland myth and the idea of return points to an essentialist link between space and identity that conceptualizes identity as fixed and unchangeable. Yet, the idea of home as the stable origin is destabilized; singularity and fixity of a place called home are questioned (Blunt & Dowling, 2006) by the massive emergence of various immigration forms and subjects. Consequently, it is argued that as opposed to the essentialism emphasized between the diaspora formation and homeland, diaspora embeds the idea of home between the past memories and future dreams.

Here, by placing "homing desire" in opposition of the "desire of return to the homeland", Brah's conceptualization of home criticizes the homeland-centric diaspora formation. Referring to the inherent bond between identity and sense of belonging,

she interrogates the idea of home through "being so far away from home". Accordingly, she argues that home in this phrase signifies "an image of 'home' as the site of everyday lived experience.", and further states "it is a discourse of locality, the place where feelings of rootedness ensue from the mundane and the unexpected of daily practice. Home, here, connotes our networks of family, kin, friends, colleagues and various other 'significant others'. It signifies the social and psychic geography of space that is experienced in terms of a neighborhood or a hometown. That is, a community 'imagined' in most part through daily encounter. This 'home' is a place with which we remain intimate even in moments of intense alienation from it. It is a sense of 'feeling at home'." (Brah, 1996, p.4). By defining home as a social and psychic space, she differentiates the nationalist discourse that is embedded in the myth of homeland. Yet, this distinction comes hand in hand with a meaningful question: "When does a place of residence become 'home'?" (Brah, 1996, p.4). As presented in Table 4, that is a question frequently asked by many scholars, who grow an interest in the relation between the notion of home and transnational migration.

**Table 4.** Questions in the literature on the relation between the notion of home and transnational migration (Blunt & Dowling, 2006, p.197)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Brah (1996)** | (1) When does a place of residence become 'home' |
| | (2) Where is home? |
| | (3) When does a location become home? |
| | (4) What is the difference between feeling at home and staking claim to a place as one's own? |
| **Ahmed (2000)** | (1) What does it mean to be at home? |
| | (2) How does it affect home and being-at-home when one leaves home? |
| **Al-Ali and Koser (2002)** | (1) How do transnational social fields and practices manifest themselves in daily lives, and how (if at all) do they impact on abstract conceptualizations of home? |

**Table 4. (Continued)** Questions in the literature on the relation between the notion of home and transnational migration (Blunt & Dowling, 2006)

| | |
|---|---|
| **Al-Ali & Koser (2002)** | (2) Does the existence of [transnational] communities necessitate a reconceptualization of the notion "home"? |
| | (3) To what extent is "home" for transnational migrants no longer tied to a specific geographical place? |
| | (4) To what extent do transnational migrants conceive of more than one home, with competing allegiances changing through time? |
| **Ahmed et al. (2003a)** | (1) What…is the relationship between leaving home and imagining home? |
| | (2) How are homes made in the context of migration? |
| | (3) And, what, having left home, might it mean to return? |
| **Fouron (2003)** | (1) Is the conceptualization of home is a fluid concept unbounded by the barriers of national sovereignty capable of birthing a new internationalist movement in the twenty-first century? |

Unsurprisingly, accompanied by the popularization of diaspora, there is also an exponentially growing literature on the notion of home in various disciplines. Perhaps the most fundamental point that is reconciled in this literature is that the 'home' as a very complex and multidimensional phenomenon functions as almost a repertoire of social and cultural thoughts and perceptions of people about themselves, about each other, the geography in which they live, the relationship between society, places and objects, that is sometimes interrelated and sometimes totally contradictory (Kılıçkıran, 2018). Accordingly, it may refer to a connection to the family; sometimes the sole body can be imagined as a home (Mallett, 2004). Hence, it seems quite impossible to reach a discrete and stable definition, when home is mentioned in any theoretical framework.

Being solicitous about the relationship between diaspora and space, this research adopts the notion of home from a geographical perspective in order to highlight its

significance in the diasporic practices in everyday life. Therefore, it takes a stand on the side of the argument that the notion of home undertakes a connotation of more than a physically inhabited space. In its simplest definition, home is a phenomenon pertaining to a co-existence of space, place, the feelings attached to this particular place, and individual and collective meanings attained to it. Hence, it may be possible to position home in relation to space. However, it transgresses this positioning by engaging with certain feelings and meanings attached to it. In that sense, the idea of home that envelops the sense of belonging at different scales of place seems crucial as it presents prominent theoretical frameworks in relation to geography that confine the meaning of home. Concordantly, in the perspective of Blunt and Dowling, home represents a spatial imaginary associating with all feelings signifying the sense of "being at home" (Blunt & Dowling, 2006, p.2). As it may be singular or plural, fixed and immutable, or mobile and variable; sometimes it may manifest the constructive feelings accompanying the sense of "being at home", sometimes can be associated with pressure and violence (Mallett, 2004).

When it is conceptualized as a whole of the emotions and meanings attributed to a place, it seems inevitable to question not only where home is but also whose home it is. In other words, home conveys meaning only if it is also coupled with the concept of identity. Hence, the question of "who" is also placed in the center of the theoretical framework that Brah (1996) employs as she puts a critique on the essentialist discourses on the relationship between homeland and diaspora formation. The way individuals position themselves in social space is largely produced by the experiences and meanings referred to in the places that are defined as home, while these experiences and meanings are molded through the positioning of the self in social space (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). No matter to what extent identities are flexible; consequently, home is also flexible as it transforms and changes over time and context. Therefore, what is referred to as home is extremely rich places to unravel the identity dynamics and how identities are negotiated by individuals and social groups.

Thinking of home with reference to its context brings another conceptual basis in addition to the questions of what and who. According to Doreen Massey, as a

feminist geographer who is one of the notable figures on the conceptualization of home as a place, the place is not an enclosed area within its boundaries, but a space that is defined by the social relations that it establishes in particular locations at different scales and finds its meaning and authenticity of "being a place" through "movement, communication, social relations which always stretched beyond it" (Massey, 1994, cited in Blunt & Dowling, 2006, p.25). To her, place is constantly reproduced through the social relations and the relations with other places; which directly affects the way the identities that are constructed in association or disassociation with the places are interpreted. Therefore, it is quite apparent that the normative discourses that consider home as segregated from social space and as a place that is protected from the chaos of the outside world must be questioned. Among these discourses, there is a very popular view on the concept of home, especially emphasized in feminist literature) assuming that home is characterized with the domestic and private sphere, which is completely separated from the public sphere. Accordingly, as highlighted by Blunt & Dowling (2006) as private and public spheres do not necessarily have to be placed as opposed to each other; home as a place and imaginary does not always have to convey the meaning of what is familial, private or feminine as it is shaped by the relations with the outside world that take part in the identity formation processes centered around social classes, gender, and ethnicity.

If to remember Brah's question of "When does a place of residence become 'home'?", the biographical context of home should also not be forgotten, especially where it is argued that diaspora embeds the idea of home between the past memories and future dreams. The roles and values are carried all the way through the journey of diaspora. Therefore, it does not seem possible to understand how a place becomes home, separately from all these experiences. If to remark a point here, when raising opposition to the essentialist discourses placing homeland in the center of diasporic identity formation, past experiences are not enough to find the answer to the question of when; unless they are considered in connection with today and future dreams.

As a final point, the question of how in terms of the relationship between home and practice is another important basis that is referred to while working on the concept

of home. As Ginsberg (1999, p.31) argues "[…] Our residence is a concept about where we live, while home is about how we live.". Similarly, while Tuan (2001, p. 102) defines home as "a unit of space organized mentally and materially to satisfy a people's real and perceived basic biosocial needs and, beyond that, their higher aesthetic-political aspirations", Heidegger (1971) highlights the ontological aspects of "dwelling" as a practice. Therefore, it is almost impossible to comprehend home as something magically appears independently from the homing practices.

Briefly, Brah's distinction between desire to return to the homeland and homing desire finds its meaning in the framework of what is defined as home by who, when and how. Here, it is critical to highlight her argument assuming that diaspora, as distinct from diaspora, is an inhabited space in order to put a further inquiry on what makes home a home. In her reasoning, the clue of how diaspora becomes an inhabited space is given by the concept of "indigenous".

Brah (1996, p.16) argues that diaspora space "is 'inhabited' not only by diasporic subjects but equally by those who are constructed and represented as 'indigenous'."; and she further states that it stands at the intersection where boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, belonging and otherness, 'us' and 'them' are blurred. Rather than a migrant group that is dispersed from its homeland, her emphasis to define diaspora as a space that is produced by those who are represented as 'indigenous', gives an impulse not only to the debates on what diaspora is but also to the relationship between diaspora and space. However, before hastening into her conceptualization of the term indigenous, it is significant to follow a diacritical stand that questions against what 'indigenous' is actually represented. Within this context, as one of the characterizing factors of diaspora formation and a defense mechanism against assimilation in the host country, the concepts of nation and nationalism are inseparable from the term indigenous.

Human movements that transcend the boundaries of nation-states indicate a sociological phenomenon that has internal solidarity and unique dynamics. It is abundantly obvious that in today's world, it is difficult to draw certain limits to people; that is what Diaspora space is exactly about. In that sense, Diasporas whose relations

and activities exceed the boundaries of nation-states are the producers of "multiple spaces" that put a challenge on the "nation's aspiration to normative homogeneity" (Tölölyan, 1996, p.4). As a result of growing interest in the subject, the concept of nationalism that is centered on the formation of diasporic identity evolves into another dimension and is re-conceptualized in the same way the meaning of home is reproduced in the geographies of inhabitance. Hence, the concept of indigenousness in Brah's argument makes sense at the point where the concept of nationalism is reinterpreted.

Diaspora communities at the intersection of the homeland and host country, point out a transnational area that is constructed through the double loyalties, the establishment of political lobbies and diasporic structures in the country of residence in favor of the homeland and its political agenda. In that sense, diasporas display a form of nationalism by organizing ideologies and practices to declare that they do not define themselves solely with their former homeland and that they organize their daily actions on behalf of the host country. Hence, within diaspora groups, nationalism is reconceptualized as a phenomenon in search of belonging to an "us" and "our place".

In the simplest understanding, omitting the differences of any sort, nationalism claims a strong comradeship among the ones who belong to the same nation (Eliassi, 2010). Even though it is impractical to know each and all members of the nation individually, the "sense of community" as a unitary force is planted through various mediums. As a means to form an "us" and the solidarity within, it consolidates the stance and collective consciousness that diaspora community develops against the ethnic disinformation. Although it aims to establish deep-seated connections with the ancestral lands and essentialist identifications; for the diaspora community, nationalism is imaginary like the idea of home that is interpreted as the homeland in the essentialist approaches. Hence, the aspiration of nation-states to cover a homogenous population is met advocacy of national heterogeneity leading to the reconceptualization of the nationality which inevitably breakaways from the national ties leaning on territoriality, and experiences a fluid spatiality where translocal and social relations take place.

However, the construction of "us" through nationalism is not singular and fixed for the diaspora community as it is for any community. In particular, for the diaspora community characterized by homing desire, construction of "us" is equal to sustaining the meaning and image of home in a way to make the return possible. Just as home is variable, who "us" is, is also variable. Here, Brah (1996, p.4) states, "At some stage in our life most of us, if not all, have had some considerable psychic investment in the idea of belonging to 'a people'." Thus, while scaling the meaning of home with "us", she associates "us" with the concept of locality. To her, locality is not a status that can be limited within the boundaries of nationalism and is related to the construction, representation, and mobilization of the position of the local subject (Brah, 1996). Her sense of locality is therefore central to the conceptualization of diaspora space and suggests a theoretical framework that requires elaboration on how locality is produced as a status.

## 2.4.1. Place

In any language, it is not straightforward to distinguish the word "place" (yer in Turkish) from "space" (mekan in Turkish). Due to the interchangeable use of the terms in everyday language, they are almost inseparable. As a result of intensive and flexible use in everyday language, especially place becomes a concept that is easily associated; yet not deeply comprehended. Furthermore, as in the Turkish language, the root "yer" (location/place) in "yerellik/yerlilik" (locality) gives the impression that locality; a specific location or place is referred. Indeed, the term locality has an immanent association with location and the concept of place. Despite the fact that the reference to a specific place when locality is mentioned may not be critical in the everyday language; the conceptual distinction between the terms place and space, and the relation of place with locality have vital importance in such a research embarking on an understanding that comprehends diaspora as space produced through locality; and, locality does not refer to a specific place. Hence, this research proceeds with the elaboration of the immanent relation of place with locality in order to draw a

theoretical framework to understand how locality is produced from the relational web between place, sense of place and everyday life.

The word place is commonly used to describe almost any sort of geographical spatiality on earth. However, despite all the discussions on the matter, the meaning of the word is very complex in the sense that it is almost impractical to distinguish what is the referent of the word place when people speak of it. Herein, within the ambiguity of the referents, it may be meaningful to distinguish place from space, in spite of their lexical similarity, proximity, and association. Exemplifying the use of word in English language, Cresswell (2004, p.1) states that place may suggest "an ownership or some kind of connection between a person and a particular location or building", "a notion of privacy and belonging", "a sense of position in a social hierarchy" or "particular orderings of things in the world that have a socio-geographical basis". Based on these examples of place, he argues that "Place is everywhere" (Cresswell, 2004, p.2). In a sense, his phrase signifies not only place exists even in the moments that it does not correspond to a geographically and physically defined territory but also, it points out another dimension of place that is different from physical correspondence and geographical coordinates. Briefly, as place does not always have to refer to a particular location, it also might not have to a material entity. Accordingly, on the relation between scale and place, he questions why "a child's room, an urban garden, a market town, New York City, Kosovo and the Earth" are defined as place (Cresswell, 2004, p.7), and associates the reason to the sense of place which is established towards the places where the meaning is produced. Concordantly, in the simplest way, he defines place as "a meaningful location" (2004, p.7). However, how does a place become meaningful? Here, he draws on the three fundamental features of place indicated by John Agnew to produce meaning in place: "*location*, *locale* and *sense of place*" (Cresswell, 2004, p.7). In Agnew's approach, location indicates the geographical position on the Earth surface. As argued previously, place in everyday language has a locational referent that refers to the question of "where", which enables to construct a relationality to define heres and theres. Locale, on the other hand, indicates the material setting in which social relations are constructed. Therefore, even though place

has a materially visualized form and refers to a particular location, in order to convey a meaning, it needs to be associated with the social relations that affect the subjective behavioral and cognitive experiences of human in their environment. Thus, in this equation, with the most basic description, sense of place is the meaning produced through the subjective perception towards a particular place. All in all, as summarized by Gustafson (2001, p.6) "meaningful places emerge in a social context and through social relations, they are geographically located and at the same time related to their social, economic, cultural etc. surroundings, and they give individuals a sense of place, a `subjective territorial identity". Accordingly, for this research, the location is Beyoğlu, District of Istanbul, Turkey. The social relations in the material settings of Beyoğlu represent the locale, and the affiliations of the Syrian refugees towards Beyoğlu represent the sense of place.

On the relation between space and place, Tuan (2001, p.6) states "The ideas 'space' and 'place' require each other for definition. From the security and stability of place we are aware of the openness, freedom, and threat of space, and vice versa. Furthermore, if we think of space as that which allows movement, then place is pause; each pause in movement makes it possible for location to be transformed into place.". For him, the state of being in a place and place are produced through the pauses. Connoting a sense of permanence in the location or locale, the pauses in the movement that Tuan speaks of refers to the practice of dwelling that extends over time and space. When dwelling is exercised, the boundaries of mere space is transgressed and the extent of the place of dwelling opens up to the relations and practices in everyday life. Within this sense, in relation to the practice of dwelling, place is always in the state of being and becoming. However, Tuan's conceptualization of place as pauses in space brings more questions into the discussion: What if the meaning is produced not only in the pauses but also in the flows as well? What if the meaning is produced only in the moment of scattering over space? Following these questions, then it becomes even more critical to dig into the relationality between space and place, and how meaning finds its place in this relationality.

Embarking on Heidegger's thought on the ontological aspects of dwelling as a practice, Christian Norberg-Schulz (1984) reawakens the ancient concept of *genius loci, the* spirit of place, from a phenomenological perspective. Accordingly, in his work, he argues that humankind displays the practice of dwelling once the orientation and identification through the environment are achieved. Thus, according to him, "it implies that the spaces where life occurs are *places,* in true sense of the word" (Norberg-Schulz, 1984, p.5). In that sense, place where "acts and occurrences *take place*" is comprehensive for the term environment, and "it is meaningless to imagine any happening without reference to a locality" (Norberg-Schulz, 1984, p.6). In his phenomenological approach of Norberg-Schulz, the change in the meaning of the concept of place is witnessed. It, now, refers to an understanding as a way of thinking and being where subjectivity and experience are emphasized. In a similar vein, Tuan (1974) coins the concept "topophilia" referring to the emotional bond established between humans and their places. Accordingly, people develop a sense of attachment to the places where the memories and experiences are accumulated (Tuan, 2001). Relph (1976), on the other hand, approaches the place in a more philosophical way and associates it with phenomenology. To him, places are grasped through practical knowledge (Relph, 1976). Like Norberg-Schulz, he also tries to construct his discourse through Heidegger, and argues that place does not refer to apathy; on the contrary, it represents vitality in the form of rooting for human existence and experience (Relph, 1976).

## 2.4.2. Sense of Place

In spite of the variety in the emphasis put by the scholars from different disciplines, the concept of place is differentiated from the concept of space in the sense that it is produced through the subjective perceptions towards the environment. Among the terms employed in the discussions on the relation between the meaning and place, sense of place seems to offer a more comprehensive theorization. The definitions for the concept of sense of place, that also refers to as place attachment, topophilia, insideness, and community sentiment in the literature, simply rely on the

disciplinary context in which they are employed. Accordingly, Low as an environmental anthropologists defines place attachment as "the symbolic relationship formed by people giving culturally shared emotional/affective meanings to a particular space of a piece of land that provides the basis for the individual's and group's understanding of and relation to the environment." (1992, p.165). In the perspective of environmental psychology, the sense of place is described by Steele (1981) as "the particular experience of a person in a particular setting". Tuan (1974, p.4), on the other hand, uses the term *topophilia* to refer "the affective bond between people and place or setting". In *Community Attachment: Local Sentiment and Sense of Place,* David Hummon, focuses on the topics of community and the sociology of place, expresses that "By sense of place, I mean people's subjective perceptions of their environments and their more or less conscious feelings about those environments. Sense of place is inevitably dual in nature, involving both an interpretive perspective on the environment and an emotional reaction to the environment. […] Sense of place involves a personal orientation toward place, in which ones' understanding of place and one's feelings about place become fused in the context of environmental meaning." (Low & Antman, 1992, p.262).

