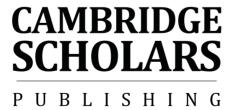# Whose City Is That?
Culture, Design, Spectacle and Capital in Istanbul

Whose City Is That?
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Edited by

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INTRODUCTION

IS THERE ANY OTHER ISTANBUL?

DILEK ÖZHAN KOÇAK
AND ORHAN KEMAL KOÇAK

> *"But why, then, does the city exist?*
> *What line separates the inside from the outside*
> *the rumble of wheels from the howl of wolves?"*
> —Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*

A city is the result of plans and projects, new and old architecture, laws and traditions and historical knowledge woven together by coincidence. It is also the intersection of people rushing around and people who do not exist, and the living or inanimate objects of a thousand varieties. All kinds of stories, myths, probabilities and concepts come to life by means of the city and also wrap themselves in the city. These are not distinctive or meaningful without taking into account the lost image of the human.

Vittorio de Sica, in his movie *Bicycle Thieves* (*Ladri di biciclette* 1948), looks at Rome where history opens in all directions after the storm of war has calmed. The city is rebuilt with reconstructed "human values" just as in *Rome, Open City* (*Roma, città aperta* 1945). But these values do not always serve "good" and "right" purposes. The city that serves as the film set has entered the process of normalization and is both a living and variable "organism". A glance does not represent the city with its hasty make up, so the film takes a deeper look and focuses on the man who seeks to protect his hopes which flourish even in the most gloomy and sinister back streets. The domination and the reality of war has ended. People have begun to return to everyday life and the tragedies in their smaller universes. Turning into a spectacle metaphor, the city accompanies this slower and quiet transition. Kurosawa similarly emphasizes this in *Stray Dog* (*Nora Inu* 1949). This time, the "missing object" is not a bicycle, making the endless cycle of the journey possible, like in mythic narratives. In the Tokyo, holding onto life after the war, a police officer

tries to locate his stolen gun during the film. In both films, the heroes walk around the city and are our guides, revealing to us on every level how the "city makes the man and the man make the city."

There is, however, another type of mobility characterizing Istanbul in the 1960s, far away from the harsh effects of the war in Rome and Tokyo. Istanbul became the first stop for people looking for opportunities during the days of migration from rural to urban areas. The film *Birds of Exile* (*Gurbet Kuşları* 1964) by Halit Refiğ is an example that brings together the characteristics of many films about this era. This film represents people under the spell of the famous saying that Istanbul's streets are "paved with gold." They come to create better lives and the film shows us their stories using a realistic narrative approach. Istanbul is an irresistible centre of attraction and is the host of the stories, many of which clearly move towards a tragic end. On the surface the problem looks to be between the city and its cultural values. The class conflict at the core of the stories unfolds through the use of implicit language. The new residents of the city walk around the city with a hunger for knowledge of it and its opportunities, and they then, in turn, become a part of it by working and earning money.

There Is No Other Istanbul

The phrase "There is no other Istanbul!" most likely gained widespread usage during these new quests in the city in the 1950s when internal migration gained speed. People who had come from the villages of Turkey in the 1950s brought their ways of life and cultures to Istanbul. The natives of Istanbul were quite disturbed by this since they were living like rural people in the city. The reason they used such a phrase was as a kind of invitation to these people to make them urban citizens much like themselves. The phrase was a type of advice in those days and these rural-urban tensions are not used or remembered anymore due to the changes within the structure of today's city. This phrase is no longer used because it is not possible to mention or talk about a single Istanbul or a single type of Istanbul city dweller. Every person who has come from another town has made and is still making or creating another Istanbul; each person from Istanbul has one difference—they are all from their own Istanbul.

