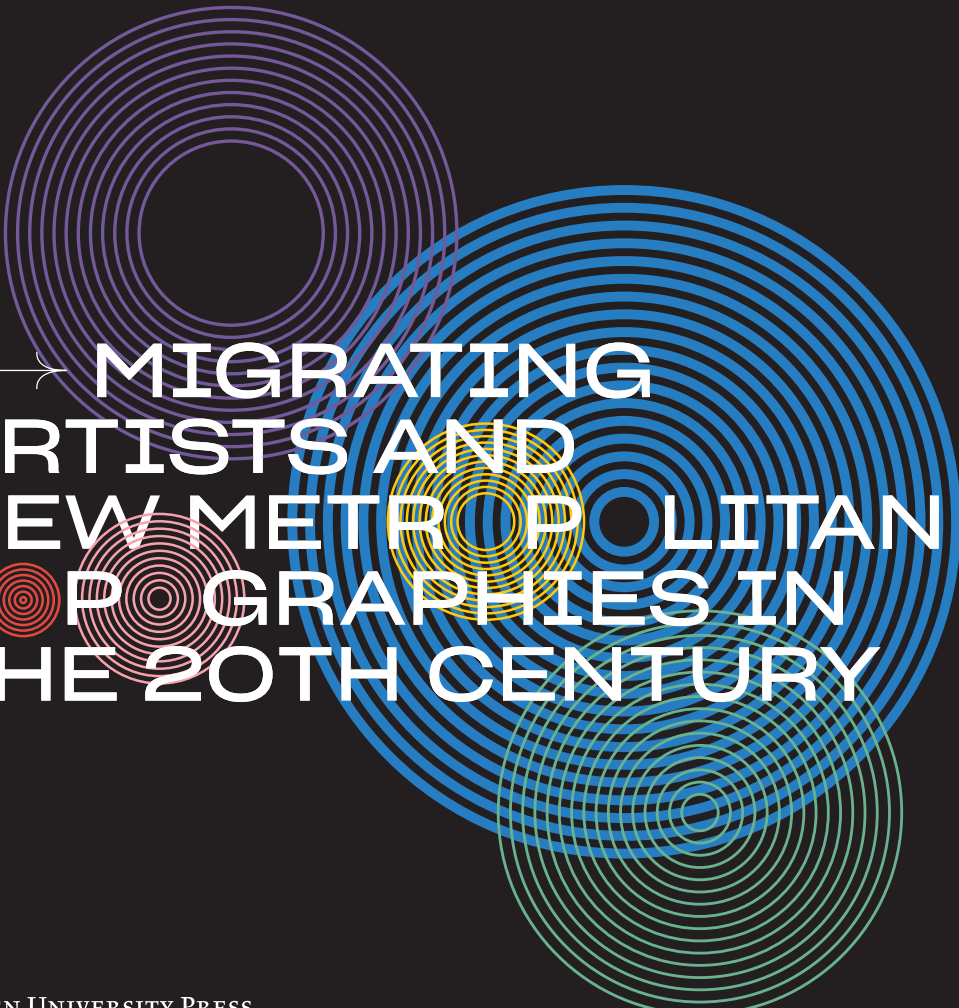


BURCU DOGRAMACI
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ARRIVAL CITIES



—> MIGRATING
ARTISTS AND
NEW METROPOLITAN
TOPOGRAPHIES IN
THE 20TH CENTURY

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Arrival Cities

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Migrating Artists and
New Metropolitan Topographies
in the 20th Century

Edited by
Burcu Dogramaci, Mareike Hetschold,
Laura Karp Lugo, Rachel Lee
and Helene Roth

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Arrival City Istanbul

Flight, Modernity and Metropolis at the Bosphorus. With an Excursus on the Island Exile of Leon Trotsky