As might be presented with a wide array of definitions and terms appear in the literature of anthropology, sociology, cultural and psychological researches, sense of place is not only a confusing concept to define but also to analyze and measure. Pointing out the endeavors to integrate the place identity literature into a more general theorization of the relationship between environment and identity, Hummon & Cuba (1993) indicate a shortfall in the examination of the identification with place at different scales. Attempting to exhibit the development of sense of home at different scales (dwelling, community and region), they draw a conclusion of that the construction of sense of place varies depending on the social and environmental factors. Accordingly, conducting a quantitative research with the residents of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, they illustrate dwelling identity is affected by demographic characteristics and interpretive residential affiliations of residents. Yet, for the formation of community identity and regional identity, participation in social life and

intercommunal spatial activity patterns are determinant (Hummon & Cuba, 1993). Therefore, while defining place identity "as an interpretation of self that uses environmental meaning to symbolize or situate identity" (Hummon & Cuba, 1993, p.112), they argue that the question of identity is not only tied to the question of "Who am I?" but also the question of "Where am I?" or "Where do I belong?". Through their work, it is further argued that the place identity typically functions in two ways: Display and Affiliation. In that sense, referring to display function of places, they highlight how people communicate qualities of the self to self or the other; while by affiliation, "the sense of attachment or home" is emphasized. Thus, utilizing the literature on the emotional bonds established between places and human, they express: "The identification with place is often experienced as a sense of being "at home" – of being comfortable, familiar, and "really me" here." (Hummon & Cuba, 1993, p. 113).

On the subject, Cross (2001) also utters the difficulties in characterizing a sense of place for another person than the self who establishes an emotional link with one place while demolishing with the other. As referring to the abundance in the definitions and to the hardship in the analysis, and drawing upon the dimensions of sense of place presented by Hummon, Cross emphasizes that sense of place is conceptualized based on two aspects: *relationship to place,* as the referent of the type of bond that a person has with places, and *community attachment,* as the depth and type of attachment to one particular place (Cross, 2001). However, in her analysis of the interviews about the community attachment of the residents of Nevada County, California, she suggests thinking of these aspects separately from each other in order to have a more meaningful framework in which sense of place is theorized as an interactional process through which the meaning and emotional links with place are constructed.

**2.4.2.1. Relation to Place**

In Cross's analytical typology for the type of relationship to place, each relation is described as a distinct and co-occuring process that is comprised of a series of unique practices and constructed meanings. As to her content analysis of the

interviews that indicates the dynamic nature of the sense of place, each process is uniquely displayed over time and at the individual, interpersonal, and cultural levels. Accordingly, she categorizes the types of affective bonds with places as sensory, narrative, historical, spiritual, ideological, commodifying and material dependence.

As presented in Table 5, Cross primarily defines six processes including biographical, spiritual, ideological, narrative, commodified and dependent processes (Cross, 2001). Then, she revises the processes by expanding the context of biographical processes to historical that includes the biographical, genealogical and ancestral processes, in order to cover the deep sense of belonging to the homeland places even though the place is abandoned or is not born in yet transmitted through cultural practices. The revised table is given in Table 6. Thus, discussing the notion of diaspora as a space characterized by homing desire rather than the deep desire to return to the homeland, it is important to consider the historical process as she concludes.

**Table 5.** Types of Affective Bonds with Places (Cross, 2001)

| Relationship | Process | Type of Bond |
|---|---|---|
| **Biographical** | Being born in and living in a place, develops over time | Historical and Familial |
| **Spiritual** | Feeling a sense of belonging, simply felt rather than created | Emotional, Intangible |
| **Ideological** | Living according moral guidelines for human responsibility to place, guidelines may be religious or secular | Moral and Ethical |
| **Narrative** | Learning about a place through stores, including: creation myths, family histories, political accounts, and fictional accounts | Mythical |
| **Commodified** | Choosing a place based a list of desirable traits and lifestyle preferences, comparison of actual places with ideal | Cognitive |
| **Dependent** | Constrained by lack of choice, dependency on another person or economic opportunity | Material |

**Table 6.** Revised Table for Types of Affective Bonds with Places (Cross, 2015)

| Process | Nature of Process | Meaning (individual or cultural) |
|---|---|---|
| **Sensory** | Experiencing the place through the five senses | Personal assessment and meaning: aesthetic value judgments based on personal preference, interpersonal interaction, and cultural values |
| **Narrative** | Practice of telling stories about the place, individuals in place, and cultural stories of place | Individual, family, group, cultural |
| **Historical** | Personal Life experience, family history, cultural history | Association of key life events with place and association of place history to personal biography |
| **Spiritual** | Deep feeling or sense of belonging | Deeply personal difficult to share, often creates conflict over "authentic" attachment |
| **Ideological** | Moral, Ethical, Legal Commitment to place | Individual, interpersonal, cultural |
| **Commodifying** | Cognitive act of assessing place based on a list desirable traits | Individual, interpersonal, cultural |
| **Material Dependence** | Reliance on a social resources of features of place | Individual, interpersonal, cultural |

**Sensory Process.** Even though the sensory perception is one way to construct meaning in a particular place, every individual produces a time-varying subjective reaction to the sensory input in the environment, which leads to differences in the sensory experience, and, later, affects the type and depth of sense of place (Cross, 2015). Accordingly, the research shows the sensory experience of restorative places among others places that stimulate the feelings of relaxation, exploration and strengthens the opportunity for self-reflection, or desirable physiological experiences has more impact on the construction of strong affective bonds. The findings of Cross also illustrate that the sensory experience of the natural landscape and built

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environment through the sights, smells, temperature, weather, and local scenes enable individual to compare the places and times that a person interacts (Cross, 2015).

**Narrative Process.** As argued by Fisher, human beings as the natural story-tellers, *homo narrans,* construct a meaningful world through the stories, narrations, myths they tell (Fisher, 1984). Therefore, apart from the discursive functions to share knowledge and experience, the narration is another way that scholars mention in the literature on the concept of sense of place (Cross, 2015). As it enables telling and hearing, and, imaginative experiencing about the place, the narrative process is the second process of Cross that enhances or shifts the meaning associated with a particular place and "contributes to the sense of belonging and the sense of cultural insideness" (Cross, 2015). The narrative process is also at the heart of the formation of diasporic collective consciousness. As mentioned previously, diaspora is a historical narrative of the story of exile from the homeland through generations. Therefore, Brah argues that the journey of diaspora is configured by "a confluence of narratives as it is lived and re-lived produced, reproduced and transformed through individual as well as collective memory and re-memory" (1996, p.183).

**Historical Process.** Drawing upon Low's typology, genealogical process, Cross also defines an analytical process in which the sense of place produced as a result of the accumulation of experience in the place through the significant occurrences in the individual's lifetime (Cross, 2015). Arguing that Low's genealogical process that is based on the lengthy historical association with a place does not include the displaced groups and ignores the new possibilities of constructing the sense of place in the new places of arrival without inhabiting the place for longer periods of time, Cross (2015) suggests using the term "historical" to express that an individual's historical link to a place does not have to extend into longer historical or cultural ties.

**Spiritual Process.** Based on the interviews, Cross (2015) identifies a sense of deep belonging to the place that does not refer to a religious connection but rather an intangible connection that goes beyond any other emotional, cognitive, or material connection.

**Ideological Process.** Cross (2015) observes the ideological process that occurs when people identify well-articulated ethical codes that provide formal or informal guidelines and dictate how to engage in a particular place. Accordingly, the ideological process of an attachment may shift in time and enable individuals and groups to have a choice to reinforce their own values.

**Commodifying Process.** Cross (2015) argues that the choice is what characterizes the commodifying process that includes a cognitive assessment for the ideal living conditions and community when a subjective place experience is at stake.

**Material Dependence.** Similar to the commodifying process, material dependence points out to a human-place connection based on the aspect of choices. Yet, lacking a noticeable positive affective or mental bond, the relation established based on the material dependence is resulted from either having no choice or limitations on choice.

### 2.4.2.2. Attachment to the Community

In order to identify the different levels sense of place that individuals develop towards the same place and to "describe the individual level of attachment, identification, and involvement with the community, past experiences and future expectations, and their assessment of the place, Cross proceeds with the revision of David Hummon's typology for sense of place, or community attachment. However, as different from Hummon's typology, she (2001) employs cohesive rootedness and divided rootedness, rather than ideological and taken-for-granted rootedness. Table 7 illustrates Cross's typology of community attachment derived from Hummon's work.

**Rootedness.** Rootedness is defined as the strongest type of attachment to a particular place. While Cross (2001) refers to the sense of belonging to only one community by cohesive rootedness; adopting the term divided rootedness, she observes that it is possible to have a strong and positive identification with more than one community.

**Place Alienation.** Based on Hummon's typology, Cross (2001) indicates a negative assessment of place or resulted from being forced to move from a place where

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a strong rootedness is established or dissatisfaction with the radical change in the place.

**Relativity.** Relativity is described as a category for those who do not feel strongly rooted in any particular community. As to Cross's findings, people in this category usually have a highly mobile sense of home.

**Placelessness.** As a final category, Cross (2001) identifies placelessness when a place-specific attachment is absent. Here, the difference between relativity and placelessness is the lack of locating the sense of home in a particular geography.

**Table 7.** Attachment to the Community (Cross, 2001)

| Sense of Place | Satisfaction | Home as Insideness | Local Identity | Type of Attachment | Future Desires |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Cohesive Rootedness** | High | Here (physical, spiritual, emotional) | strong | biographical, spiritual, ideological | continued residence |
| **Divided Rootedness** | Variable | here and there (physical, spiritual, emotional) | split | biographical, spiritual, dependent | variable |
| **Place Alienation** | Low | there (physical, spiritual, emotional) | weak | dependent | desire to leave, but unable |
| **Relativity** | Variable | anywhere | moderate | commodified (biographical, dependent) | to live in ideal place, wherever that may be |
| **Uncommitted Placessness** | moderate | nowhere | weak | none | no specific expectations of place |

In brief, sense of place is the language of place. It is simply how an individual speaks of a particular place and how the meaning is produced by the subjective perception towards a particular place. In this framework, home whose meaning extends beyond any physically enclaved geography is a significant word in the place language. However, here, the similar definitions of the concepts of home and place

lead to the question: Is any place home? On the discussion of place as home, Cresswell (2004, p.39) expresses "home is an exemplary kind of place where people feel a sense of attachment and rootedness". In parallel with the definitions of place as a meaningful location, where people construct meaning through the subjective perceptions of the immediate environment, then, it might be also argued that home is a meaningful place; or as Tuan (2001, p.147) puts "home is an intimate place". In relation to the meaning and home, here, another question pops up: How are meaning and intimacy produced towards a particular place? In other words, how is the sense of home constructed?

So far, space and place are distinctively portrayed in the sense that place signifies an ontological phenomenon loaded with meanings and space is transformed to place through the involvement of the experiences, actions and, thus, feelings of humankind about the immediate environment. If to return to the essence of the debates outlined in this research, the notion home in Brah's conceptualization of homing desire in diaspora formation simply coincides with the descriptions of place that is highlighted by the above framework. From this point of view, in her conceptualization of diaspora space, she employs the description of home as the place where everyday practices are experienced, and further argues that home is, in a way, "a discourse of locality where feelings of rootedness ensue from the mundane and the unexpected of daily practice" (Brah, 1996, p.4). Thus, the above question of how the sense of home is constructed in diaspora space finds its answer in the production of locality. If simply put, locality does not represent a spatial unity in the same way that local does not coincide with a specific geographical location. Within the drawn theoretical framework up until here, locality is interpreted as a form of being and a status that is experienced and produced. In that sense, everyday life appears as a medium in which locality emerges with all its patterns and takes a factual form.

## 2.4.3. The Locality of Diaspora

Undoubtedly, the most shocking and dramatic changes, losses, and mobilities in everyday life are manifested in the lives of diaspora. For the reasons and consequences of leaving the world *here* behind and stepping into a completely different world *out there*, and taking a unique and difficult journey between those worlds of belonging,

immigration has always been in the lens of the broad social research. In every aspect of imaginable, everyday life in diaspora not only contains exciting experiences but also complicates the problems, and brings many social contexts to the agenda of immigrants. Diaspora is not only a spatial journey from one geography to another. As characterized by the temporal journey from the past to the present and future, the diaspora carries the values, knowledge, and experiences of the past and brings them to the present. Consequently, it faces the necessity of choosing between the old and the new. While creating a unique continuity in all ordinary and extraordinary situations, everyday life is where the choices of the diaspora are spontaneously realized, and sometimes controlled.

Through routines or preferences that become natural parts of everyday life, it possible to achieve sociological consequences. However, it is difficult to reach to absolute knowledge about these consequences since the familiar connotation of everyday life is scattered, ambiguous and complicated due to the nature of its functioning that relies on the socio-cultural interactions between social groups. Therefore, attempting to unveil the ordinary practices of homing desire that take part in the production of locality, this research elaborates on the phenomenon of everyday life to enlighten the relationship between the diaspora and urban space as the home of diaspora.

The studies on everyday life have emerged as a critical response to the classical and contemporary macro theory adopted by the mid-twentieth century American social thought, where positivist and critical sociology discourses were abundantly deterministic in the depiction of individuals (Adler, Adler & Fontana, 1987). However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, the fundamental philosophical traditions that micro everyday life sociology was built upon have already begun to shape the critiques that have been directed to the traditional perspective of everyday life sociology. Within the newly blossomed perspective on everyday life, the academic literature has presented notable works of Goffman's dramaturgy (1959), which reflects a theatrical metaphor for analyzing how people present themselves in everyday life and Garfinkel's ethnomethodology (1967), which focuses on the interaction that is

produced by the actions of people in everyday life. Later on, with the translations of Schutz's and Husserl's works on the phenomenological approach analyzing the construction of everyday consciousness, there has been a shift in the focus of sociological perspective on everyday life (Adler, Adler & Fontana, 1987). In the late 1970s and 1980s, on the other hand, academia has continued witnessing a diversified everyday life perspective. Among them, drawing on the Marxist thought, Lefebvre's critical theory (1991) examining everyday life as an urban phenomenon has also been illuminating work on the subject. Within the context of Lefebvrian analysis of everyday life, everyday life is where the effects of victimizations and alienations caused by capitalism are manifested. Urban space is the principal ground of everyday life and the analysis of the social production of space is the only way to understand the phenomenon of everyday life.

Following Lefebvre, Michel de Certeau, as a notable scholar on the debate of everyday life in relation to the urban space, gets involved in the subject by leaking into what is ignored in Foucault's stance on "discipline". Accordingly, for de Certeau, everyday life is not about the production but the consumption of power by the ordinary people through the exhibition of daily practices in the "network of an anti-discipline" (de Certeau, 1984, p.xv). As he exemplifies as "a secretary's writing a love letter on "company time" or as complex as a cabinetmaker's "borrowing" a lathe to make a piece of furniture for his living room" (de Certeau, 1984, p.25); individuals find their own way of operating, and deflect the disciplinary rules imposed on them. Thus, the continuous rationalization that power is in seek, is challenged by ordinary people who do not blindly abide by the rules. In de Certeau's account, everyday life is built on the strategies and tactics that diffuse into these strategies.

From this perspective, de Certeau calls "a "strategy" the calculus of force-relationships which becomes possible when a subject of will and power (a proprietor, an enterprise, a city, a scientific institution) can be isolated from an "environment." A strategy assumes a place that can be circumscribed as proper (propre) and thus serve as the basis for generating relations with an exterior distinct from it […]." (de Certeau, 1984, p.xix). Further, he (1984, p. xix) describes tactic as "a calculus which cannot

count on a "proper" (a spatial or institutional localization), nor thus on a border-line distinguishing the other as a visible totality.". On one hand, the place appears as a prerequisite that empowers strategies to function on behalf of the power. On the other hand, tactic is a planned act that uses the places of strategy; which indeed, gives tactic spatial freedom in a way that it wiggly and practically moves through the cracks in the hegemonic system. In this context, tactic cannot be situated in the definitions of identity and power, which refer to the space of other. Here, de Certeau states: "In short, tactic is the art of the weak" (de Certeau, 1984, p.37). As the art of the weak, tactic is capable of transforming the cracks in the places of strategy, enjoys the spatial freedom in contrast to the situated and place-dependent nature of power, makes moves in place under enemy control, and performs the art of poaching. The aesthetic moves of the weak may potentially occur at any moment in everyday life. According to him, tactics of the weak are, thus, an art of maneuver. As the sum total of actions, attitudes, and habits that have the craft of always finding a way to operate, tactic manifests itself as a form of behavioral discourse that opposes to strategy.

Through the transformative effects of the imposing nature of urban space on individual and collective preferences and orientation, the spatial experience points out how urban space is perceived. As visually and symbolically instructing its inhabitants on how to behave within its boundaries, urban space, as the space of strategy, assumes a predetermined sense of spatial experience. Yet, as de Certeau gives an insight, through tactics, individuals also sneak from the cracks and alter the situated nature of urban space according to their desires, and thus, urban space is re-experienced and reconstructed. Thus, building a mutualist relationship, the physical landscape of urban space embeds the behavioral landscape, and behavioral embodies the other. Here, it is critical to ask where the process of the experience of space starts. According to de Certeau, the answer is clear: Down below.