Nowadays, many cultural identities, ways of living, behaviours and values, which are intentionally or forcibly hidden, live together. It has always been impossible for us to say that the city has a single dimension or a single definition that has the same meaning for everyone. We can see many signs that cities are irreversibly polyphonic, multicultural and on the

rise. To obtain this knowledge, we need to breathe the chaotic atmosphere of the city's boundaries which are entwined with those of other cities. Michel de Certeau (1984) explains the construction of the city by using the example of walking, comparing it with the construction of language by talking. He implies that this construction is dispersed into endless space as language and can be divided into categories, and we can see by extension of this metaphor how each person who lives within the city perceives the city. Grammar books describe "perfect language" which can never exist in daily life. But the use and practice of language is much more creative and rich than can be described. Just like in language, the formal constructors of the city describe a "perfection" which does not take into account the other dynamics of the city. However, the citizens who are not taken into account construct both the cultural and political dimensions of the city. Those that defend the city and their own living spaces confront the state, which is the executive agent of financial capital. Urban dwellers are both diverse and have a desire to communicate with each other, and this fact cannot and is not explained by theories of democracy. Classical media and government entities do not offer space to these efforts of creating a society and/or a world that uses discourse to define itself and this turns all space—except that of formal entities—into areas of vital expression and presentation.

Writing about Istanbul means getting in touch with different types of Istanbulites, and not just those in the centre of the city that are represented in tourist guides and mass media. This framework can be valid for every city. Each city dweller experiences the city with their own sensibility and each reconstructs the city everyday by adding the richness of their own life. This framework created the structure for the arguments in *Whose City Is That?* as each question the chapters endeavour to answer. The title of the book enabled different academics to ask the same question using different methodologies and subjects. The question "Whose Istanbul Is It?" and the necessity of studying Istanbul using multidisciplinary perspectives brought many researchers from different fields together, because the city is larger than one approach and the constraints of one "unique" field. Gathering researchers and academics from various disciplines enables each to think about the city alone and together, so as to create new forms of thought and discourse about the city.

Cultural transformation can be directed by both regular and irregular forces and these results can be observed. Multicultural, cosmopolitan places bring both social memory into existence and reveal the narratives that are the roots of an image's character. The chapters in this book are therefore focused on the physical and economic dimensions as well as the

imaginary, fictional and hyper-real dimensions, expressing the concern of bringing the real and imaginary borders of the city together.

The Transformational Quality of the City

Cities have always been a product of their time because of their physical and spatial expressions. While in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries cities were the engines of industrial production and the centre of world trade and finance, from the mid-1970s until today they have been the product of a global economy and a society based on multinational capitalism and the increase of financial flow. Today, the two main reasons for the (unintended) changing character of a city are globalization and migration. Ethnic, social and cultural diversity, the result of migration, have changed, and are still changing, the landscape of the modern city and they are also reshaping social divisions and conflicts. (Hall 2006, 20)

After the collapse of nation states, megacities are mentioned rather than countries. The vast majority of the world's population is now living in cities. As Ricky Burdett and Deyan Sudjic mentioned in *The Endless City* (2007), in half a century 75% of the world's population will be living in cities. The change in the balance of urban and rural population is evident as time passes, and it is therefore impossible to define cities as homogeneous structures. Urban space is augmented by its dwellers and its content becomes rich in the complexity of old and new forms that are brought together by its inhabitants. If we take this view, then understanding the urban landscape is only possible with the help of different disciplines and methods.

Istanbul, as the subject and centrepiece of this book, differs from other cities in Turkey because of one telling feature—its potential to become a world city by joining the global financial markets on the world stage (Göktürk, Soysal & Türeli 2011). The modernization process of Istanbul gained speed in the nineteenth century and still continues. However, just as it was in the nineteenth century, the development of Istanbul has never been a standardized process, its uneven development creating an image that brings together pre-modern, modern and postmodern aspects in its appearance. It is not possible to define Istanbul either as a completely global city as defined by Sassen (2001) or a third world city because of its peculiar position that has been defined as "between global and local" by Çağlar Keyder (1999).

Istanbul's globalization process began at the same time as the rest of the world's in the 1980s. Along with internal migration and globalization, changes in Istanbul's features became visible; even today, this process of

change has caused a deterioration of the historical skyline, which had been the same for centuries, from the days of the emperors.