Burcu Dogramaci

Istanbul: City on the water, city of migration

At the beginning of the 20th century Istanbul was an important arrival city for migrants. Even before World War I, about 1,000,000 people lived in the Ottoman capital, including roughly 130,000 foreigners, who came primarily from countries bordering on the Mediterranean and from Russia (Keyder 2004, 34; King 2014, 77). During the Balkan wars in 1912–1913, many people also fled to Istanbul from the disputed Ottoman territories in the Balkans. After the founding of the republic in 1923 and after the embassies moved to the new capital of Ankara, many embassy employees left Istanbul. Later a law regulating the “entry and residence of foreigners in Turkey” (1938) (Guttstadt 2018, 53), the capital tax for non-Muslim inhabitants of the metropolis (1942) and riots against the Greek minority in 1955 led to an exodus from the city (Sert 2015, 219). In the meantime, after 1917 but mainly as of 1920, many who had fled the Russian Revolution had arrived in the city. The historian Hans von Rimscha writes of 50,000 Russian emigrants in 1920 (Rimscha 1924, 51); Charles King, author of a book on ‘Modern Istanbul’, even mentions a total of 185,000 civil war refugees from Russia who were stranded in Istanbul, raising the total population by 20 per cent (King 2014, 124). Many of them lived on the European side in the district of Galata, in the neighbourhood of the main street that was initially called the Grand Rue de Péra and later Istiklal Caddesi, which leads to Taksim Square and was located near the traditional Russian centre, Karaköy. For a while Istanbul became a “Russian Constantinople” with restaurants, pastry shops and cabarets on the Grand Rue de Péra (Vassiliev 2000, 68–72). In 1921 “Kultura” was the first Russian bookshop to open in Pera, and in the same year the “Union of Russian Artists” had its first exhibition in the Mayak Club (Bursa Sokak No. 40, see Deleon 1995, 54–62). Members of this

union included artists such as Vasily Iosifovich Ivanov, Vladimir Konstantinovich Petrov and Boris Isaevich Egiz.

What is interesting here is a comparative perspective of the second 20th-century movement of emigration to Istanbul – the arrival of emigrant artists, architects and urban planners from National Socialist Germany. Since 1927, the government of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk had been bringing increasing numbers of foreign specialists to the Turkish Republic, which had been proclaimed only a few years earlier. These were expected to speed up the reforms in society, politics, administration, science, culture and education. After 1933, emigrants who were forced to flee the National Socialists arrived in the country. Admittedly they were able to immigrate by invitation only, but largely held leading positions. Thus, they worked as professors, chaired commissions and were engaged to write textbooks in their areas of expertise (Cremer/Przytulla 1991). In Istanbul, German-speaking artists and architects taught at institutions such as the Academy of Fine Arts; these included the sculptor Rudolf Belling, the architect Bruno Taut and the urban planner Gustav Oelsner. German-speaking architects such as Clemens Holzmeister, Paul Bonatz and again Gustav Oelsner also worked at the Faculty of Architecture founded in the 1940s at the Technical University of Istanbul, located in Istanbul-Maçka not far from Taksim Square. Many of them lived in the radius of these institutions on the European continent and preferably in the neighbourhoods of Beyoğlu and Galata.

For the new arrivals the topography of the city situated on two continents and divided by a strait provided a very special experience of emigration. After his arrival, the sculptor Rudolf Belling, like many of the emigrants, was initially housed in the Park Hotel,¹ a luxury hotel in Beyoğlu-Gümüşsuyu built in the Art Deco style that had a panoramic view of the Bosphorus. As Rudolf Belling wrote in early 1937:

From my hotel window I look down at the Sea of Marmara, the Bosphorus to the left, a truly Golden Horn. Vis-à-vis is the Asian coast, Skütari, Haydarpasa, Kadiköi. Then a couple of wonderful islands and all the way in the back a lovely curving mountain range. You cannot imagine how different the city can appear, what pastel shades tint the houses and water.²

The water separates Istanbul into two halves and not only marks the boundary between the European and the Asian continents, but affects the way people live, dwell and work in the metropolis. The Bosphorus and ways of overcoming this waterway were crucial factors when looking for housing, since especially for those whose place of work was on the European side the daily commute on the Bosphorus ferries was laborious.