"The ordinary practitioners of the city live "down below," below the thresholds at which visibility begins." (de Certeau, 1984, p.93). Watching the New York City from the 110th floor of the World Trade Center, de Certeau describes the spatial experience from above from the perspective of a scopic eye that is freed from the

gravitational sphere of the city and all the anonymous rules of city. The static image that is experienced from above is the artwork of a panoptic power to which everything is visible. And, the static spatial experience is the imposition of prevailing political power that accentuates the visual orders and symbolic narratives of its rationality through the materialization of the despotic nature of the physical structure of the city directing the experience below. However, from down below, nothing is as visible as from above. The crowd is provoked by the restraining setting of the environment in which it inhabits. Therefore, it moves to find possibilities other than the determinants signify. Paradoxically, who rules the urban space is who inhabits "below the threshold at which visibility begins". For an individual who thinks that a certain space has liberating possibilities, it is inevitable to reinvent fixed relational forms. de Certeau, here, points out Charlie Chaplin as an example of the reinvention in the use of an object that is designed for a certain purpose. For him, Chaplin multiplies the possibilities of his walk by "doing other things with the same thing" (de Certeau, 1984, p.98). In a similar vein, walking in the city is a form of resistance that reproduces and transforms the ascribed spatial codes within semantic frameworks, as what is experienced by walking comes from a free choice rather than what is imposed. "For 'their story begins on ground level, with footsteps,' writes de Certeau, and it is here, not up above, that the history of the city is written." (Coverley, 2006, p.106).

De Certeau's conceptualization of spatial experience in urban space offers an analytical tool to comprehend how urban space represented on the map is constituted through the spatial practices performed in everyday life where stories, journeys, and experiences take place. Accordingly, he states (1984, p.93) "[...] I shall try to locate the practices that are foreign to the "geometrical" or "geographical" space of visual, panoptic, or theoretical constructions. These practices of space refer to a specific form of operations ("ways of operating"), to "another spatiality, (an "anthropological," poetic and mythic experience of space), and to an opaque and blind mobility characteristic of the bustling city. A migrational, or metaphorical, city thus slips into the clear text of the planned and readable city.". In this conceptualization, being nomad in the city emerges as the most basic form of urban experience, and composes

a textual assemblage of individual and social experiences that may never be fully readable on the rational, functional, and regulatory map of the city. In this respect, urban space is where familiar heres and theres are created by walking individuals. Thus, urban space is built twice; first, through physical geography; the second, through the experience that surrounds it and the ontological traces left behind. In both ways, the *Flâneur*, *Walker*, and *Wanderer* are dragged into a search of urban space and an understanding of urbanite where they are the inhabitants of a third space between the drawn and narrated maps of the city. Therefore, in a sense, through the act of walking, these characters produce their own sense of locality in urban space where they are naturally excluded by the prevailing power at first hand.

### 2.4.4. Concluding Remarks

The participation in everyday life through walking is interpreted as an urban practice enacted against the prevailing authority of the other, and as a form of tactical resistance for the construction of the subjects' sense of belonging to the urban space. However, how do Brah's description of diaspora space and the concomitant concepts relate to de Certeau's account on spatial experience through strategy and tactic? Analogically, diaspora communities inhabit the home places of those who label them as other. Yet, characterized by the homing desire, as Brah (1996) suggests, they experience and appropriate the home places of other by creating a familiar environment for themselves. Here, the home-making practices of diasporic subjects correspond with the tactical resistance of de Certeau. Thus, the spatial experience of the diasporic subjects in the home places of other points out how diaspora tactically narrates the sense of locality and how it articulates the sense of home in urban space. For diaspora, the production of the sense of locality in the space of inhabitance is essentially about being included in or excluded from the boundaries of home places of other. However, such a metaphoric approach that links de Certeau's perspective on everyday life to Brah's conceptualization of diaspora space requires a deeper exploration of the spatial experience of the urban environment built upon the boundary negotiations between us and them. Here, the phenomenological perspective on

everyday life provides a better understanding of how urban space takes part in such relationality between diaspora space and everyday life. Therefore, this research presents the methodological approach that gives an insight into such relationality while it primarily discusses the relationship between the phenomenon of experience and urban space and how differentiated urban experience leads to changing spatial organizations for different individuals.

## CHAPTER 3


## METHOD


Drawing upon the Avtar Brah's conceptualization of diaspora as an inhabited space by those who are constructed and represented as indigenous, this research essentially takes an interest in the home-making practices and the formation of the sense of home for diaspora communities. Within this framework, it is guided by the main research question of **"How is the idea of home represented by urban refugees?"** Central to such a design research focusing on the homemaking practices in everyday life, the transcendent and reflexive aspects of lived experience in *situ* is attempted to be accessed. Therefore, the go-along as a qualitative research tool that allows exploring the complex meanings of place in the everyday experience of urban space is employed as a phenomenological ethnographic method. By nature, the go-along method requires the researcher to combine interviewing and observation in participants' daily routines to discover the habitual practices take place in the immediate environments.

Hosting 3.5 million registered Syrian refugees, Turkey still stands as the largest refugee-hosting country during the Syrian conflict since 2011. Among the cities where the Syrian refugees that have temporary protection status, İstanbul hosts the majority of the Syrian population with 548.476 Syrian refugees. As noted earlier, in the country's history of hosting refugees, the size and the diversity of the arrived Syrian population lead to a different immigration experience for both the Syrians and the local population. Thus, with the aim of mapping the idea of home represented by urban refugees, the Syrian refugee population in Turkey is selected as the research group. As being the historical peninsula with a long history of hosting a diversified population for over a century and having a great contribution to absorbing migrants in different time periods, Beyoğlu District is one of the districts that the Syrian population is

intensively located. Therefore, to easily reach out to the participants, the research location is set as Beyoğlu.

The following of the chapter presents a detailed theoretical framework for the research design including an introduction of the go-along method, the structure of the go-along interviews, history of the research site, limitations and biographical information of participants.

### 3.1. Street Phenomenology: The Go-Along Method

Exploring the place-making practices in the everyday life of urban refugees in a way to represent their sense of home, this research applies a novel method, where phenomenology and ethnography meet from the perspective of urban design. Providing an insightful analysis of the immanent and mundane relationship between humans and their immediate local environment, proposed by Margarethe Kusenbach (2003), street phenomenology is set as a qualitative research tool where traditional ethnographic methods of participant observation and interviewing intersects.

Focusing on the phenomenology of bodily perception and reviving the concepts of experience and perception, The French phenomenologist Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) introduces the concept of body-subject that scrutinizes subject-object dichotomy. Emphasizing the body as beyond being a biological construct, he discusses the position of the concept of body in this dichotomy. In that perspective, body and space are in a mutual relationship that enables each one to be (as in exist) in relation to the other. Thus, it is inevitable that they shape each other. Kusenbach (2013) argues that following Merleau-Ponty and adopting phenomenology to comprehend sociology, Schutz (1967) acknowledges the significance of positioning the living bodies in the immediate environment to explore the role of environment and the meaning of place in daily experience. However, inserting phenomenological thinking in the work of sociology is still a new approach. On the matter, in his work on the environmental experience, David Seamon (1979) also presents a theoretical base on the structure of human behaviors and experiences. Seamon (1979) explores the principal experiential nature of urban space through movement while putting emphasis

on the relationship between place, space, and environment. Believing that everyday life is a series of repetitive movements from one destination to another that result from habits, he (1979) asserts that this type of daily behavior is a result of consciousness-awareness interaction in which the body memorizes those movements that are habitual, involuntary, automatic, and mechanical. Therefore, in this perspective, he identifies two types of behavior: body ballet and time-space routines. In this identification, body ballets appear as "the set of integrated gestures and movements which sustain a particular task or aim" as body ballet, while time-space routines refer to an unconsciously planned pattern oriented by the body (Seamon, 1979, p.54). These two types of behavior are how an individual manages the behavioral and repetitive geography of inhabitation, which he calls place ballet. His conceptualization of place ballet denotes the rootedness of body ballets and time-space routines in space. According to Seamon (1979), in order to construct the ontological sense of insideness, the body movement unites with time and space. Thus, place ballet fosters a strong sense of place.

Accordingly, Seamon exemplifies the moments of awareness he experienced in a daily practice: "I round a curve on the road and suddenly notice the brilliant autumn foliage ahead; I enter a corner grocery store and observe that its doors have recently been repainted; I wait for a bus and watch the children skating on the pond across the street. In each of these experiences, a part of my awareness has touched and been touched by an aspect of the geographical world; a strand of attention is present between me and the trees, the building, the pond as a place of activity." (Seamon, 1979, 99). In this narration, he defines these moments of experiences as the representatives of encounters between the person and the world. Accordingly, he argues that the behavioral memory of the body by constantly repeating the actions does not affect the perceptual experience, whereas the change in the behaviors due to the change in the environmental stimuli indicates that the body and space are experienced (Seamon, 1979). Therefore, the nature of the encounter is dependent on the observer's level of awareness of the environment. Accordingly, he suggests (1979, p.101) to use the term "tendency towards mergence" for the moments in which the

observer is more attentive to the surrounding, while the term "tendency towards separateness" when the individual is less aware of the environment. Hence, his understanding underlines the capacity of the nature of the individual's encounter with the immediate environment in shaping the spatial practices.

Following such a theoretical framework providing a critical understanding of the classical ethnographic methods, Kusenbach (1993) introduces the "go-along" to overcome the shortcomings of the methods. Accordingly, she argues that while in the applications of observational approaches, informants do not tend to express their interpretations about their habitual environment, the sit-down interviews as static encounters disengage participants from the outside world and their everyday experiences (Kusenbach, 2013). By definition, the go-along method requires the researcher to attend an individual's natural habitual routines conducted in their immediate environment. "When conducting go-along, fieldworkers accompany individual informants on their 'natural' outings, and – through asking questions, listening and observing – actively explore their subjects' stream of experiences and practices as they move through, and interact with, their physical and social environment." (Kusenbach, 2013, p.463). What is significant in the go-along is to diminish the external interruptions that could prevent the subject from acting unnaturally, yet still, actively participate in the subject's spatial practices in situ and observe the perceptions, affections, and interpretations of the physical and social environments while the routine continues.

### 3.1.1. Areas of Discovery

In addition to the introduction of the method, Kusenbach also presents five substantive themes, which both participant observation and interviewing would have shortcomings to discover.

**Perception**. In parallel with her analysis of the go-alongs conducted throughout her research, Kusenbach (2013) argues that human perception is composed of series of filters formed by physiological and developmental factors or social contexts, and concordantly, she expresses that the practical knowledge that is rooted in the personal

relevance, and the tastes/values are two perceptual filters that could shape the environmental experiences of participants in the place.

**Spatial Practices.** Drawing upon Seamon's model suggesting a spectrum of the "awareness continuum", Kusenbach also discusses (2013) that the spatial practices are framed by the degree and quality of the spatial engagements to transform the meaning and function of a daily practice. Kusenbach (2013) discusses that the encounter with the environment is also capable of bringing up the memories and anticipations that occupy a place in the participant's storyline.

**Biographies.** According to the observations of Kusenbach, in the moments when the biographical experiences are stimulated in the environment of daily engagements, biographies underlie the present nature of the spatial interactions.

**Social Architecture.** Signifying that the encounters with the environment also reveal the social architecture in the environment, Kusenbach deduces (2013) that the go-along conducted in situ enables the participant to express the perception towards the nature of the social relations among inhabitants through comparison and positioning the self in the local space.

**Social Realms.** In addition to unveiling the social structure in the daily environment, the go-along method is also well suited to extract the interactional patterns in social encounters, which Kusenbach (2013) defines as social realms.

### 3.1.2. The Types of Go-Along Method

As implied by the name, the go-along method is conducted by the researcher going along with the participant on outings in the everyday environment. However, even though it is mostly based on the preferences of the participant, the objectives of the researcher and the sort of data to be reached out are also the parameters that affect the nature of the go-along. Accordingly, as characterized by Kusenbach (2013) the go-alongs can be conducted in a natural setting of the everyday activities where the intervention of the researcher is minimized. Therefore, typically, for the minimum level of disturbance, the routes and the duration of the trip are up to the preferences of the participant as it is the natural flow of the daily routine. Yet, it also should be

acknowledged that the presence of the researcher creates a disturbance in the natural setting of the routine, and naturally intrudes the privacy of the lived experience. However, the go-alongs do not always have to be conducted in the local environment during usual outings. Kusenbach records that some researchers may choose a constructed path to conduct the interviews. Concordantly, Kusenbach (2013, p.464) describes "contrived" or experimental go-alongs where the interview is conducted in an environment that the participant is unfamiliar with the material setting and perform an unusual activity. Evans & Jones (2011) notes that the walking interviews seem to be embraced by the scholars by enabling researchers to engage with the environmental knowledge and perception of the individuals in situ. Yet, what differentiates the walking interviews is to what degree they are designed. Accordingly, as presented in Figure 1, they present the typologies of walking interviews in the literature based on the level of familiarity with the environment and the level of intervention in the route preferences.
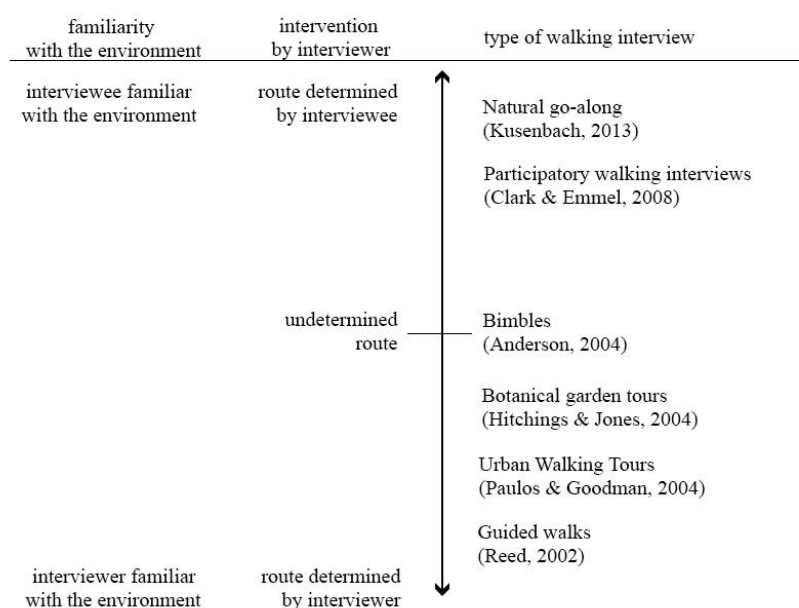


**Figure 1**. Typology of Walking Interviews of Evans & Jones
(re-drawn by the author)

Noted as the most observed form of a go-along and walking interview, walk-alongs enable researchers to capture the veiled or obvious habitual relations with the immediate surrounding and understand how the familiar environment is formed by the route preferences of the individuals (Kusenbach, 2013). However, depending on the daily routine, the context of the local area, or the participant needs, the go-alongs might be in the form of walking along, riding along or mixed (Kusenbach, 2013; Carpiano, 2009)

## 3.2. Structure of the Walk-Alongs

As a qualitative research tool, interviewing at any point at the spectrum of structuredness is an important asset in the design of the go-along method. Accordingly, Carpiano (2009, p.265) highlights the differences of open-ended (the minimum level of intervention in the course of the conversation) and semi-structured formats (an optimum level of intervention to direct the conversation in a way to discuss certain topic determined prior to the interview yet allow the undetermined topics to spark unintentionally) in the go-alongs.

## 3.3. The Implication of the Walk-Alongs

During the site research, of the five go-alongs that are conducted, all were walk-alongs. All walk-alongs were accompanied by informal open-ended interview techniques in order not to cause any direction that could affect the narrations of the participants. However, in spite of the concerns to maintain a minimum level of disturbance during the natural outings, the spontaneous questions that were asked during the go-alongs were concentrated on two assumptions based on the theoretical background concentrated on Avtar Brah's conceptualization of diaspora space: **(1)** the distinction between the idea of homeland and home, and **(2)** the sense of locality produced in the mundane everyday life practices. Therefore, simply aiming to find out if the participants feel at home and, if so, why they feel at home, the walk-along interviews attempted to trace the distinction made by the participants between

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homeland and home and the sense of locality in the narratives about the places on the routes of daily routine.

During the sit-down interview prior to the go-alongs, the participants were informed about the structure of the go-along, they were asked the questions regarding their age, their origins in Syria when they have left Syria, when they have arrived in Turkey and Beyoğlu before the go-along to explore the biographical information on the participants. For the go-along interviews, all participants were asked to perform a daily routine within the boundaries of Beyoğlu Urban Site. During the go-alongs, the subjects were not given any directions or instructions on what to do or where to go that would limit the daily routine. Thus, all five participants have determined the walking route based on their preferences. Yet, to be relevant, the geographical boundaries of the research site were limited to the boundaries of Beyoğlu Urban Site[7].

### 3.4. Familiar Location: İstiklal Street – Beyoğlu

Depicted as the geographical bridge between Asia to Europe and East to West, Istanbul, as the most populated Turkish city, still preserves its legacy of being home to a diverse population of different individuals, groups and nations with various religious, ethnic and cultural roots in its extensively diverse urban neighborhoods. Among them, being one of the most populated and spatially and socially diversified districts of the city, Beyoğlu still covers such neighborhoods characterized by the immigrant groups with different ethnic backgrounds, including the Syrian refugees who have arrived at the city after the conflict in May 2011. Due to its history of welcoming others, Beyoğlu urban site presents territorial geography, a hybrid, negotiated urban space. Therefore, as illustrated in Figure 2, built through the different cultural layers, Beyoğlu urban site is selected as the research site to investigate how

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[7] In accordance with the number 2302 decision of İstanbul Number II, of the Regional Committee for the Protection of Cultural and Natural Assets dated 07.01.2009, the 1/5000 scale Beyoğlu Urban Site Area Conservation Development Plan was approved on 21.05.2009. Aiming at eliminating existing negativities; considering unique identity structures of the Historical Peninsula and protecting the historical, cultural, and architectural values, the 1/1000 scale Beyoğlu Urban Site Area Conservation Development Plan was also approved in 2010.

imaginary and lived experiences enable and restrain the everyday practices of urban refugees who represent the sense of home in and through urban space.