As there is global competition between Istanbul and other cities, the centre of the city was rebuilt in accordance with the scope of this competition and Istanbul transformed into a "spectacle." The "city", in and of itself, transformed into a commodity available for consumption, with culture becoming an instrument to create political and cultural capital; in this way, even artistic activities are offered so they can be marketed and sold as commodities. Istanbul's positioning as a city with a "three-thousand year history, as the capital of two empires, the focal point of two major religions and the capital of culture and art at the crossroads of East and West" has created an image of the city that has become a brand (Yardımcı 2005). However, as with other world cities, people who are able to utilize the opportunities of Istanbul's global cultural environment are the urban elites and artists who have already fused with global society through their education, lifestyles, cultural exposure and economic abilities. New urban elites separate themselves from the rest of society by using "global cultural" opportunities. At first glance, Istanbul resembles a kind of "showcase" which can be entirely consumed through its shopping and business centres. This "showcase should be colourful, glossy, transparent, clean and safe. It must have both an attractive exoticism and comfort. It should have a security system (and behind the scenes) a way for the effects of that capital to generate safety" (Ibid). Such a showcase may only be possible if urban centres are cleaned, emptied and re-regulated. The gentrification process that Istanbul experienced after the 1980s was the result of such a target. The "Others" who are distorting the aesthetics of the "showcase" are pushed beyond the designated areas that are now protected by security systems. From now on, the secure areas belong to urban consumers and tourists.

Culture, which itself has turned into a spectacle, becomes one of the means of selling the city, "a brand of a branded product" (Zukin 1995). As a result of all of this, Istanbul becomes a divided city. In fact, cities have always been divided by class and wealth, race and nationality, ethnicity and religion, gender and sexuality and lifestyle and culture. The wealthy, the entrepreneurs and the middle class, the professionals and the clerks, the artisans and poor dwellers, the lower class and outcasts have always occupied different zones of the city. However, the boundaries between these spaces have never been entrenched. These various zones are never uniform in look or homogeneous in social composition. Differences edge, slide and blur into one another. They overlay one another, creating a complex, overlapping matrix. These juxtapositions and overlaps may

themselves multiply. For Stuart Hall, these are the dimensions along which the contemporary city is said to be changing most quickly. Furthermore, many other elements come together around cities that bring different worlds and temporalities together. For this reason, cities have a long history as the centres of trade and markets, and thus as sites of cultural exchange and social complexity. These form the basis of cities' unplanned "cosmopolitism" (Hall 2006, 24–25). Sharing similar spaces within cities, people are physically very close together, yet there are invisible walls between them. So, we can say that for each inhabitant there is another city, another Istanbul. In addition to its formal and informal elements, Istanbul has another important element that is important to define. Each person living in the city creates or lives in another city which is made of their own personal and particular experiences.

When we talk about Istanbul, which one do we mean? This book doesn't search for an absolute answer to the question asked in its title. On the other hand, in attempting to describe Istanbul, it is obvious that it is impossible to understand it by a single and unchanging criterion. In addition, the city we are trying to understand and describe turns into something different moment by moment, which cannot be defined or identified because of its very nature as a mega city. However, its flow is not aimless and non-directional, and each sign is not causeless or dateless. In this context, in order make the possibilities of the city visible, we would ask one more time: "Istanbul, whose city is it?" Is it a world city that experiences the capitalization process at its own pace and integrates itself into the world economy? Or is it a city that has been turned into a field of destruction and construction by capital? Or is it a city that is used as a billboard in terms of marketing and presentation strategies? Is it a city presented as a "brand," which tries to differ from other competitors with its culture, art, fashion, science, sports and various other forms of entertainment? Should we look at it as a historical city which tourists know from the postcards and guides; or should we go to the back streets to find its weaknesses, in the slums—in other words, search for the "guerrillas" of the conquered city? Perhaps Istanbul is not a part of reality itself, it is something that gives inspiration to artists, something created and reproduced each time by an artist, or is a kind of dark silhouette formed by a series of different fictional cities. Or is Istanbul, in and of itself, a work of art? The articles that bring this book into being will enable us to have a clearer and more understandable picture of Istanbul.