This paper addresses the question of how it was precisely the city's location by the water that inspired and challenged emigrants in the 1930s and 1940s to build.³ To date, the work of German-speaking architects in Turkey has been studied primarily from a national perspective, in reference to individual architects and as a contribution towards modernity (Nicolai 1998; Dogramaci 2008; Akcan 2012). So far, there has been no local perspective on architectural emigration history with a focus on Istanbul, nor have there been studies of the connection between metropolis, migration and topography.⁴

For the houses built by (e)migrant architects, such as the *Ragıp Devres Villa* (architect: Ernst Egli), the *Eckert House* (architect: Clemens Holzmeister) and the private home of the Berlin architect Bruno Taut, the Bosphorus was an important creative point of reference. Leon Trotsky's exile on Büyükkada/Prinkipo, the Princes' Island located off the coast of Istanbul, leads to concluding observations about the insular status of exile.

Designs by emigrants: Architectures at the Bosphorus

During the 1930s and 1940s residences for local people and emigrants were planned in Istanbul, and some of the designs were done by German-speaking architects like Ernst Egli, Clemens Holzmeister, Margarete Schütte-Lihotzky and Bruno Taut. Particularly prestigious were buildings that were close to the water or overlooked the Bosphorus or the Sea of Marmara. Described below are buildings and projects by the water – ranging from the Rumelihisari to the historic centre of Istanbul (fig. 1). Here it becomes clear that the specific topography of the city on the water represented a special challenge for developers and architects and had a very decisive influence on the construction activity of the architects. It is important to note that during the construction period of the buildings presented below none of the three Bosphorus bridges was yet in existence. The opposite shore on the Asian continent could be reached only by ship.

It must be emphasised from the start that foreign *and* local architects were planning and implementing building projects by the water. Among the major 20th-century architects of Bosphorus villas was the Turkish architect Sedat Hakkı Eldem, who over a period of several decades built *yahıs* (beach houses) for a well-to-do upper-class or industrial clientele. His houses are described as follows: “An Eldem yalı is, before anything else, a gesture to the Bosphorus.” (Bozdoğan et al. 1987, 103). As early as 1938, with his *Ayashlı Yalı* in Istanbul-Beylerbeyi, Eldem created a prototype for a renewed traditional villa architecture; its floor plan and façade were modelled on the Ottoman palace at the Bosphorus (ibid., 49). The German-

speaking architects were thus not the only ones to be engaged with building at the waterside; rather, they were working and competing within a creative local environment. Nevertheless, the following remarks will focus exclusively on the architects who had migrated to Istanbul, who – according to one thesis – expanded their repertory while addressing the water topography and the needs of their clients, and at the same time inscribed themselves in the matrix of the city.

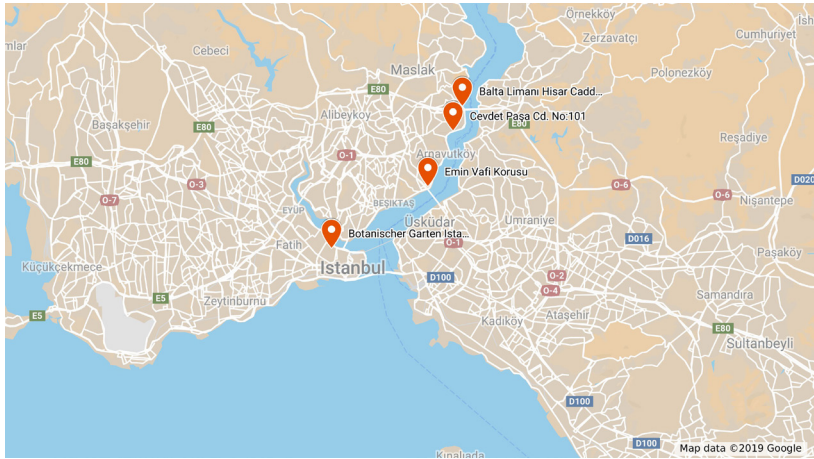


Fig. 1: Map of Istanbul, from right to left: Holzmeister's *Eckert-Rifki Villa*, Egli's *Ragıp Devres Villa*, Taut's *Villa* and *Alfred Heilbronn Botanical Garden* (© Google).