**Figure 2.** Research Site: Beyoğlu Urban Site

### 3.4.1. Pera: Home for Diaspora All Along

As the most cosmopolitan place of the Ottoman Empire, today's historical area of Beyoğlu was called Pera before the foundations of the Turkish Republic in 1923[8]. The English travel writer Lady Mary Wortley Montagu describes the residents of Pera in her letter of February 1718: "Pera [is a collection] of strangers from all countries of the universe. They have often intermarried, [forming] several races of people the oddest imaginable. There is not one single family of natives that can value itself as

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[8] "Beyoğlu, the heart of cosmopolitan Istanbul, has also been known as Pera (from the Greek *to pera*, "the other side" of the old city) since Byzantine and Ottoman times." (Demirkol Ertürk & Paker, 2014).

unmixed. You frequently see a person whose father was born a Grecian, the mother an Italian, the grandfather a Frenchman, the grandmother an Armenian and their ancestors English, Muscovites, Asiatics, etc. […] This mixture [produces] creatures more extraordinary than you can imagine. Nor could I doubt that there were several different species of men, since the whites, the woolly and the long-haired blacks, the small-eyed Tatars and Chinese, the beardless Brazilians, and, to name no more, the oily-skinned yellow Nova-Zemblians have as specific differences under the same general kind as greyhounds, mastiffs, spaniels, bulldogs or the race of tiny little Diana, if nobody is offended at the comparison." (Montagu, 1994, p. 111).

It is not the topography of the place but the "odd residents" of Pera what captivates Lady Montagu; she is impressed by how Pera covers the cultural and ethnic diversity of Europe and Asia. In another letter, she accentuates the variety in the languages spoken in the area: "Tower of Babel […] Turkish, Greek, Hebrew, Armenian, Arabic, Persian, Russian, Slavonian, Walachian [sic], German, Dutch, French, Italian, Hungarian […] ten [of which are spoken] in my own family" (Montagu, 1994, p. 122). The letters of Lady Montagu clearly underscore the cosmopolite social environment of Beyoğlu as the place of differences.

Figure 3 illustrates the Map of Pera and Galata in the 19th century. However, the physical structure of Pera has started to change in the mid-19th century. Being set as a model of a heterogeneity of the Ottoman empire, Pera has become a symbol of a modern urban order of the physical structure adopted in Europe which has come hand in hand with the new forms of urban sociability (Yumul, 2009). Figure 4 portrays the physical and social atmosphere of The Grand Rue de Pera in 19th century.
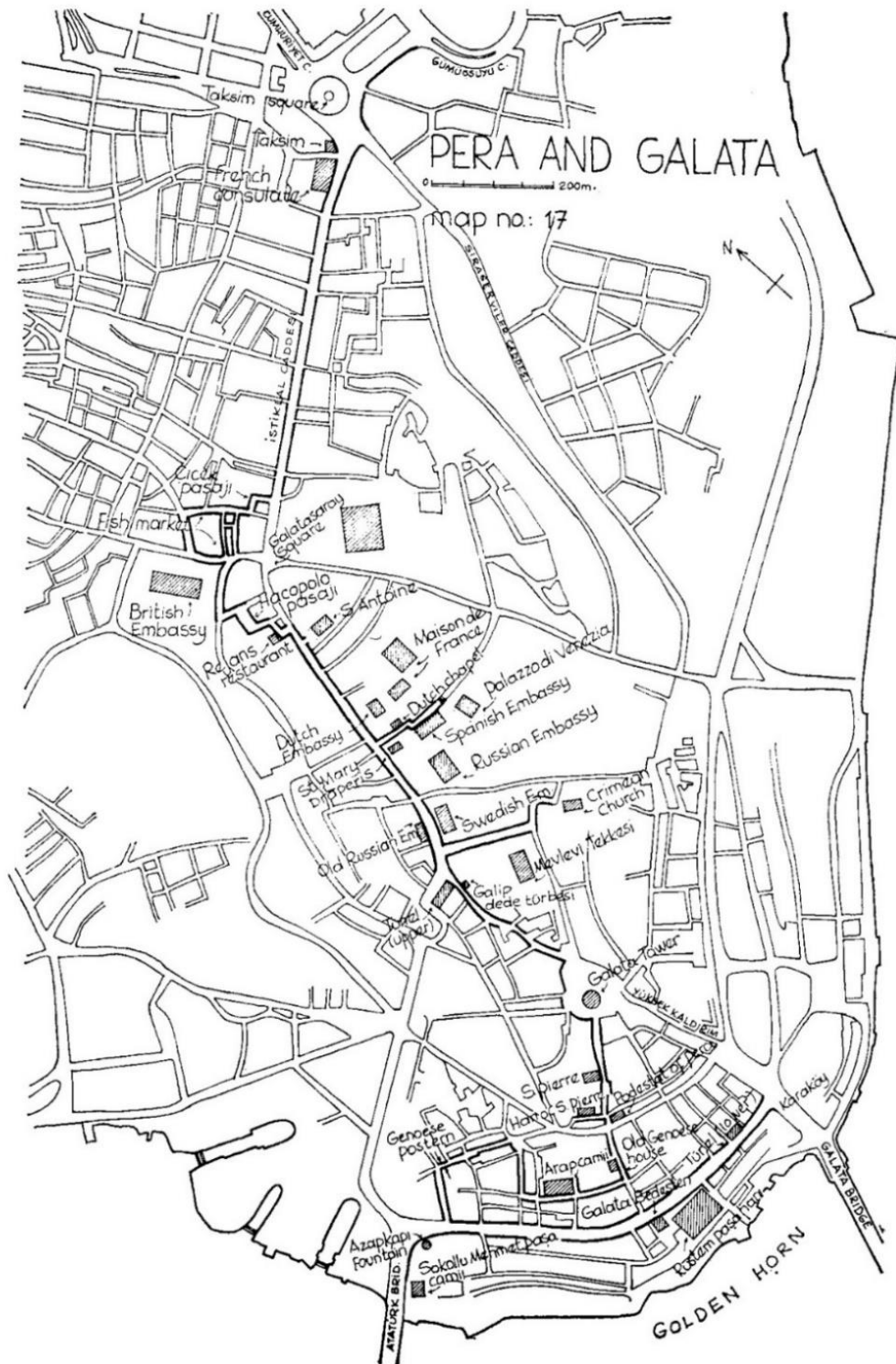
**Figure 3.** Pera and Galata Map (Sumner-Boyd & Freely, 2010, p. 392)

Yet, the adopted sense of "Europeanness" that is coupled with the representation of a free and tolerant way of life had different resonances in different social groups. However, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire has gradually altered the hospitable ambiance towards the embraced lifestyle, and hostility has eventually unfolded. With the foundation of the Turkish Republic, Ankara has taken over the capital status, which resulted in the relocation of embassies in the new capital, which once characterized the main artery. Following the changes in the built environment, Pera has started to be seen as a threat to the ideals of nation-states that imagine to be a home of homogenous population, in which the differences are eliminated (Yumul, 2009). Shortly after the foundation of the republic, the name Pera derived from the Greek has changed to the Turkish Beyoğlu, and the Grande Rue de Pera has named as Istiklal Caddesi. The Turkification process has accelerated, and the non-muslim population of Pera that composed the cosmopolite ambiance has faced a substantial decrease in number, especially after the September 6 and 7 incidents in 1955 resulting in great damage to the places of non-muslims including houses, churches, and cemeteries near Istiklal Street. Figure 5 shows a moment of attack of Turks to a Greek property.

Beyoğlu underwent a significant demographical change in the 1960s with the adoption of industrialization policies, which brought extensive migration flows from other cities. As such, while the shift of business center has resulted in residential abandoning Beyoğlu, the vacancies have been filled by the migrant groups. The gradual Turkification of the district has also led to a change in the social structure. Eventually, the streets have been taken over by marginalized groups including sex workers, gypsies and the Kurds. As a result of the increased crime events in the 1980s and the neoliberal vision adopted by the center-right government, the district has undergone a massive urban renewal project, which ended up demolishing a unique architectural heritage that is a mix of Ottoman traditionalism and European modernity. Figure 6 shows the demolition of Tarlabaşı in the 1980s.

However, in spite of the demolitions, the physical and social structure of Beyoğlu has continued to be shaped by the unwanteds. From Pera to Beyoğlu, the

district still embodies difference in the hybrid spaces of its streets where ethnic differences survive and claim legitimacy.



**Figure 4.** The View of The Grand Rue de Pera during 19th century

**Figure 5.** Turkish mob attacking to Greek property



**Figure 6.** "Tarlabasi Demolitions" in the 1980s

### 3.4.2. Field Observation

In the go-along method, providing a different perspective from the perceptions of the participants, field observation is useful for the researcher to get familiar with the natural setting where the interviews are conducted and to assess the social and physical structure. . In order to maintain a contextual setting, the location of İstiklal Street and prominent landmarks are illustrated in Figure 7, and a conceptual context analysis of the physical and social environment is presented in Figure 8 through pauses, movements and moments on İstiklal Street which is the main artery of the research site. Accordingly, while pauses refer to the public squares enable users to gather around, movements signify the pedestrian circulation on the street. On the other hand, by moments, the volumetric street space is referred.
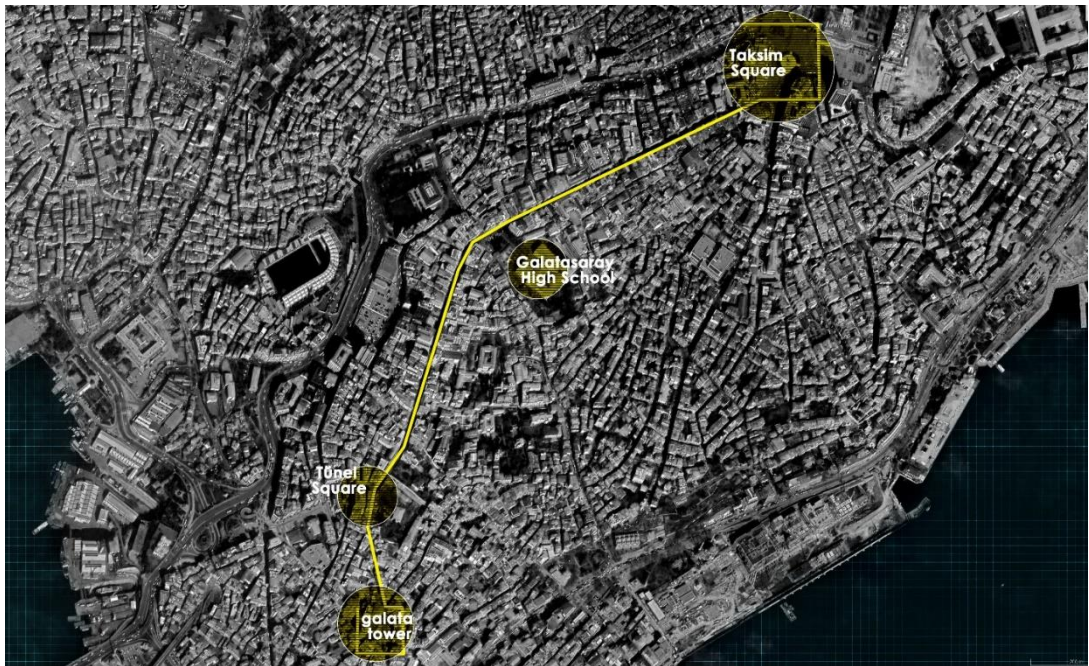


**Figure 7.** The location of İstiklal Street in Beyoğlu Urban Site
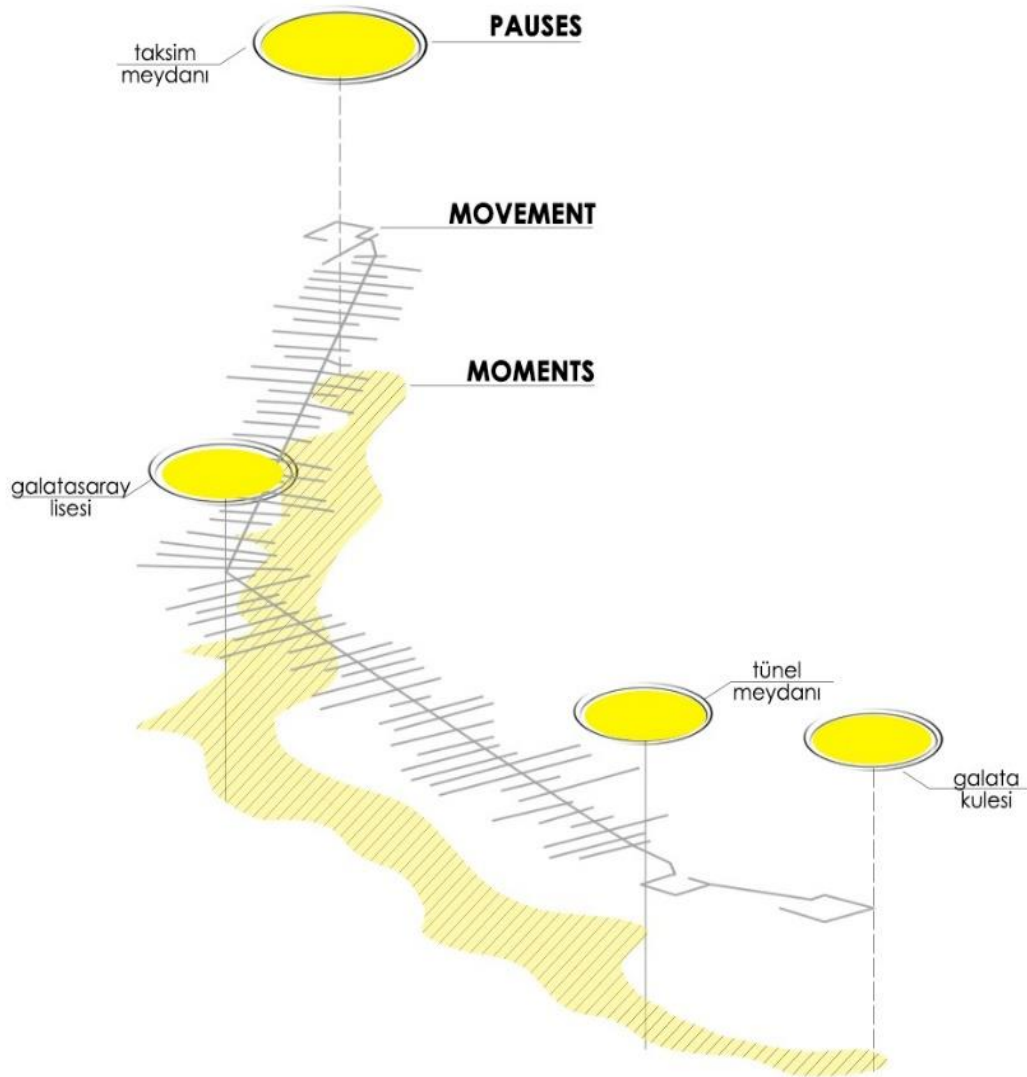
**Figure 8**. The Analysis for the Spatial Context of the Research Site

**Moments.** Presenting a comparative analysis of urban transformation through sections along Istiklal Street between the years 2004 and 2014, Tekin and Gültekin (2017) note that İstiklal Street witnesses a substantial spatial change due to the increase in cultural capital lots, leading to a demolishment and displacement of urban memory. Although the main artery is characterized by commercial activity, porosity in the use of horizontal and vertical street space is still evident along Istiklal Street.

**Figure 9.** The "For Sale" signs hung for the upper levels of the buildings around Tünel Square



**Figure 10.** The "For Sale" signs hung for the upper levels of the buildings in front of Galatasaray High School
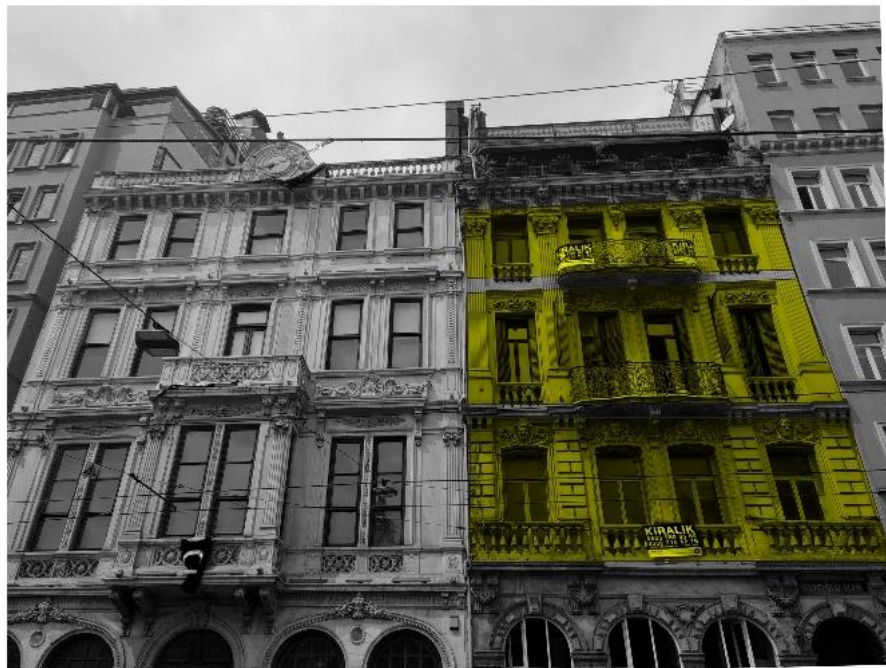
**Figure 11**. Abandoned backstreets of Beyoğlu Urban Site

As presented in Figure 9 and 10, while the ground levels of the buildings are occupied mostly by shops and restaurants, the upper levels are abandoned and vacant. Similarly, Figure 11 illustrates how the main artery still preserves commercial businesses while the back streets are mostly abandoned.