The focus of this book will be more apparent in light of this quote by Deyan Sudjic: "Despite the efforts of the planners and the speculators and the politicians, the city is formed by the everyday reality of human

experiences" (2007, 51). Istanbul is not only a city consumed by tourists and city dwellers, it is a city that is reproduced and designed by its inhabitants, as Deyan Sudjic emphasizes. Therefore, the intention of this work is to show that there is no unique image of Istanbul because of its changing structure. Istanbul doesn't provide a complete picture; it consists of parts and layers that develop strong interactions with each other, even if they do not open to each other. Our purpose is not to bring all these different parts together but to find the point where these diversities meet and show a holistic view of the city that is sensitive to the reasons for cultural production and cultural opportunities.

Whose City is That? shows that this city is produced not only by strong and systematic efforts, corporate influences and/or marketing activities, but also individual contributions and coincidences. As Georg Simmel states, we cannot separate Istanbul's spiritual dimension from its everyday life practices. Istanbul appears in many forms and these forms will be analyzed with the support of such disciplines as communication studies, cultural studies, cinema/media studies, literature, the fine arts, city and regional planning, anthropology, political science, social and economic geography and architecture.

Even if the city does not give us an overall picture, it consists of parts and layers that can develop strong interactions even if they do not open up to each other. This book does not aim to bring into existence a whole picture from these parts but instead aims to see and show the rich points of diversity, cultural production spaces and all their attendant possibilities from a holistic view.

The book has six main parts which deal with significant issues in urban studies, but this time taking a particular look at Istanbul. The first section, "The City of Media," deals with Istanbul as a cultural text, focusing on representations in literature, television and cinema which exhibit Istanbul as a rich and infinite product of cultural production processes. This approach deals with how Istanbul is first mediated as a "fictional city" by fictionalizing it, or re-converting it to a dream every time it is viewed so that this process repeats itself over and over again. The city which appears in different forms of cultural production is reproduced by the interlocking images and meanings of "yesterday" and "today." This section of the book also deals with Istanbul as a place not only experienced in its material dimension, but also represented and recreated by media. Hande Tekdemir focuses on travelogues written about Istanbul and the city that is produced by them. She expresses that the mythic "East" produced in Western narrative is a search for the "Orient," which is a part of an Eastern journey. In addition, she writes about the shock experienced by the nineteenth

century travellers when they experienced or saw familiar things when encountering the "Orient." Murat Akser deals with cinema's reconstruction of Istanbul that is fed by the literary themes and familiar fictions of the last century. The movies *Taken 2* and *Skyfall* show us how Hollywood turns Istanbul into an image of an Eastern city by editing and repeating the same places, images and stereotypes, since this image is the one audiences want to see, and is easier to sell. The last article of this section belongs to Eylem Yanardaoğlu. Her work is about TV series that feature Istanbul recently marketed to neighbouring countries (Russia, the Gulf Arab countries and Muslim communities in North Africa). The storylines of these TV series are set in the present day or the Ottoman Empire's magnificent and dynamic Istanbul, which is a "natural" actor in these series. She draws attention to their contributions, just like the Nobel Prize and Eurovision in their own ways, in making historic Istanbul a powerful alternative to the famous central areas of touristic attraction.

"The City of Elites" section is about urban transformation and gentrification. This chapter is about the changes in recent years, especially to areas of cultural reproduction. Ebru Soytemel and Besime Şen explore how gentrifiers mobilize their social networks and social capital. They discuss how these networks are constructed through the process of "place making" and belonging as well as how social capital and social networks work in practice during the gentrification process.

"The City of Dystopia and Utopia" section gathers two opposite words to emphasize two main dimensions of Istanbul that are far from each other but intertwined. In particular, this section focuses on many outlying city areas that have emerged as "utopian" and "dystopian" places, distant from the city centre both in terms of geography and tradition and as life is lived in these places. Şükrü Aslan and Tahire Erman journey through the history of "*gecekondus*," which is not part of today's reality but an image of Istanbul's past. The history of "cleansing" the city of *gecekondus* in the last twenty years, and the process of making high-rise blocks, business centres and shopping malls, is told through news and stories in daily printed media since the 1940s. In doing so, the article questions whose city Istanbul was and whose city it is becoming as the *gecekondus* are erased from the city's spaces. Tahire Erman's chapter is about the destruction of *gecekondus* and placing the former residents of *gecekondus* into buildings built by TOKİ (the Mass Housing Administration). The destruction of *gecekondus*, described as tumours on the city, falls under the scope of cleaning out undesirable elements. This is one of the effects of globalization, whose mission is to make Istanbul a world city. Erman's work is about the Istanbul of the people who live in the Bezirganbahçe-