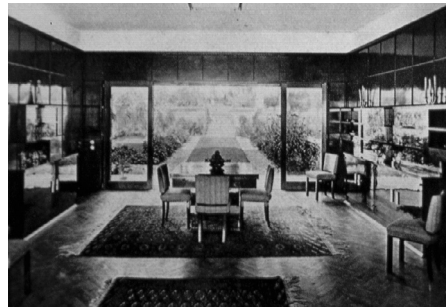
Following his Atatürk palace, the residence of the president in Ankara (Nicolai 1998, 64f.), the Austrian architect Clemens Holzmeister, who had worked since 1927 for Turkish Ministries and built mainly in the capital city Ankara, received many commissions for villas. Between 1932 and 1946 Holzmeister designed more than a dozen houses for the country's politicians, military men and upper crust. However, only some of the designs were actually implemented, and hardly any of the projects were nearly as radical as the functional and modern architecture of the Atatürk palace in Ankara. Thus when, in many villa designs, Holzmeister formulated a classic tiled roof, bay windows and stone base, the picture that emerges is of a residence that has been cautiously modernised. An example of this approach is the *Eckert-Rifki Villa* (1943/1944, Baltalimanı Caddesi, fig. 2)⁵ in Rumeli Hisarı, situated directly on the Bosphorus. While many clients did choose Europeanised floor plans with separate bedrooms for children and their parents, and a living room, the exterior architecture had to follow traditional models of the Turkish house. Particularly in the 1940s there was a striking departure from

the radical modernity of functionalist designs in the wake of rising nationalism in architecture. This also indicated that a reformed lifestyle did not inevitably have to lead to the adaptation of European forms of architecture.



Fig. 2: Clemens Holzmeister, *Eckert-Rifki Villa*, Istanbul Baltalimanı, Baltalimanı Caddesi, 1943/44 (Archive Monika Knofler, Vienna).

A few kilometres in the direction of the historic centre of Istanbul was the former fishing village of Bebek. Outside the historic city centre, the prosperous elite of Kemalist Turkey built villas whose floor plans and occasionally their external form as well were positioned as progressive. In particular Ernst Egli's retreat for the engineer Ragıp Devres in Istanbul Bebek (1932/33, Cevdet Paşa Caddesi No. 101, fig. 3a, b) left its mark on the Turkish villa landscape. With its wrap-around balconies, steel columns, flat roof and panoramic windows, the house follows the parameters of international architectural modernity and thus differs from the



Figs. 3a–3b: Ernst Egli, *Ragıp Devres Villa*, Istanbul Bebek, Cevdet Paşa Caddesi No. 101, 1932–1933. View from the street and Interior (*Werk*, no. 25, 1938).