**Movement & Pauses.** Referring to the gathering areas, Figure 12 shows the pauses where locals, tourists, and police forces take along İstiklal Street. While the local activity seems scattered over the whole area, touristic activity is mostly concentrated on the main artery, and at Taksim Square and Galata Tower. In addition to the locals and tourists, police forces intensively move along the whole artery and occupy Taksim square and the Galatarasay High School intersection. In Figure 13 and Figure 14, the pedestrian circulation for tourists and police forces are conceptualized.
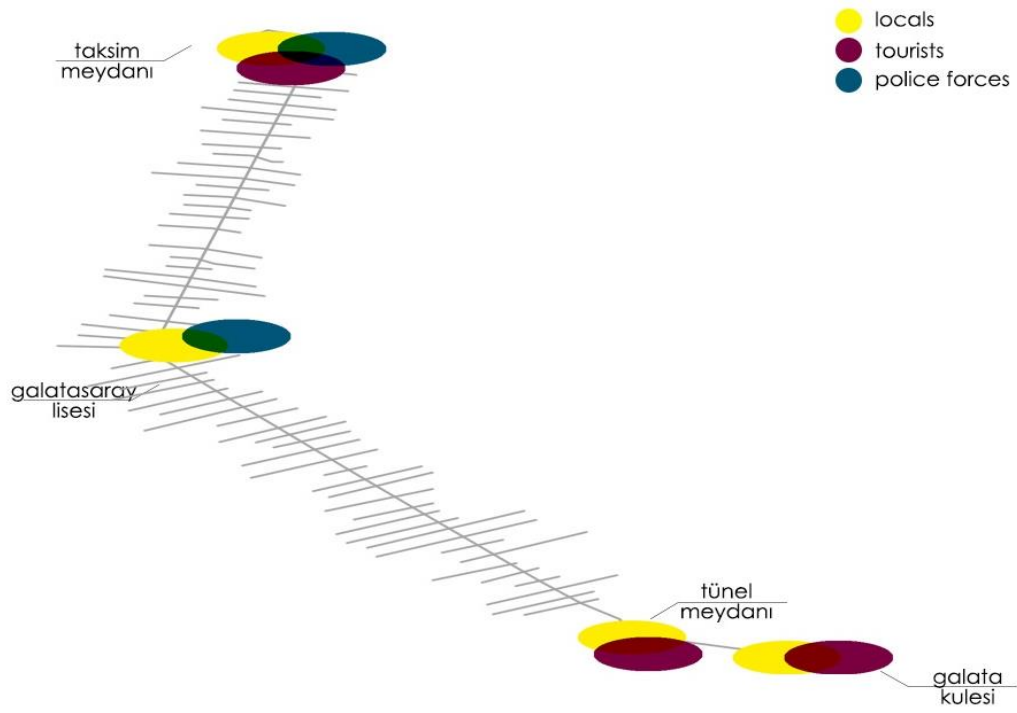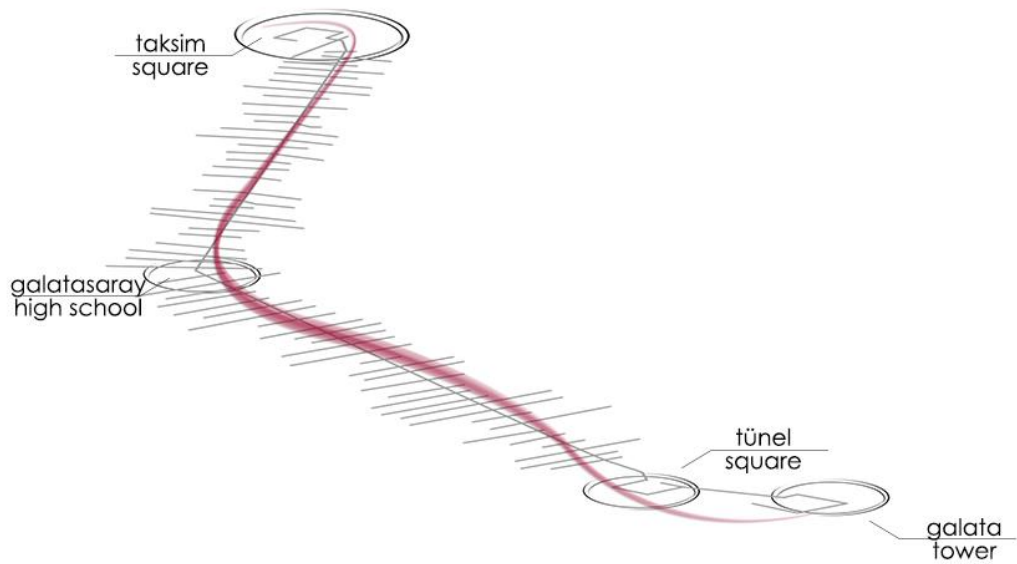
**Figure 12.** Pauses along İstiklal Street

**TOURIST MOVEMENT**



**Figure 13.** Tourist Circulation along İstiklal Street

**POLICE MOVEMENT**

taksim
square

galatasaray
high school

tünel
square

galata
tower
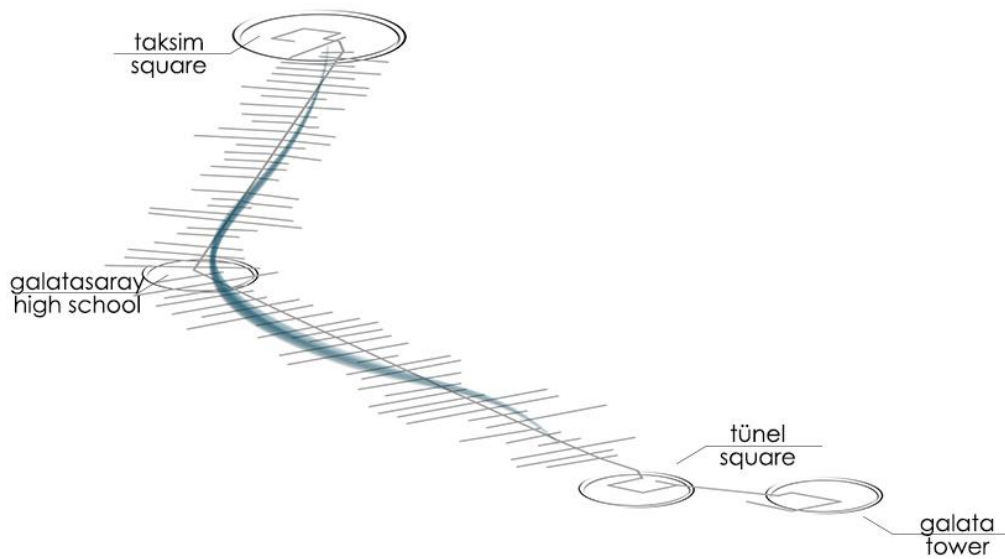
**Figure 14** Police Forces Circulation along İstiklal Street

## 3.5. The Implication and Limitations of the Method

Despite the go-along method has methodological strengths, it also possesses practical, ethical, and epistemological limitations.

### 3.5.1. Climatic Conditions

It is apparent that the go-along method is a type of technique that is conducted outdoor. Hence, it is inevitable that the climatic conditions depending on the season have a great effect on the implications of the go-along method. During this research, the interviews were conducted in summertime (the month of August), when the highest temperature for the year is recorded in the Northern hemisphere. As it could be life-threatening to be exposed to the direct sunlight and causes discomfort to walk on the street, the participants have preferred to be on the interview after the sun has lost the overwhelming effect. Yet, walking in the most populated streets of Istanbul gets harder in the summertime evenings as people generally prefer to be outside the most and the streets get more crowded. Another limitation was with the use of

photography as a recording tool as it gets more difficult to have a quality photo under the inefficient street lightening when the streets get darker in the evening.

### 3.5.2. Time of the Day

Time of the day is another condition that could change the course of the interview, as "the type and frequency of social activity may differ not only in different locations within a community but also throughout the course of the day" (Carpiano, 2009, 269). Although it is not a limitation to conduct the interviews in accordance with the preferences of the participants, due to the personal responsibilities such as work and family, participants only have certain times to attend the interview, which could have an impact on the feeling of safety and the level of comfort for both sides. In addition to the time of the day, the day also matters, as daily routines in weekdays may vary in a weekend time.

Varying from one hour to three hours, each walk along was conducted based on participants' time preferences. During the research, all the interviews were conducted at the time of the day when the participant was available. Accordingly, two of them were during daytime (roughly between 06.00 pm and 08.00 pm); the rest was after evening-night time (roughly between from 07.30 pm and 11.30 pm). Fortunately, no limitation has been encountered regarding the time preferences, except the darkness affecting the quality of the visual recording.

### 3.5.3. Safety

Safety is another aspect that the researcher should take into account the safety of both sides. For a place, experiencing a high volume of touristic activity and the protests occurred in recent years, the high police activity in the area is present. Being under the radar of the authorities and having the eyes of police forces on them, the Syrian participants have expressed a great discomfort to stroll in crowded streets because they were afraid to be interrogated by the police forces.

### 3.5.4. Equipment

No audio recording tool was used since it was impractical to record the audial conversation happened in the most populated and busy streets in the city. Depending on the researcher's personal preferences and subject's comfort level, jotting down key phrases and facts on the spot and taking photos as recording techniques were used. To minimize data loss, the records and mental notes are expanded into sets of field notes. The use of qualitative GPS tracking is highly preferable in walk and talk interviews. In order to keep the effectiveness of the go-along method, the GPS data of the researcher's mobile phone that is recorded by Google Maps in different modes of movement, chosen by the subjects, was used as a base data in the presentation and visualization of the results of the research.

### 3.5.5. Language

Language is already recorded as a barrier to the entire migration process, especially the adaptation process to the local context. Although an analysis of to which extent the language barrier affects environmental perception is excluded from the scope of this research, as a factor affecting the individual's capacity to express themselves, it is acknowledged that interviews were not conducted in the mother tongue of both sides already led to the data loss in verbal transmission of experience. Nevertheless, for participants who currently sustain their lives by communicating in a non-Turkish foreign language, the use of the English language is as much a daily routine as their spatial practice. Therefore, the go-along interviews were conducted with English-speaking participants in order to avoid disturbing the participant's freedom to express himself or herself in the presence of a third party in the interview and to the natural course of daily routine in the place.

### 3.5.6. Recruitment of the Participants

The fact that the reluctance to participate in an interview requiring being on the streets that are currently under the strict ID checks for the deportation of Syrian refugees who are not registered in the city of residence has been noted as the most

compelling limitation for this research. Moreover, the requirements of being an English speaker, not having mobility limitations, being registered in İstanbul and being an active user of Beyoğlu Urban Site for the participant profile have narrowed down the pool of potential participants.

# CHAPTER 4

## SITE RESEARCH

Within the context of the theoretical framework presented throughout the research, this research attempts to map the home-making practices of Syrian refugees appear in their everyday lives. Adopting an ethnographic method from a phenomenological perspective, it explores not only what is said about the urban space but also *where* specifically it is said. Accordingly, in this chapter, the findings from the go-along interviews conducted with five Syrian refugees are presented. Figure 15 illustrates the routes that are preferred by the participants on the Google Maps Image of Beyoğlu by the use of GPS data obtained from the researcher's cell phone.
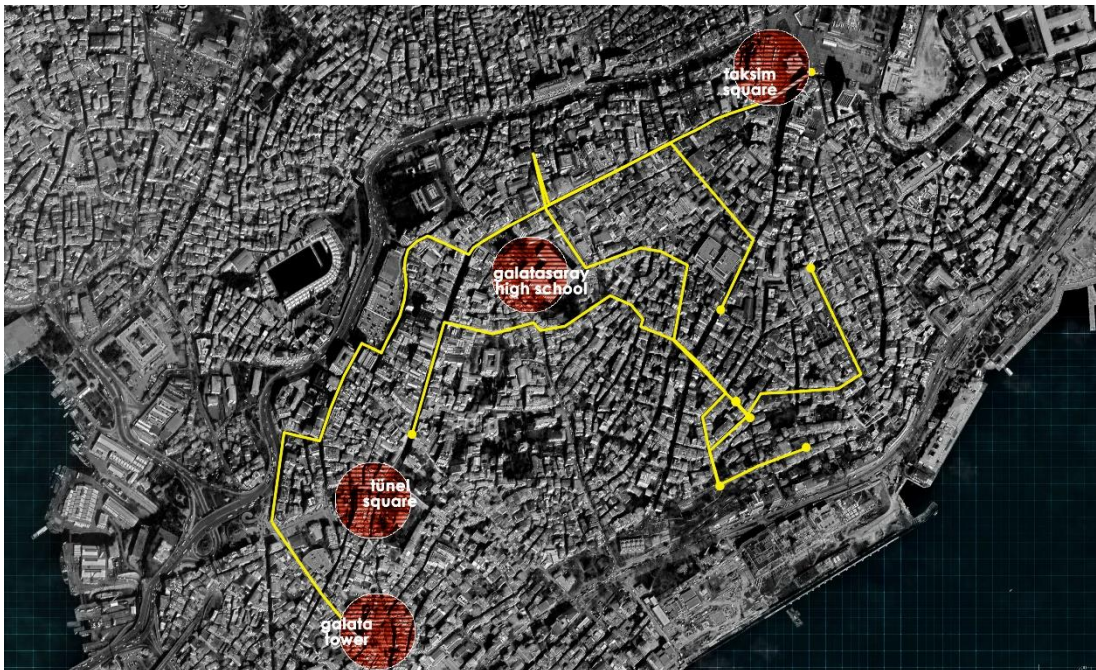


**Figure 15.** The Routes of Five Participants from the Go-Along Interviews

As indicated in the Method chapter, this research focuses on two assuptions: **(1)** the distinction between the idea of homeland and home, and **(2)** the sense of locality produced in the mundane everyday life practices. Therefore, the analysis of routes is prominently guided by Cross's theorization of sense of place comprising of two aspects of the construction of sense of place: *relationship to place,* as the referent of the type of bond that a person has with places, and *community attachment,* as the depth and type of attachment to one particular place. However, as argued by Seamon (1979) and Kusenbach (2013), the sense of place constructed towards the environment is also transformed by the degree and the quality of spatial engagements. Thus, aiming to correlate how the degree of spatial engagement with the environment is associated with the meaning of home constructed is also attempted to be displayed in the analysis. Accordingly, this research presents the analysis of the go-along interviews in two ways: First, through a table analysis formed on the basis of Cross's theorization of sense of place. Second, through a schema conceptualized on the basis of Brah's distinction between the deep desire to return to the homeland and homing desire (1996), and Seamon's continuum awareness (1979). Hence, in the table, the routes are analyzed in segments based on the differences in the keywords that are emphasized in the narrative of participants in each encounter with the environment, while how the meaning attributed to the place is differentiated in each encounter and whether it is associated to the idea of homeland are drawn in the conceptual schema. As mentioned in method chapter, prior to the go-along interview, the participants were asked the questions regarding their biographical information. Due to the confidentiality concerns of the participants, nicknames that were chosen by the participants were used to mention them in the research. The participant profiles accompanied by field notes and findings, and analysis of the routes from the go-along interviews are given in the following.

## 4.1. You Are A Guest Here: Sasa

**Sasa** is a female Syrian refugee and mother of two, who has arrived in Turkey in September 2016. She was born and raised in Damascus. Beyoğlu is the first place

that she has ever been to in İstanbul and Turkey. She works at the German Consulate General in Beyoğlu. Last from 6.30 pm. to 08.15 pm, the go-along interview was conducted in the evening of a weekday after her work while she was going to window shopping on the way home. Figure 16 shows the preferred route of Sasa in the daily routine.
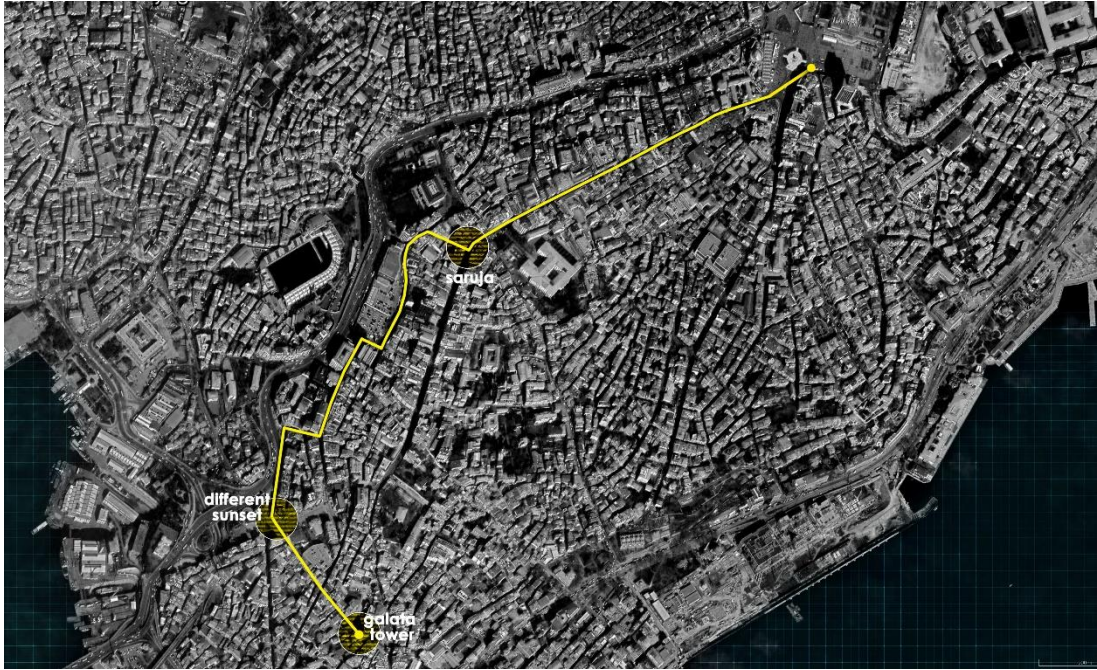


**Figure 16**. Sasa's Route of Daily Routine

**Taksim - Saruja**

In the third year of her stay, Sasa thinks that Beyoğlu is a place where the feeling of freedom has gained a new meaning for her as she has felt accepted in the community as who she is, not as a Syrian refugee but a single mother of two children. After getting a divorce, her husband took their children and returned to Damascus. So, reminding that she was born and raised in Damascus, she says that she has to go home to see her children when she has the opportunity. Even though moving to Beyoğlu has given her a new sense of life, she mentions that a part of her heart will always be in Damascus because it is where her family lives. Yet, she also acknowledges that there is no life for her in Damascus. Even though Sasa primarily associates the idea of home

with Damascus, she talks about how the built environment of Beyoğlu invokes nostalgia for her. She mentions how narrow streets of Beyoğlu demarcated from İstiklal Street are quite similar to the ones in Saruja, Damascus and the courtyards located around İstiklal and smell of Shisha coming from the tea shops in the courtyards remind her how it was like to be in Damascus.