TOKİ housing estate in Küçükçekmece. Finally, Sibel Yardımcı analyzes themed-gated residential areas, as the utopian city has created a miniature Bosphorus, a false Venetian and Aegean atmosphere. This time the city is marketed by embedding other historicities and visual identities using unheard or untested features on its body. As Theodor Adorno describes in the concept of cultural industry, what is reproduced are not products, but people, who are just like counterfeits. The city, as the result of the reproduction cycle, reproduces its dwellers in these dystopian places as individuals with a certain sensitivity united by similar enthusiasms and joys, wonders and sadnesses and who live and consume the city with "fresh," "new" and "renewed" promises. The city as an object of consumption can be marketable if new functions are installed into it.

"The City of Guerrillas" section is about the Istanbul of street artists, contemporary artists, street vendors and migrants. There is a common feature in bringing these people together. The concept of "guerrilla" which gives the section its name is about the methods used by guerrillas, not in the political-military sense, but in the sense of survival, production and life in the city. This section is about "bottom-up tactical resistance" against the strategies of being ruled. This section also takes the perspective that power is about being visible and how the "art of the trick" is the last choice of the weak (Clausewitz 1955, 212–213). The articles in these sections reveal how the city guerrillas built their homes with their own hands, which are in the illegal or "unsafe" parts of the city. This they did in order to survive and express themselves in the urban public space.

Bahar Aksel and İnci Olgun liken graffiti to a kind of guerrilla activity in terms of process and they distinguish it from other artistic expressions because it is an urban/street art. In their work, they discover how each sign has a different language and aesthetic representation. The article details individual stories which are unique, but at the same time find similarities. These become visible in many different urban public spaces even though they are made by the "invisible" actors of the city whose creative will occupies another of its dimension. Evrim Kavcar deals with the tactics of contemporary artists in urban spaces. She describes the dynamic of selective amnesia and capital that deprive Istanbul of its memory and how contemporary artists become trappers that hunt, catch and chronicle all that is fleeting in the city. She problematizes the artistic interventions, which are different from the mentality of everyday society. She writes that just like street vendors turning each situation into a chance to sell, the contemporary artist turns each urban situation into a chance to make art. In this respect, Istanbul both as a work of art and a work of the artist, is recorded in an historical sense.

Erbatur Çavuşoğlu and Julia Strutz focus on street vendors as the representatives of informal people. Their chapter deals with the characteristics of street vendors as urban guerrillas, addressing their tactics in an environment that is not hospitable to them in the last decade. Ayşe Akalın discusses Filipino women working in Istanbul using the church both as a place of worship and spiritual support. In addition, the chapter shows how the church is used by Filipinos who spend their Sundays, their one holiday a week, coming together and using the church as a space of social activity.

The section "The City of Culture and Capital" deals with Istanbul as in global competition with other world cities. Because of this Istanbul uses and markets its culture just like any other global city. In addition, this section sees the city as a commodity in terms of raw materials and making money. There is no doubt that culture is one of the most powerful weapons in packaging and marketing cities.

Nilay Ulusoy analyzes the fashion event, Vogue Fashion's Night Out (VFNO), which is "fashion's biggest shopping party," celebrated every year since 2010. It is part of Istanbul's new identity as a capital of fashion and shopping. Ulusoy claims that being chosen as a part of the VFNO organization has affected Istanbul, allowing it to be redesigned and positioned alongside other global cities. Accordingly, VFNO emerges as an international activity which combines Istanbul's image with fashion. The aim of the VFNO event is to represent Istanbul through the lens of fashion which exists by feeding from the city of Istanbul and its lively, hybrid structure. In brief, VFNO aims to market Istanbul to the world by adding another attribute that it has not had before, which is fashion capital.