classic Turkish residential building. The break with tradition is also evident in the organisation of life inside the building and of its interior design. In the classic Ottoman house, women lived in the *harem* while men lived in the *selamlık*, the men's wing and the reception area. Only the closest male relatives could enter the women's house, and it was only here that the lady of the house was allowed to receive her guests (Nayman 1936, 510). Indeed as early as the end of the 19th century the Ottoman aristocracy and upper class became increasingly interested in European types of housing and interior design (Gürboğa 2003, 62). However, a radical societal change and reform of housing took place primarily only after 1923. The floor plan of the *Ragıp Devres Villa* consists of two rectangles nested inside each other, where all plumbing units and private rooms were situated in the recessed wing, while a single, prestigious salon for social gatherings which opened to the garden was housed in the other half. The planning of the parents' bedroom and separate children's rooms on the top floor was a concession to European living arrangements. At the request of the clients, Egli was responsible for the garden architecture as well as the interior furnishings (Egli 1969, 51). In the dark wall panelling, the built-in wardrobes and buffets there are visible references to Viennese interiors like that of the *Moller House* by Adolf Loos, built in 1928. A European type of residence and furnishings became the expression of a lifestyle that was the antithesis of that of an Ottoman house (Ernst Egli, in: Meier 1941, 1240). Just a few years after the *Ragıp Devres Villa* was built, the émigré biologists Leonore and Curt Kosswig also moved into a house in the suburb of Bebek. However, they did not build a new house, but lived in a historic wooden villa. This "House on the Hillside" (Inşirah Sokağı 32), as the Kosswigs referred to it in a photo, was a meeting place for emigrants where plays and music were performed. The Kosswigs were part of a coterie of scientists – a kind of "private academy" – headed by the economist Alexander Rüstow and the lawyer Andreas Schwarz; its members, among them the financial economist Fritz Neumark, represented various disciplines and gave lectures about their respective fields of specialisation (Neumark 1980, 180). Kosswig's residence in Bebek thus had an important social function of networking and community building within the German-speaking émigré community. The House on the Hillside formed its own island in exile and was thus an expression for strategies of community building.⁶

A second popular location and residential area outside the city centre was Ortaköy.

Here the architect Bruno Taut designed homes for himself and others, including a house for the surgeon Rudolf Nissen (Nerdinger et al. 2001, 392). Taut built his own house (Emin Vafi Korusu, fig. 4) in 1937/1938 on a hillside with a panoramic view. The one-storey building has a rectangular ground plan and sits on a cement

slab measuring six by 15 metres, resting on solid ground only to a minor extent (Aslanoğlu 1980, 144f.; Zöllner-Stock 1994, 68f.).



Fig. 4: Bruno Taut, *Taut Villa*, Istanbul Ortaköy, Emin Vafi Korusu, 1937–1938 (Junghanns 1970/1983, ill. 331).

Towards the front the tiled hip roof on the elongated section of the building is completed by a three-tiered roof. A tower room which was to house Taut's studio finishes off the building at the top. Each of the storeys is pierced by ribbon windows which in the lower sections direct attention to the water. In the tower room a nearly panoramic view was even possible.

The Berlin architect Bruno Taut had arrived in Istanbul from his Japanese exile in 1936; here he was to head the architecture department at the Academy of Fine Arts and preside over the buildings department of the Turkish Ministry of Education (Nicolai 1998, 133–152; Dogramaci 2008, 151–160). The academy was thus an important reference point for Taut's professional activities after he arrived in his city of exile. However, the architect did not plan his own house in a central location and thus within walking distance of his place of work, but rather in Ortaköy, 4.2 kilometres away from the academy. In the guidebooks of those years the Ortaköy Mosque is mentioned only marginally (Baedeker 1905, 85; Mamboury 1930, 176); the Istanbul suburb held no interest for tourists. However, Ortaköy was situated close to the water and could be reached in little more than an hour on foot, or by tram or steamer. In 1973 the first bridge across the Bosphorus was constructed in the immediate vicinity of Taut's house, since here the two continents are closest to each other. In other words, Taut chose a building site

close to the boundary between Asia and Europe. One can only guess whether this is to be seen as a reminiscence of his former stage of exile in Japan and therefore as his visual focussing on the Asian continent. More convincing, however, is the thesis that he was interested in the transition expressed in the form of water and the space between West and East, Europe and Asia.