**At Saruja:**

Pointing out a shop at the entrance of Passage Hazzopulo, she says it was the first place that she went looking for silvers. After her first experience in the shop, however, she noticed that it was just a place for tourists as the prices for the same piece of silver offered to *yabancı*[9] and local are different. Therefore, she did not visit the place before learning a little Turkish. Calling passage Saroujah, she offers to have a tea in the passage, as she was tired from working and walking. She says that Saroujah was the area that she was often visiting in Damascus. This passage with the Syrian tea shops located inside reminds her Saroujah. While talking about being yabancı, she mentions that her brother and some of her friends have recently had Turkish citizenship. Sometimes while they are outside to hang out, they make fun of each other over being a Turkish, as none of them is a fluent Turkish speaker. She says that there is only one thing that matters among the things written on the passport, which is the birthplace. She expresses the birthplace for Syrian refugees is the indicator that they will always stay as yabancı. Apart from the sense of home associated with her birthplace, she also emphasizes that Beyoğlu as the place not only where she remembers how being in Damascus felt like both in positive and negative meanings, but also is where she builds a new sense of home as she is without being oppressed by the communal codes. She wants to leave Saroujah to catch the sunset. Insisting paying for the teas, she says that allowing guests to pay the bill would be rude for a host.

Further, she remembers that her grandmother advised her that when she visits a place where she is the yabancı, she must remember that she is the representative of

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[9] Yabancı lexically means *Foreigner* in the English language. Even though the interviews conducted in English, yabancı was the only Turkish word that was used by all the participants when they referred to the perception of Syrian in Turkish community.

her culture. Being a Syrian in Turkey, she expresses that she now represents her country. With her grandmother's advice in her mind, she emphasizes that she has been following the cultural and societal codes in Beyoğlu to prove to the Turkish people around her that she is not harming the city and societal life.

**Saruja – Different Sunset:**

Leaving the main artery, she turns to a backstreet and talks about it is not only the how streets, smells, and food but also the geographical and historical landscape of Beyoğlu is what invokes the sense of home and nostalgia for her, as Damascus itself is a historical city as well. While walking on the streets of Beyoğlu, she also talks about the historic built environment such as historical buildings, forms of the streets and the bumpy geography of the district stimulate the feeling of walking on the streets of Damascus. However, for Sasa, Beyoğlu is not only a reminder of her home, Damascus. But also, as different from Damascus, she thinks especially the peripheries of Beyoğlu facing to the seaside offer a moment of getting away from all the tragedies that she had to go through. She expresses that even the sun sets different in İstanbul.

Sasa also mentions that her grandfather was originally from the southeastern region of Turkey. She remembers that her grandmother showing her an illustrative map of İstanbul that her husband brought it from Turkey which depicting the iconic images from city life and the green hills in İstanbul. From the stories told by her grandmother, she says that she has always imagined İstanbul as an oasis in the desert.

**Galata Tower:**

At the end of the walk, she suggests going to Galata Tower to finalize the interview in order to take a selfie with ther guest, because it is what she does whenever she has guests visiting her in İstanbul.

**4.1.1. The Analysis of Sasa's Route**

Based on the expressions of Sasa related to the environment of her daily routine, four segments were identified: (1) Taksim Square to Saruja, (2) Saruja, (3) Saruja to Different Sunset, (4) Galata Tower. Based on the field notes based on Sasa's narratives

during the interview, Table 8 displays in which segment she establishes a sense of "at-homeness" in relation with the processes presented by Cross (2011).

**Table 8.** Segment Analysis of Sasa's route

| SEGMENT | Keyword | Type of Bond | At-homeness |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Damascus<br>Single Mother<br>New Life<br>Freedom | Historical<br>Commodifying | Here (Beyoğlu)<br>There<br>(Damascus) |
| 2 | Yabancı/Tourist<br>Language<br>Birthplace<br>Saruja/Damascus<br>Guest | Historical<br>Commodifying<br>Ideological | Here (Beyoğlu)<br>There<br>(Damascus) |
| 3 | Bumpy Landscape<br>Historical Architecture<br>Sunset | Sensual<br>Narrative | Here (Beyoğlu)<br>There<br>(Damascus) |
| 4 | Guest | Sensual<br>Commodifying | Here (Beyoğlu) |

Accordingly, during the segment from Taksim square to Passage Hazzopulo, she establishes a historical (biographical) relation with the environment as the place signifies a turning point in her new life as well as the similarity of Beyoğlu's built environment with Damascus. Furthermore, emphasizing the feeling of freedom due to the socio-cultural structure of the population inhabiting in the area, she indicates a commodifying relationship with the local community. However, the association with the homeland in the sense of home appears a dominant phenomenon in her encounter with the immediate environment. Therefore, she shows the type of sense of "at homeness" in relation with two places: homeland (Damascus) and space of inhabitation (Beyoğlu). At Passage Hazzopulo, in addition to the narratives based on

Damascus and birthplace that highlight the positioning of herself and the Syrian community, she indicates an ideological process affecting her bond with the place that is imposed on her through the prevailing cultural codes peculiar to the community.
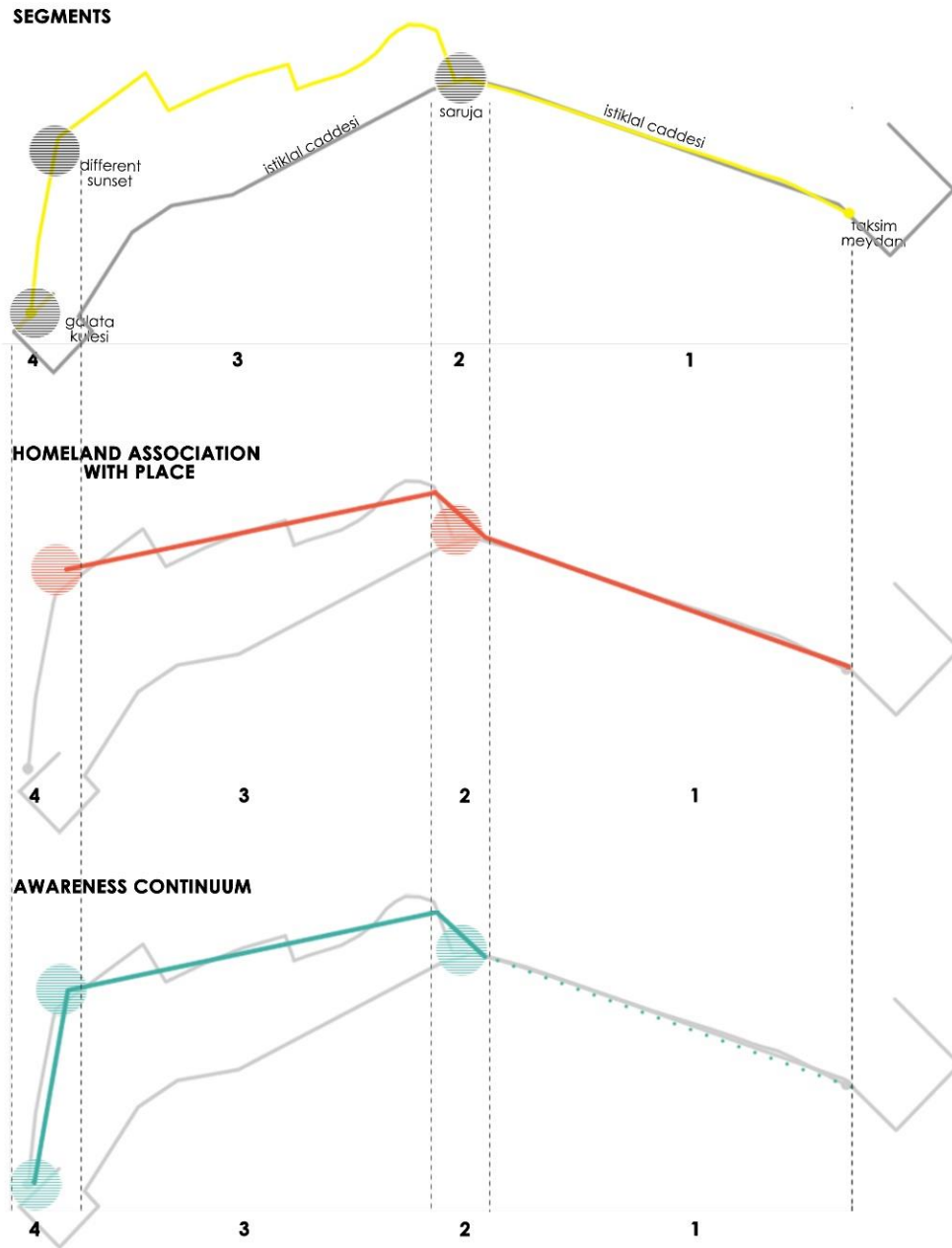


**Figure 17.** The analysis of Sasa's route in relation with homeland association with place and awareness continuum

Figure 17 shows the analysis of Sasa's route in relation with homeland association with place and awareness continuum. Accordingly, the sense of home is constructed based on the social and environmental characteristics of the place through the idea of homeland. Along the segment from Passage Hazzopulo to Şişhane Park, she displays sensual and narrative processes that enable an affective bond with both Damascus and Beyoğlu. As the final stop of the route at Galata Tower, she indicates a sensual and commodifying process forming a sense of hereness and allowing the appropriation of space to position herself included in the locale..

## 4.2. Typical Nightlife in Beyoğlu: Kratos

Kratos is a 36-year-old male Syrian refugee who has been living in Douma, Syria. He has arrived in Hatay in 2013 and spent a year in Reyhanlı. In 2014, he has moved to Gaziantep. After staying in Gaziantep for 4 years, he has started his life in Cihangir in July 2018 due to change of work. The interview was conducted at nighttime between 10.00 pm to 11.00 pm while he was going to his regular bar before joining his friends in another. The route taken in the go-along interview is presented in Figure 18.
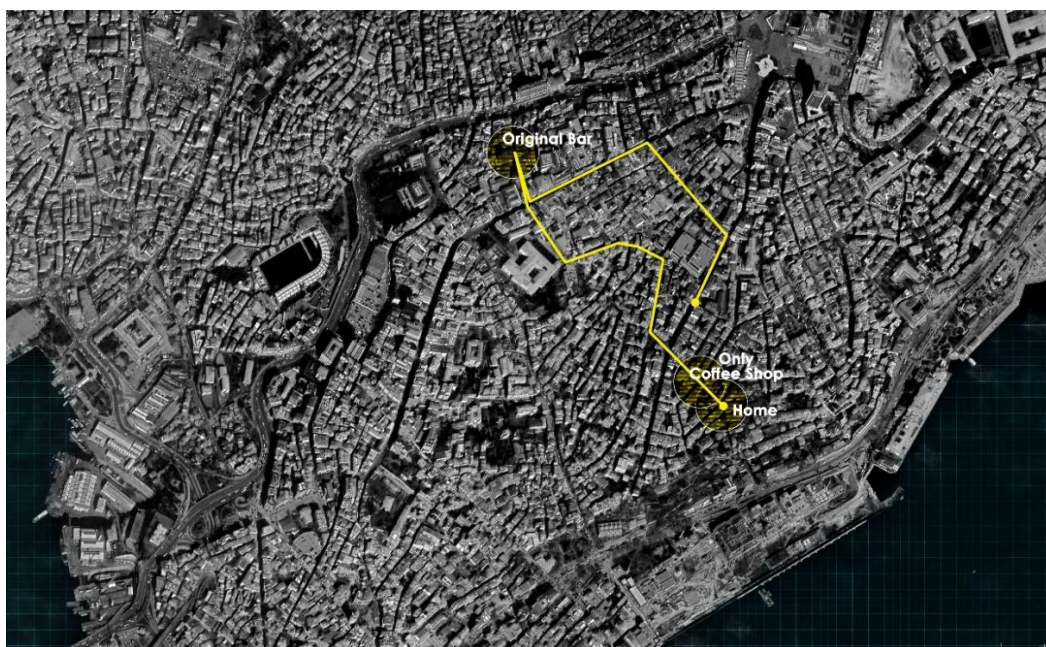


**Figure 18.** Kratos's Route of Daily Routine

**Home – Only Coffee Shop:**

Kratos expresses that being able to choose what to do is the most important thing in his life. It is the reason why he loves his neighborhood, Cihangir. He evaluates his habit of going out and attending parties as more frequently than an average person can possibly do so. He describes Cihangir as not only a home where he can stay in and avoid the crowd but also a door that allows him to choose between the crowded and solitude. Kratos believes that Cihangir offers him a choice between a calm/quiet life and a crazy life full of parties.

**Only Coffee Shop:**

Pointing out the coffee shop at the corner, he says that he could not go to have coffee in the morning as he slept until noon. He mentions that he used to own a coffee shop in Douma. For Kratos, being regular in the community is what matters. This is why he goes only that coffee shop even though there are others in the area. He thinks that home is when people know what you want to drink, eat or where you like to sit the most, etc. Only then, you can call it home, he says. In line with his thoughts, he calls the whole community of Cihangir home as he knows most of the regular people in the neighborhood like him, who he calls the actual owners of the neighborhood.

**Only Coffee Shop – Original Irish Bar:**

He expresses that his life has almost too many stages in different places before coming to Turkey in which he had to put a lot of effort each time to get to know the people that he newly met. At Istiklal intersection, he admits that he would not have his current lifestyle if he was living in somewhere else than Cihangir, even though he thinks that İstanbul is not the best for a city. Pointing out the upper floors of the buildings along the street, he mentions that the upper floors find life after midnight. The crowd on the street on the time of the walk was nothing comparing to the nighttime. He expresses that he loves nightlife in Beyoğlu, and he finds the community of nightlife suits him, and vice versa. He thinks that the heterogeneous social structure of the neighborhood population makes him feel that he belongs to the community. Even though he acknowledges that he is "yabancı" for the Turkish community, he

feels that he is just another flavor for the Cihangir community. He also expresses that he does not hang out with Syrians too much. Most of his friends are non-Syrians.

**Original Irish Bar:**

Greeting the random people in front of the bar, he sits on his usual seat. He expresses that the bar has two other shops in the area. After finding out that this was the original one, he started to come here.

### 4.2.1. The Analysis of Krato's Route

Based on the narratives of Kratos in association with the environment of daily routine, Table 9 illustrates four segments were identified: (1) Home to Only Coffee Shop, (2) Only Coffee Shop, (3) Only Coffee Shop to Original Bar, (4) Original Bar. It also illustrates Kratos's the sense of belonging to the place and the type of bond with the immediate environment based on the field notes extracted from the go-along interview with Kratos.

**Table 9.** Segment Analysis of Krato's route

| SEGMENT | Keyword | Type of Bond | At-Homeness |
|---------|---------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Choice | Commodifying Material Dependence | Here (Beyoğlu) |
| 2 | Yabancı Regular Community Crowd Flavor Douma | Historical Commodifying | Here (Beyoğlu) There (Douma) |
| 3 | Yabancı Community Upper Floors Heterogeneity Nightlife Lifestyle | Material Dependence | Anywhere |
| 4 | Regular | Commodifying | Here (Beyoğlu) |

Indicating the importance of the strategic location of Cihangir Neighborhood, in the first segment, Kratos shows a commodifying relationship with his environment, where the sense at-homeness in Cihangir is revealed. At the coffee shop, with a historical (biographical) connection with the place through the idea of homeland, Kratos displays a sense of belonging towards the place and the community, which enables him to relate to the environment in the sense of "at homeness". Between Only Coffee Shop to Original Bar, his narratives indicate the affiliation towards the place that is characterized by material dependence in the sense of belonging to the community and lifestyle peculiar to the environment. In the final segment, with the invocation of the sense of being familiar in the social environment, the sense of at-homeness is emphasized.

Figure 19 illustrates Krato's sense of place associated with the idea of homeland and the behavioral attentiveness to the environment. Accordingly, along the route, it is observed that the idea of homeland is not associated with the sense of place constructed in Beyoğlu, and the tendency towards mergence only consists of certain pauses on the route, which denote the sense of belonging to social environment of the place.
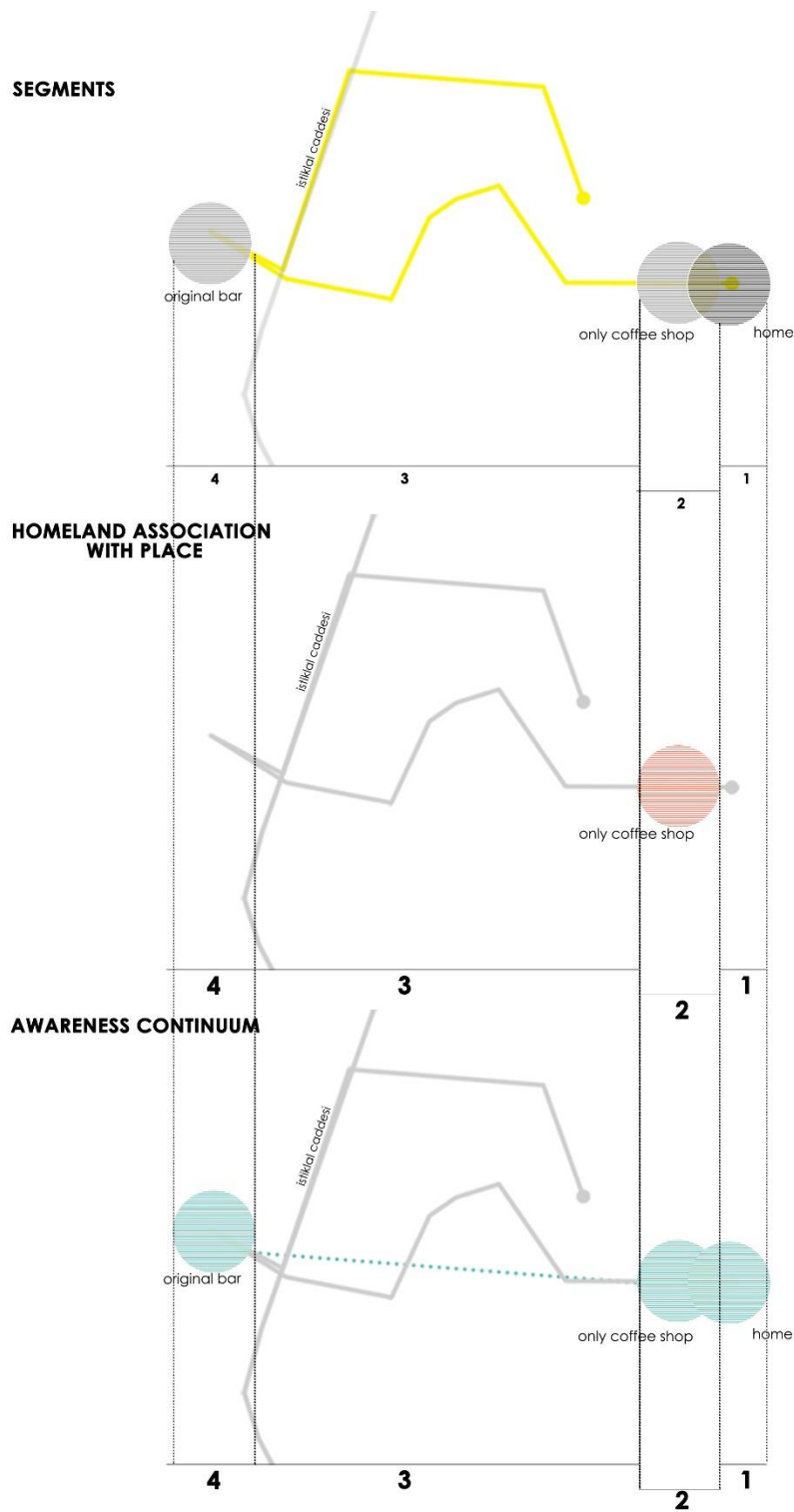
**Figure 19.** The analysis of Krato's route in relation with homeland association with place and awareness continuum

### 4.3. The Escape from the Crowd: Noah

**Noah** is a 24-year-old male Syrian refugee. He was born in Salamiyah and has lived in many places including Damascus. He has recently arrived in Beyoğlu, İstanbul in 2018. He used to live in Cihangir, yet due to personal reasons he has moved to Tarlabaşı. He works in a coffee shop on Istiklal Street. Lasting from 5.30 to 07.00 pm, the interview was conducted at the evening after work, in his leisure time. The route preferred by Noah is given in Figure 20.