Dilek Özhan Koçak focuses on the city of tourists and points out that the city the tourist comes to know is different to the reality. She shows that it is something recreated and rewritten through printed and visual media that reproduces the same images time and time again; as such, the city that tourists visit is an image of itself; indeed, an imaginary city. In addition, she also sees Istanbul as other researchers have, as using its culture as a marketing tool differentiating it from the other cities, and considers this in light of how important tourism income is to the city. Istanbul and other international metropolises all want the flow of global tourism and so cultural capital is equal to physical capital.

Deniz Ünsal's describes the representation of the Ottoman past, which has recently become a popular theme in the cultural and creative industries in Turkey, especially the exhibition that can be viewed in the Panorama 1453 History Museum. She argues that the economic and political aspirations of the ruling party in Turkey nurtures this imperial nostalgia with the aim of reconstructing a new historical imagination. The

appearance of the Panorama 1453 History museum is the result of these interests. Ünsal also compares the "living space" in Maslak 1453, which is an example of re-conquering the city through real estate development projects using Panorama 1453 Museum as inspiration. She argues that Constantinople is re-conquered in the Panorama Museum every day, while Istanbul is transformed into a space for the new capitalist elites and the new rituals of belonging to the city. The essence of new cultural citizenship is invented both in the museum and the urban landscape.

"The City of 'Him'" section, by Emine Onaran İncirlioğlu is about Mustafa Taşdeviren, and depicts Istanbul through the eyes of a single person. Taşdeviren, who is a Roma, came to Istanbul many years ago, and this chapter is about the things he did to survive and how they formed his consciousness. In the chapter, he talks about his journey as a young boy alone in Istanbul in his own words. İncirlioğlu shows us what or who Istanbul was through the eyes of a person who walked every inch of it during his time here and how this journey formed his ideals and the expectations he had for himself. İncirlioğlu shows us Mustafa Taşdeviren's own Istanbul.

During the preparation for this book, one of our main goals was to remember and to remind each other that each individual living in the city has his/her own right to the city. This right cannot be transferred to anyone, whether they are strong and dominant or weak and silent. When someone says that they are talking for "us" with a loud voice we liken that to a little humming noise, or if the story to be told for us is filled with glory, colourful images and bright light, we know that there is another reality hidden behind this showy scene. As we know, the struggle launched for green space in the centre of Istanbul in June 2013 is based on "right to the city," whose main demand is social justice itself.

"Whose City Is That?" opened many new ideas for us, each different from the other, but united and each complementing the other. These ideas add valuable insights to this question and offer many different possibilities rather than one answer. In addition, these efforts gave us strong evidence and original studies that show that there is an Istanbul for everyone.

Articles from these many different disciplines are not a coincidence, but were, in fact, a choice and an obligation. Richard Sennett understood that the changes in cities in the past few centuries also changed the meaning of the words used to scientifically describe the city. We know that some basic and general concepts considered in this book will change as a result of the inevitable changes in the city, because, as David Harvey expressed: "sociologist, economists, geographers, architects and city planners and so on, all appear to plough lonely furrows and to live in their

own confined conceptual worlds" (1993, 24). The drawback of this is that each discipline uses the city as a laboratory to test propositions and theories, and much recent research deals "with problems in the city rather than of the city" (Leven 1993, 24).

The city is planned with more "serious" purposes in mind. Money is being transferred, and buildings are destroyed along with the people who live in them and their dreams. All this for the sake of these financial considerations. The lives destroyed during this urban transformation are only known as a statistical value. However, despite this view, we know that the major force that shapes the city is the daily reality of human experience, because eventually the city is reconstructed everyday in the mind of a unique and inimitable "ordinary citizen." So, we can say that the primary purpose of this book is to find the answer of to whom Istanbul does belong, which presents us with the richness of human experience and the practice of everyday life. As Henri Lefebvre points out, our experiences regarding the production of space are components of the production of space (Lefebvre 2000). Each type of interaction and communication process should be taken into account to see the city in conjunction with all its aspects. Thus, Istanbul, just like other cities, emerges as an Istanbul which is reproduced by each of its in habitants in everyday life. Our main and strongest wish throughout the process of compiling this book was to provide scientific contributions that highlight the ideal of "anyone who lives in Istanbul should have a say about the city," instead of presenting surprising, weird and interesting life stories and trends.