Bruno Taut was the only one of the German-speaking architects in Turkey to design a house for himself there. The explanation for the reluctance to build a home for oneself can be traced to the short-term contracts of the foreign specialists, which had to be extended at regular intervals. But Taut decided to build a house of his own quite soon after his arrival. Undoubtedly this is due to his self-image as an architect. In Taut's texts, theorising about society-building forms of construction and types of housing is closely linked with his own building and dwelling practice: In 1927, his home in Dahlewitz, built in 1925/1926, becomes the subject of a comprehensive study in Taut's publication *Ein Wohnhaus* (Jaeger 1995). The book Taut wrote in Japan, *Houses and People of Japan* (Taut 1997), similarly features the Japanese house in which Taut lived with his life partner. How, then, can a place be assigned to Taut's house in a life in exile? As a figure of memory, it refers to his own building experiences, such as Berlin Dahlewitz, or to what he saw and inhabited in Japan (see Dogramaci 2019, 97–101). Here is a further interpretive approach, a brief reference once again to the ark motif which Taut invoked in his much-quoted remark: "... a new Dahlewitz arises, very different, by the deep blue Bosphorus, on 15 m high concrete pillars, a 'dovecote' of Noah, who is soon to be 900 years old."⁷ In the Old Testament story Noah is warned of the flood by God and told to build an ark to protect his family and the land animals (Göttlicher 1997, 13–15). The ark is then supposed to have run aground on the East Anatolian Mount Ararat; a reference to Turkey is thus established. Beside the concrete link to the original biblical text, the ark and the flood can also be used as a metaphor. For of course the ark is not a ship, but rather a 'movable container' which is placeless and rootless, both a transitory object and a refuge (Blum 1996, 50). Thus, the ark can be described as an allegory of exile existence as such.

While it can be argued that Taut uses the imagery or metaphor of the ark, the botanical garden in Istanbul Fatih (Süleymaniye Mahallesi, Fetva Yokuş No. 41, figs. 5a–d) and its diversity of plants definitely does show associations with the Garden of Eden. The Institute of Pharmaceutical Botany and the scientific botanical garden were set up above the Galata Bridge in historic Stambul in the 1930s. This was done at the suggestion of the botanist Alfred Heilbronn, whose authorisation to teach at the University of Münster was withdrawn in 1933 for 'racial' reasons. That same year, Heilbronn was invited to take a post as professor of pharmaceutical botany and genetics in Istanbul through the agency of the



Figs. 5a–5d: *Alfred Heilbronn Botanical Garden*, Istanbul Fatih, Süleymaniye Mahallesi, Fetva Yokuş No. 41, 1935 (Photos: Burcu Dogramaci, 2018).

“Notgemeinschaft deutscher Wissenschaftler im Ausland” (Emergency Association of German Scientists) refugee organization (Ludwig 2014; Raß [2014], 6). Only a short time after his arrival, Heilbronn managed to convince the relevant ministry of the necessity for a botanical garden, which was opened in 1935 as the Hortus Botanicus Istanbulensis. From the Botanical Garden there is a view of the Galata Bridge and the Golden Horn. Paths through the garden are arranged in such a way that they offer, time and time again, unexpected and uplifting views of the water. While the Botanical Institute was designed by Ernst Egli and opened in 1937 (Nicolai 1998, 31f.), it was Heilbronn who was responsible for the artistic and technical installation of the garden, designed the greenhouses, helped to plan the heating and cooling system, had a garden inspector come from Germany and personally took charge of the garden (Namal et al. 2011, 197). Today the Botanical Garden is not only an enchanted place accessible to the public above the noisy city,⁸ but also a place of remembrance for the community of German émigrés to Istanbul.

Island exile: Trotsky on Büyükada/Prinkipo

From the Botanical Garden there is a view of the Bosphorus – the city of Istanbul is significantly characterised by the water, which not only separates (and connects) the two halves of the city, but is also a contact zone with neighbouring countries which can be reached by way of the Sea of Marmara, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. This fact inevitably calls to mind themes like migration, trade and tourism, which formed a central reference point for the 14th Istanbul Biennial in 2015. Entitled *Tuzlu Su* (*Saltwater*), the exhibition, curated by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, dealt with the mediating, connecting, transformative and metaphorical significance of water. The Biennial was spread over various venues within the city, including the nine Princes’ Islands in the Sea of Marmara. On the largest Princes’ Island of Büyükada (Prinkipo in Greek), in the garden and on the pier of the dilapidated *Yanaros Villa*, Adrián Villar Rojas displayed his installation *The Most Beautiful of All Mothers* with chimeric sculptures (Christov-Bakargiev 2015, 93). The place is historically significant and symbolically charged because the political exile Leon Trotsky lived in the *Yanaros Villa* from 1932 until his departure in 1933.