**Figure 20.** Noah's Route

**Work:**

Noah works at a branch of a coffee shop chain, located on İstiklal Street. During his breaks, he usually has a cup of coffee, sits outside and smokes on the concrete benches of the shop facing the street. As to his observations, he mentions about a municipality worker cleaning the street each day in a very passionate way. He expresses his admiration for the municipality worker for keeping the place as clean as possible for people to feel good about the street and doing his job in the best way he can. Yet, he says that such behavior of the municipality worker teaches him that he

also should be keeping his living space clean, and he starts to clean the cigarette litters in front of the shop.

While sitting in front of his workplace and having coffee, he tries to decide what he wants to do in the evening. He says he usually goes to a rock bar in Tarlabaşı or to the park in Cihangir. He says that at the end, you go where your friends are.

**Work – Unknown Church:**

While walking on İstiklal Street, he walks fast and makes drifts among the crowd. He mentions a Syrian saying for the slow walkers and he says that people here on the street are walking on the eggs[10]. He categorizes people walking on the street in two: The tourists and others who just go somewhere. Accordingly, tourists are the slow walkers and the ones who do not care what is happening. Even though he does not like seeing tourists at the place he uses, he thinks that he does not have a right to dislike tourists and say something about it, as he is not a Turkish citizen.

**The Unknown Church:**

Right before taking the turn to Cihangir to go the park he frequently goes just to stay away from the crowd and sometimes to draw, he wants to show the church that no one knows, as it has only one gate that seems closed all the time. He tells the story of the church. In one of his discovery walks on the street, he noticed the church that seemed closed. Yet, with a great curiosity of why a church located on Istiklal looks so abandoned, he approached to the gate and noticed that the gate is open. Since then, he uses the church to escape all the tourists and crowd just walking on the street to go somewhere. Expressing that he is not a believer, this church just evokes something in him. Noticing the police ahead of him, he sarcastically expresses that police loves him. Describing himself as a human right activist, he speaks of many places that he had to go to in order to avoid ending up in jail.

**The Unknown Church – Old Neighbor:**

On the way to the park, he talks about why he wanted to leave Cihangir. He says he does not know how to feel here. He thinks that even though he does not feel

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[10] Walking on eggs/eggshells usually refers to being careful no to offend someone or do anything wrong (Cambridge Dictionary).

alienated all along, as to his observations of the neighborhood community, the people in Cihangir is more careless. He mentions that the surgery he recently had and the owner of the local shop asked him how he was after the surgery. He thinks that Cihangir is a very crowded place with all types of people from different genders, ages, and backgrounds that make it harder to get to know people. He mentions that he feels more comfortable in Tarlabaşı, as the socio-economic condition of the neighborhood population and the community's way of living seems more suitable for him, which enables people to actually care about each other. Yet, still, he cannot say that neither Cihangir nor Tarlabaşı is among his definitions of home.

**Europe Side:**

Despite the fact that Noah is a newcomer and still is not quite familiar with the place, he admires the natural landscape of Beyoğlu. He mentions that Beyoğlu does not have any resemblance to the places that he has been living in Syria. Always imagining how it would feel like in Europe, he often spends time in this park in Cihangir with the whole vision of the sea and the Asian side just to look at the other side over the sea and remember what he has left behind. He even makes a joke about an imaginary earthquake splitting the sea between the sides and buries the Anatolian side underwater. For him, Beyoğlu, as just being located in the Europe side, represents a newness in his life. Even though being in Beyoğlu means to be in Europe, where he has always imagined to be, Noah expresses that he would have tried to go somewhere else if he had a choice. Now that his residency is in İstanbul, he complains that he is currently stuck in the city.

### 4.3.1. The Analysis of Noah's Route

Based on the interview conducted with Noah, 5 segments identified regarding the narrative emphasis given to the places: (1) work, (2) work to unknown church, (3) unknown church, (4) unknown church to old neighbor, (5) Europe Side. Taking the field notes into account, the overall assessment for the identified segments are illustrated in Table 10.

**Table 2.** Segment Analysis of Noah's route

| SEGMENT | Keyword | Type of Bond | At-Homeness |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Municipality Worker Friends Cihangir - Tarlabaşı | Ideological | Here (Beyoğlu) |
| 2 | Walking on the eggs Tourists | | Nowhere |
| 3 | Escape Church Citizenship Rights Police | Commodifying | Here (Beyoğlu) |
| 4 | Not knowing how to feel Cihangir Careless Tarlabaşı Comfortable | Commodifying | Anywhere |
| 5 | Natural landscape Location Europe Anatolian | Sensual Material | Here (Beyoğlu) |

Accordingly, for the place of daily routine from work place to the park, ideological, commodifying, and material types of relationship with the environment are evident in Noah's discourse. However, he still shows the relativity type of sense of "at-homeness". As illustrated in Figure 21, even though Noah shows a tendency towards mergence with the spatial environment, the constructed the sense of place in the moment of encounter is not associated with the idea of homeland.
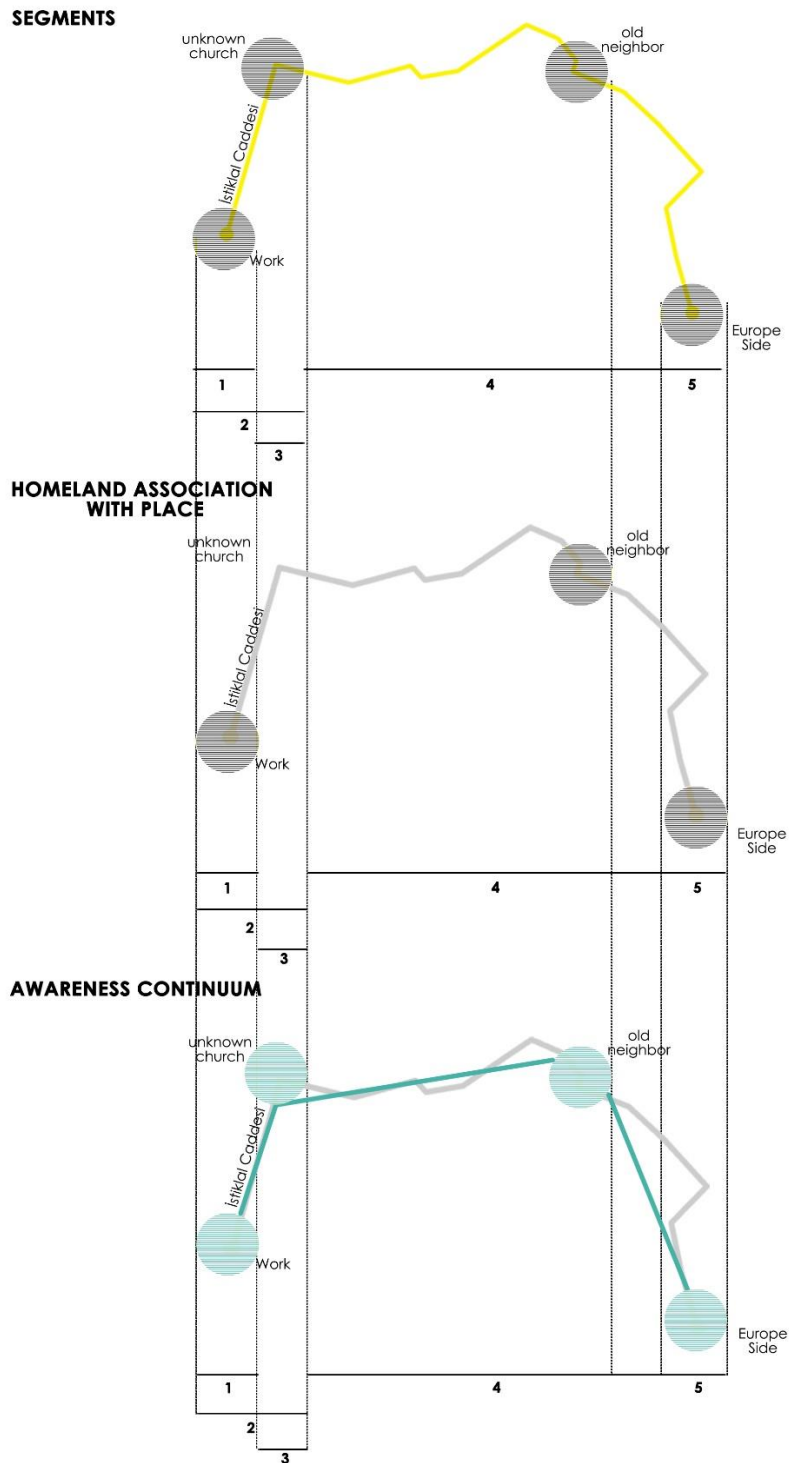
**Figure 21.** The analysis of Noah's route in relation with homeland association with place and awareness continuum

## 4.4. A Return to Moment: Al-Jaar

**Al-Jaar (komşu** in Turkish) is a 28-year-old male Syrian, who has arrived first to Gaziantep at the end of 2015 and has started to live in Beyoğlu in November 2017. He works as a freelancer. The interview was conducted from 07.30 to 8.15 on a weekday while he was returning from his break in a local bar to home. The route preferred during the interview is presented in Figure 22.
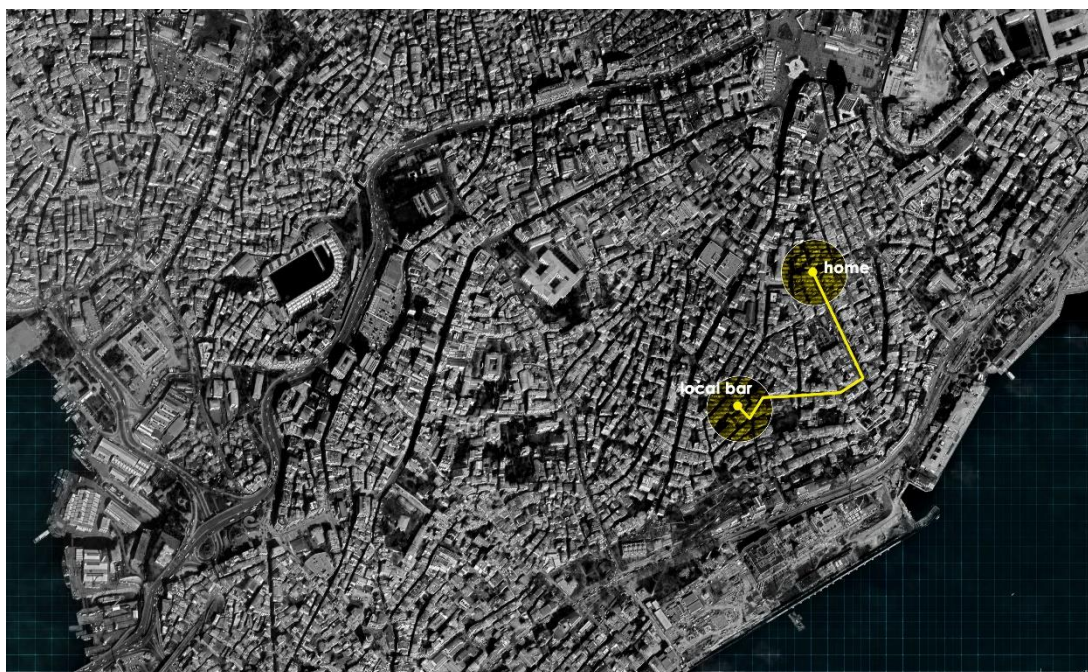


**Figure 22.** Al-Jaar's route

**Local Bar - Moments:**

Al-Jaar is coming from As-Suwayda, a small town of a minority group in Syria, Druze. Following the usual route from the local bar that he frequently goes to have a break from work to the home, he mentions that he does not identify himself with Druze. He expresses that he always felt stranger all along. No matter where he is, As-Suwayda or Beyoğlu, he does not recognize himself with those places. He does not believe that he feels rooted in anywhere but the moments and does not have any feeling of a physical home. Noticing a Greek restaurant at one of the corners on the way, he gives an example of one these moments about a particular food peculiar to Cyprus,

called Molehiya. He describes the feeling of being at home as the moment when he eats Molehiya, drinks Rakı and hugs his wife.

**Moments:**

He stops at one of the stairs and sits to smoke. He mentions that he got married, right before his leaving Syria. Yet, due to the legal limitations, he had to move to Turkey alone while his wife had to go to Cyprus to obtain citizenship to be able to freely travel to Turkey. For him, Beyoğlu and İstanbul mean family as it is the place where he finally had a chance to get back together with his wife and start to be a family. He also shares a story about how much Beyoğlu means to his family. He tells that when he has applied to citizenship, he has been asked to choose a Turkish name. After a conversation with his wife, they have decided to take Beyoğlu as their family name, and Barış as his first name.

### 4.4.1. The Analysis of Al-Jaar's Route

Table 11 illustrates 2 segments identified along the route associated with the expressions made in the places: (1) local bar to moments and (2) moments, and presnets the analysis of those segments in terms of the type of bond and the sense of "at-homeness" developed. Grounded on the field notes and the observations, Al-Jaar does not display any association with the environment in the moment of encounter in the segment from local bar to moments. However, at the spot of moments, he expresses a historical affiliation towards Beyoğlu.

**Table 3.** Segment Analysis of Al-Jaar's route

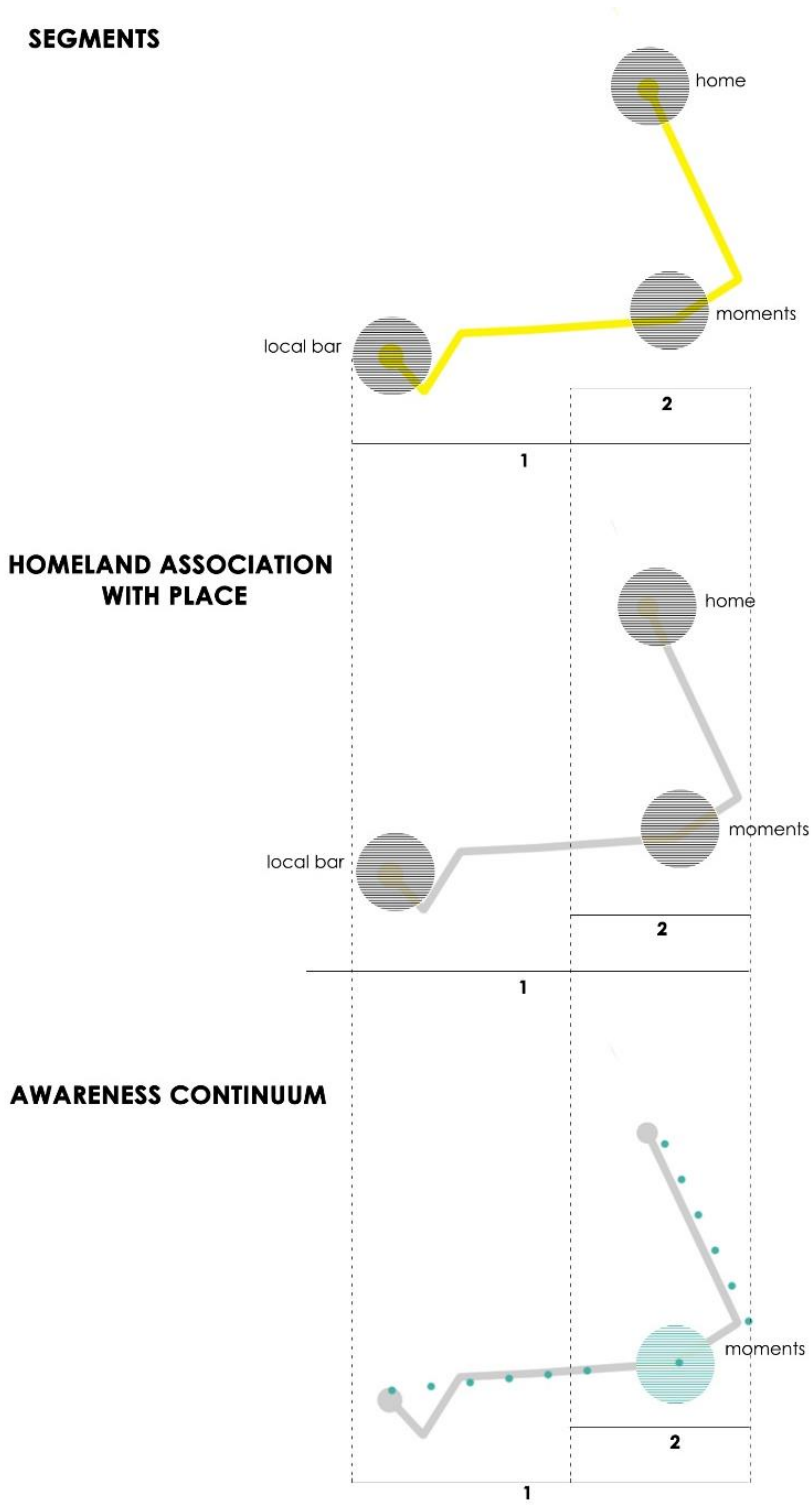| SEGMENT | Keyword | Type of Bond | At-Homeness |
|---------|---------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Druze Minority Stranger Moments Family | | Nowhere |
| 2 | Beyoğlu Family | Historical | Here (Beyoğlu) |

**Figure 23.** The analysis of Al-Jaar's route in relation with homeland association with place and awareness continuum

As Figure 23 illustrates, the sense of "at-homeness" developed in Beyoğlu does not carry any association with homeland. Furthermore, the tendency towards mergence extensively appears only at the spot of moments. Therefore, the correlation between the built landscape in segment of moment and the idea of home in association with the idea of family and Beyoğlu is evident in the conceptual analysis of A-Jaar's route of daily routine.