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PART I:

THE CITY OF MEDIA

CHAPTER ONE

UNCANNY ENCOUNTERS WITH THE CITY AND THE SELF IN WESTERN TRAVELOGUES ON ISTANBUL

HANDE TEKDEMIR

> "Here is a riddle for you *unheimlicher* bird.
> What is so strange it feels like home?"
> —Susan Mitchell, "Bird, a Memoir," in *Erotikon: Poems.*

Focusing on a number of Western travelogues on Constantinople, this chapter discusses the main characteristics of a certain literary form that I call the "Istanbul canon," in which the city has persistently been identified as uncanny. The traveller, who arrives in Constantinople with the expectation of finding the "Orient" as part of their Eastern journey, is shocked to see a partially familiar world that reminds them of home. Equally surprising is the glimpse into a pre-modern past, still surviving in the cityscape, particularly in the integration of the dead within neighbourhoods (i.e. the graveyards) and the nonhuman (i.e. the street dogs), and the parallels between this "strange" realm and one's own remote, even forbidden and buried past, hidden from sight in the modernized world. While I examine various moments in which the Western traveller constantly moves between a familiar and unfamiliar world in Constantinople, I argue that such moments compel them to recognize the modern condition in which the uncanny is a constant haunting presence. On a textual level, too, the attempt to narrate this previously unknown place is juxtaposed with the strange familiarity of other travellers' notes. "The textual uncanny" prompts the traveller to experience unexpected familiarity with this Oriental city that has been written about many times and to their own writing selfhood, which is annulled by the existing canon. As an integral part of the Istanbul canon, the frustration with canonical repetition caused by a sense of belatedness

alienates one even from one's own writing.

Located geographically on the threshold between the East and the West, colonizer and the colonized, pre-modern and modern, the city's ambivalent history functions as a means to understand the uncanny within the history of modernity. On the one hand, as the capital of the late Empire, Istanbul played a role in the colonization of parts of Europe, the Middle East and Africa (thus challenging the binary opposition between the colonizing West and the colonized East as posed by Edward Said in *Orientalism* [1978]). It was the centre of an Eastern empire, which competed for power with other European empires for more than four hundred years until the end of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, from the turn of the century until after World War I, Istanbul was a city under siege and occupation by European powers that tentatively shared the remains of the Empire, and which encountered strong native resistance to colonization. The result was that Turkey obtained independence before it became a colony.

While my main argument is indebted to Edward Said's discursive framework, as he outlines it in his pioneering work on British and French representations of the Orient, I limit my focus to travelogues written specifically about Istanbul. Within *Orientalism*'s spacious geography, Edward Said examines a body of European writing which helps to shape the production of the "Eastern myth" by Western narratives. The Orientalist assists in exacerbating the impact of a series of stereotypical images, with Europe (the West, the self) as the rational, developed, superior, authentic, active and masculine, and The Orient (the East, the other) as the irrational, backward, inferior, inauthentic and feminine (1978, 8). This system is designed to promote European imperialism and colonialism.

Although the end of the nineteenth century, in particular, witnessed increasing pressure on the Ottoman Empire by the British and French, the relationship between Europe and the Ottomans did not really fulfil the criteria posited by Said in *Orientalism*. The fact that Orientalist texts produce a certain type of knowledge that is transformed into power over the Orient is only tentatively taken for granted throughout this chapter. Interrogating what the Orient actually *does* to the Western traveller, rather than what the West imposes on the Orient, I will examine the ways in which the traveller is unsettled and disordered, if not totally disempowered, as a result of their journey to Istanbul.

The Textual Uncanny

Lord Byron's Constantinople letters, written during his two-month stay in 1810, project a writing self who is overtly hesitant to talk about Constantinople, even though it was the grand destination of his Oriental tour. As J. P. Donovan notes, Byron sounds impatient and unwilling to mention local details to his correspondents. His response to John Hanson is typical: "I came up in an English Frigate, but we were detained in the Hellespont ten days for a wind. Here I am at last, I refer you for the descriptions of Constantinople to the various travelers who have scribbled on the subject" (1993, 14). What Donovan calls "the antipathy to writing" in Byron's letters is resistance to the obligation of writing. In a letter he wrote to R. C. Dallas, Byron expresses how he felt about this "unfinished business": "I had projected an additional canto [of *Childe Harolde's Pilgrimage*] when I was in Troad and Constantinople and if I saw them again it would go on; but under existing circumstances and sensations, I have neither harp, 'heart nor voice' to proceed" (1993, 16). Taking into consideration the multitude of travelogues written about Constantinople over the centuries, Byron's silence is justifiable. There are various ways to recover one's writing self: silence, so as not to repeat other accounts (as in the case of Lord Byron); negation of the referential network, so that one's account is taken to be the most genuine and original and emphasis on the special case with one's visit, etc. In all these cases, which will be further examined with textual examples from different travelogues below, the Western traveller nevertheless feels unsettled, if not totally obliterated.

As an earlier example, Lady Montagu in *Turkish Embassy Letters* (1718) takes issue with her own predecessors who spend years in the European quarter Pera "without having ever seen it, and yet … pretend to describe it" (126); in the same manner Lord Byron will question her own veracity years later. Lady Montagu finds fault with a certain Mr. Hill who provides his reading public with false information about "a sweating pillar very balsamic for disordered heads" in St. Sophia. His remarks are equally wrong, Lady Montagu states, about the miserable situation of Turkish ladies, who are actually "freer than any ladies in the universe" (134). She also cannot avoid correcting a misleading remark by Gemelli, who claims that there are no remains of Calcedon [Kadıköy]—Lady Montagu writes that she personally visited the place on the Asian side of the city (140). On other occasions when Montagu displays reluctance akin to Lord Byron's she refers the reader to certain writers such as Knolles and Sir Paul Rycaut. However, subtly implicated within her silence, her corrections,

even her determination not to be redundant—hence listing of what she will *not* write—one may detect the very act of reiteration that she tries to avoid.

The degree of self-consciousness in travellers whose reason for traveling is business is no less intense than those whose primary motivation is sightseeing. Charles MacFarlane's visit to Constantinople, as he announces in the long title of his book, has a military purpose: *Constantinople in 1828: A Residence of Sixteen Months in the Turkish Capital and Provinces with an Account of the Naval and Military Power, and of the Resources of the Ottoman Empire.* Yet, his concern for originality is prevalent even in the preface:

> I was in Asia Minor at the date of the fatal conflict at Navarino—at Constantinople at the commencement of the Russian invasion; and … I flatter myself that my observations on the Turks during those trying circumstances, cannot be found wholly devoid of interest. (1829, xiii-xiv)

While MacFarlane seeks to render his account unique, his futile endeavour finds echoes in other travellers' anxieties to authenticate their own texts and transgress the referential power of Istanbul writing. His account is likewise indebted to predecessors in situations akin to his:

> Dr. Walsh, in his deservedly popular work, has given an able account of Sultan Mahmood's military reforms, which might seem to render further details unnecessary; but it was my fortune to see the development or extension of those plans, the progress made in them since the Doctor's departure from the country, and to watch the working of the new system in the most critical moments. Thus, taking up the subject where he left it, I consider a portion of my work a humble continuation of my predecessor's; whilst some details on the civil improvements of the Ottoman government, not noticed by Dr. Walsh, may pretend to entire novelty, which succeeding travellers [*sic*] will in their turn enlarge upon. (1829, xiv)

In order to be original, one has to acknowledge the accumulated canon so that the exceptional status of one's own work becomes recognizable. James Cook quoting Miss Pardoe in 1891, ["I had brought with me for reperusal on the voyage, books that a long time ago, while I was still a lad, I had read with much interest though with some doubt as to their veracity, namely, Miss Pardoe's 'City of the Sultan,' written in 1836, and N. P. Willis's 'Pencillings by the Way,' written a year or two earlier" (1891, 8)], Julia Pardoe quoting Lady Montagu, and Lady Montagu referring to other authorities, generate at best a feeling of nausea and disorientation, evoked by an endless chain of repetition and deferral. The extensive scope of the canon is evident in the fact that travellers' accounts go beyond the national