## 4.5. A Return to Home: Ali

**Ali,** a 36-year-old male Syrian, has arrived in Gaziantep in 2014. After spending 3 years in Gaziantep, he has moved to Cihangir, İstanbul. The go-along was conducted on the day he returned from vacation during nighttime from 09.15 pm to 09.45 after *re-uniting* with his friends. Figure 24 shows the route of daily routine taken during the go-along interview.



**Figure 24** Ali's Route

**Home - Home:**

Ali believes that where you want to live is how you define home. He is from a small town in the countryside of Damascus, called Al-Zabadani. He mentions that throughout his life, he always has dreamed of leaving his hometown, and adds that he felt that Istanbul is all along what he was looking for and where he always wanted to live.

**Home:**

Ali stops by a park before heading home. He mentions that he frequently uses this park to watch İstanbul, and further adds that there are people coming and displaying their musical abilities. He recognizes the melody coming from one of the groups sitting at the park and starts to sing along in Arabic even though the songs is in Turkish. The song makes him mention the historical relationship between Syria and Turkey. He mentions that he feels at home here in Beyoğlu because the whole city is the manifestation of history and has lots of stories to tell for the ones who listen. That is why he believes that "she" has a soul that attracts him the most. Ali believes he feels places. He mentions that he was able to feel the agony in the history of the city. In a similar way, he expresses that İstanbul has a unique soul that has been calling him while he has been living in Gaziantep. Right after he moved to Cihangir, he felt that he has always belonged to İstanbul. He expresses that Beyoğlu has changed him as in the way of living and thinking a lot that he even started to exercise and lost almost half of his weight. He says the natural landscape of Cihangir with *yokuşs*[11] is very helpful.

**Home:**

Cihangir is the first and only place that he has lived in İstanbul so far. While living in Gaziantep, he used to come and go to Beyoğlu. He says that Cihangir is in a way secluded from the entire crowd on İstiklal and its surrounding. He expresses that it is simple and still has humanity. He also feels like melted in the community. He is a dentist and has a clinic in Fatih, a neighborhood most of the Syrian refugees are

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[11] Yokuş is the Turkish translation of the English word Slope.

living in İstanbul. He expresses that Fatih is little Syria, full of conservative people. He expresses that each day on the way from work to Cihangir, he feels an unexplainable joy to return to where he feels belonging to. He is also engaged with an American woman, who has been insisting him to move to the US. Yet, he does not feel ready to leave his home he finally has met.

### 4.5.1. The Analysis of Ali's Route

Throughout the interview with Ali, two segments were identified significant in the daily routine of going home from the neighborhood bar: (1) home and (2) home. As shown in Table 12, in the first segment, expressing a spiritual connection with Beyoğlu and İstanbul, Ali indicates a sense of hereness, while in the second segment from home to home, the spiritual connections is accompanied by sensual process occurs between him and Beyoğlu due to the historical built landscape of Beyoğlu. With the expressions of a comparison between the social structure of Beyoğlu and Fatih, Ali further displays a commodifying nature of the affiliation towards Cihangir, Beyoğlu. Figure 25 shows that although Ali displays the attentive spatial engagement with the environment, he does not associate the sense of home that is constructed in these segments of Beyoğlu with the idea of homeland.

**Table 4**. Segment Analysis of Ali's route

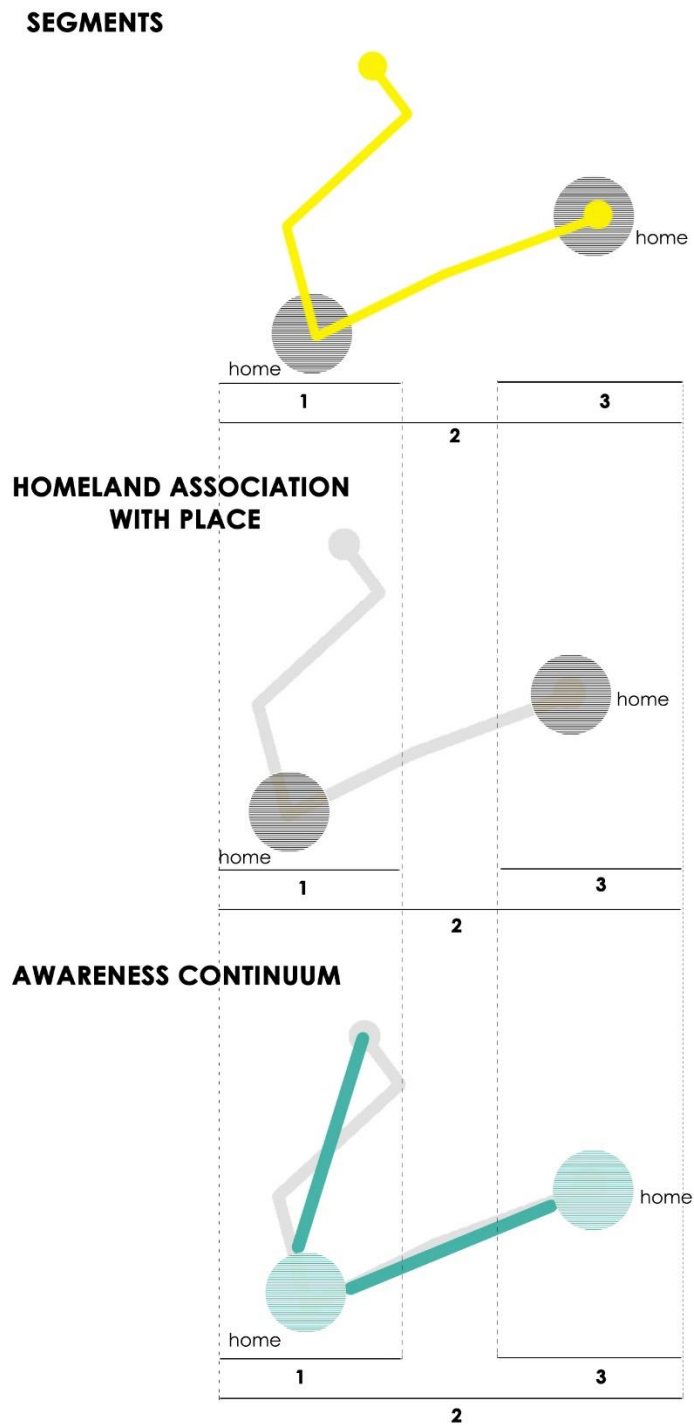| SEGMENT | Keyword | Type of Bond | At-Homeness |
|---------|---------|--------------|-------------|
| 1 | Istanbul | Spiritual | Here (Beyoğlu) |
| 2 | Music Historicallandscape Soul | Spiritual Snesual | Here (Beyoğlu) |
| 3 | Cihangir Simple Humanistic Modern Fatih | Spiritual | Here (Beyoğlu) |

**Figure 25.** The analysis of Ali's route in relation with homeland association with place and awareness continuum

## 4.6. The Findings of the Site Research

Accommodating a diverse population of different individuals, groups and nations with various religious, ethnic and cultural roots in its extensively diverse urban neighborhoods throughout the history, Beyoğlu Urban Site sets a meaningful context to investigate the relationship between diasporic subject and the place of inhabitance. In that sense, the theoretical discussions for bridging the diaspora and space in relation to the production of locality and construction of "us" through everyday life practices are presented with a real-life context through the site research conducted in Beyoğlu. Therefore, in relation to the research question of "How is the idea of home represented by urban refugees?", the findings from the site research is analyzed through the meanings of home produced by the subjects of Syrian diaspora in the space of inhabit, Beyoğlu Urban Site.

Throughout the go-along interviews that aim to observe the complex meanings of place within the everyday life experience of urban space, as Cresswell (2001) argues, it is observed that the idea of home for the Syrian refugees is essentially associated with the location and locale as well as the sense of place constructed. Grounded on this perspective, participants narrate a sense of locality in relation to location and locale, which are Beyoğlu Urban Site and the social relations constructed within Beyoğlu's material setting. Yet, as illustrated in the segment analysis, the type and depth of the attachment to the same district varies among the participants. Accordingly, some participants construct a sense of "at homeness" and display a sense of "hereness" that is peculiar to the location and locale. However, the idea of home does not always appear in association with the idea of homeland or selected research site, Beyoğlu. As narrated in the theoretical framework the meaning of home is multidimensional. Accordingly, as illustrated in the analysis of the go-along interviews, Beyoğlu appears to carry the meaning of home that is constructed in the everyday life practices of urban space, and sometimes it indicates sometimes the built or social environment, sometimes signifies a spatial unity, a feeling or a moment. Therefore, reaching out such a wide and multi-scalar sense of home observed in the narrations of the participants during the go-along interviews, the findings of the site

research conducted in Beyoğlu supports Avtar Brah's argument conceptualizes diaspora as a space characterized by homing desire instead of the deep desire to return.

# CHAPTER 5

## CONCLUSION

Throughout the research, the representations of the idea of home by urban refugees are interrogated. Concerning the ways in which the urban refugee feels at home in the space of inhabitance, everyday life practices come to the fore in the construction of the sense of being at home in the process of settlement in the territory of other. Therefore, this research coins the concept of diaspora space, where the idea of home is a discursive practice of locality produced by the mundane and unexpected daily practices of the ones who inhabit the diaspora space.

The final chapter argues the validity of the theoretical outline framing the site research based on the analysis of the findings presented in the previous chapter. Then, returning the opening quotation of "*The savage is no longer out there but has invaded home.",* it discusses the production of diaspora space through the question of the foreigner and attempts to contribute to the urban design literature with further topics.

## 5.1. Reflection on the Findings

The theoretical framework of this research is mainly built upon the conceptualization of diaspora as space by Avtar Brah. On this ground, this research argues that diaspora as a tactical resistance is the space of locality that is produced in the spaces of *other*. Within the context of this argument, the notion of home that is described as the narration of locality is discussed from the geographical perspective, which coincides with Brah's perspective arguing that the diaspora as a space that is characterized by the homing desire. The results drawn from the interviews conducted in Beyoğlu Urban Site, show that the Syrian urban refugees construct the sense of home and locality in everyday life practices at different scales and in different representations by the appropriation of urban space. Such construction of the sense of home and locality in everyday life practices is indeed the endeavors of the urban refugees to become a member of the society that excludes them in the first place. In

other words, in the vocabulary of de Certeau, it is the foreigner's desire of home-making and resistance in the already appropriated home places of the other.

Here, it is important to remind the question of foreigner by Derrida: What if the foreigner's territory of inhabitance was no longer foreign to it, would the foreigner still be a foreigner in the place that defines it as foreigner?

## 5.2. The Question of Foreigner: Insideness and Outsideness

On the relation between social characters and documentary, Ulus Baker expresses that social characters are not comprehended but felt by society. He acknowledges Georg Simmel for putting emphasis on the absolute condition that creates social characters, which, to them, is the *recognition by society*. For instance, even though poverty is recognized as a state of one who lacks a socially acceptable amount of material possession, there might not be a character as "poor" within society. In order that the poor exist, society must discover and develop a particular attitude towards the poor, such as the enactment of Poor Laws in sixteenth-century England. Thus, the foundation of the social relation between the social character and society is built upon the recognition of the social character. In that way, the social character becomes one of the elements composing the society. In a similar vein, Simmel expresses "The inhabitants of Sirius are not really strangers to us, at least not in any social logically relevant sense: they do not exist for us at all […]. The stranger, like the poor and like sundry "inner enemies," is an element of the group itself." (Wolff, 1950, p. 402). Hence, the phenomena of the stranger as a sociological form is defined by its *position* in society. On contrary to the perspective of the Baudelaire's Flaneur, Simmel discusses the stranger as the *potential wanderer* "who comes today and stays to-morrow". The emphasis that is put on the permanency of the stranger indicates its fixed position which is consolidated by the boundaries of the group where it is socially, hence spatially, captivated within. What Simmel also expresses is the dual nature of the relationship between the stranger and the society. Since the social comprehension of the stranger denotes both the remoteness and nearness, the first spatial interaction is about being excluded from/included in the boundaries. From an individualistic

perspective, it appears as the question of whom to invite to or reject from the boundaries of one's home. At first glance, the answer to such a question is very much likely to depend on personal feelings. However, in a broader sense, being the holder of the power to exclude/include is highly engaged with the concepts of border, territory, and sovereignty that require establishing the rules of hospitality and hostility towards the stranger.

Accordingly, in *of Hospitality*, Derrida (2000) mentions two rules of hospitality: laws of hospitality, and the law of hospitality as "the divine right of the guest and the divine duty of the host, means to open one's home and let guests arrive, without asking who they are" (Bedir, 2014). In other words, laws, and rules that embody an economy and rationalizes welcoming the foreigner and the law of hospitality that stays outside any order of bargaining. However, hospitality is neither an unconditional inclusion of the foreigner nor the moment of encounter in which the power of the sovereign is exercised. It is the simultaneity of two. Nonetheless, the exercise of the power to decide who is included in and excluded from one's home is the primary reason underlying the spatial order of the world that is constituted upon the borders essentially to distinct us (what is inside) from them (what is outside).

In that sense, setting territorial borders and dwelling inside them constitute the distances. It does not only describe what is close, but also signifies what is far, and, thus, defines, what to call who comes from far. Dwelling speaks of what is close and what is far while narrating what is inside and outside. The distances in the living space are different from the geometric distances. There is a sense of mergence and separation in the definitions of distances. For instance, "I am here" refers to the place where the individual is in, while "You are there" means you are "other" and "there". Therefore, the distances in living space determine how close or how distant between "here and there" is. In that sense, Tuan (2001, p.50) expresses "A distinction that all people recognize is between "us" and "them." We are here; we are this happy breed of men. They are there; they are not fully human and they live in that place. Members within the we-group are close to each other, and they are distant from members of the outside (they) group. Here we see how the meanings of "close" and "distant" are a compound

of degrees of interpersonal intimacy and geographical distance.". In brief, hereness denotes intimacy and sincerity. Thereness, on the other hand, indicates an exclusion as what is distant, unrecognized and unfamiliar.

## 5.3. Inside the Urban Space

The dichotomy of hereness and thereness appears in urban space as the distinction between private and public. Urban space primarily functions as the place of gathering where the differences and similarities are explored. Thus, as the place where the boundaries are drawn, it also functions as the place where the spaces of other are explored.  According to Richard Sennett, urban space has vital importance since it, as a public space, allows interaction between *differents* without hiding their differences. In The Conscience of the Eye, where he focuses on the influences of urban design on social life, Sennett (1991) argues that for the sake of homogenized communities where the order is protected and disorder is avoided, the contemporary understanding of urban design is the product of the fear of exposure to the exterior, which brings about the sharpened distinctions between the interior and exterior spaces of everyday life in urban space. Materially realized distinctions in the form of barriers in the urban space nullify the primary function of urban space, where the individuals and groups get interacted with all the differences. Within this perspective, he (1991, p.xiii) attempts to elaborate the ways to "revive the reality of the outside as a dimension of human experience". As targeting first the Judeo-Christian ethos that signifies the fear of dislocation and exposure, and, then, turning to the perspective of needs of Puritanism on the rejection of the exterior distractions to focus on the interior peace, Sennett (1991, p.42) comes to the conclusion that the modern urbanist is "in the grip of the Protestant ethic of space", where the rejection of the outside world is adopted to honor the inside first. In this perspective, what is tried to be communicated is that the urban planners now purify and homogenize the urban space by embracing the construction of barriers between the inside and outside.

If return to Derrida's question, as argued throughout the Introduction chapter, hospitality begins with language that is imposed on the foreigner. What sets out the

rules of hospitality and hostility is the insinuation of the words that are assigned to define who is foreigner. Referring to the Socrates's analogy of being foreigner and not knowing the "flowery use of language", he states: "If I were foreign, you would accept with more tolerance that I don't speak as you do, that I have my own idiom, my way of speaking that is so far from being technical, so far from juridical, a way that is at once more popular and more philosophical. That the foreigner, the *xenos*, is not simply the absolute other, the barbarian, the savage absolutely excluded and heterogeneous.". Yet, as it is laid out, the savage, guest, yabancı or foreigner, however it is named, inserts its own language in the language of the master. In other words, it welcomes itself into the boundaries of home, and constructs its own home inside the boundaries of *other'*s home. In that sense, diaspora constructs the feeling of being at home through learning the language of the other. The urban space as the site of the unexpected and mundane everyday life practices is appropriated and transformed into home places of the differences. Diaspora finally manifests its territory of belonging on the map.

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