Trotsky’s island exile lasted a total of four years, and it is significant that in Byzantine times Büyükada/Prinkipo was a place of banishment which offered undesirable princes and princesses shelter not chosen by themselves (Pinguet 2013, 29–33; Sartorius 2010, 11). Many of them were blinded and thus deprived of the ability to gaze at the shore of Constantinople, which is within sight of the island.

Büyükada/Prinkipo thus represents the two sides of an island exile between banishment and refuge. And these two sides of an archipelagic displacement are also combined in the person of the exile Leon Trotsky. Banished by Stalin not once but several times, Trotsky and his entourage were sent to Istanbul by ship in 1929. The Russian general consulate, which initially welcomed the exiles, did not seem to be a safe place in the long run. Subsequently Trotsky at first moved into the Hotel Tokatliyan in Beyoğlu on the Grand Rue du Péra, considered to be one of the city's most modern, exclusive hotels. Later the exiles settled in a furnished apartment in the district of Şişli (Izzet Paşa Sokak 29; see Heijenoort 1978, 6).⁹

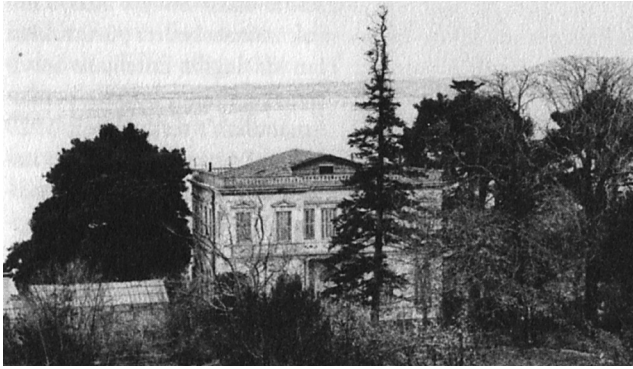


Fig. 6: *Izzet Paşa Villa*, Büyükada/Prinkipo, Çankaya Sokak, residence and exile domicile of Leon Trotsky, 1929–1931 (Coşar 2010, 61).

On the largest island of the archipelago of the Princes' Islands Trotsky was able to rent the guest house of the summer residence of the Ottoman family Izzet Paşa (Çankaya Sokak, fig. 6) located on the north side of the island not far from the dock. Here Trotsky and a constantly expanding circle of family members, friends and political supporters spent the first two years on the island. Then, however, a fire on 1 March 1931 damaged the villa, which had a timber frame construction, and destroyed parts of Trotsky's library, photographs and his collection of newspaper cuttings (Pinguet 2013, 113; Service 2012, 482). After four weeks at the Hotel Savoy on Büyükada/Prinkipo, Trotsky stayed on the Asian side of Istanbul starting at the end of March and moved into an apartment in the district of Moda for a few months (Şifa Sokak No. 22). He did not return to the island until January 1932, only finally to move to his last domicile, the *Yanaros Villa* (Nizam Mahallesi Hamlacı Sokak No. 4, fig. 7a, b). The villa was built in the 1850s by Nikola Demades on the western shore of Büyükada (Christov-Bakargiev 2015, 95).



Figs. 7a–7b: *Yanaros Villa*, Nizam Mahallesi Hamlaci Sokak No. 4, residence and exile domicile of Leon Trotsky on Büyükkada/Prinkipo, 1932–1933 (Heijenoort 1978, 10).

The various addresses of Trotsky's exile attest to his nomadic existence and indicate the challenges that displacement meant for those involved, confronting them with the problem of finding suitable housing (fig. 8). In the case of Trotsky there was the added fear of assassinations. The exile was not only in constant danger of attempts on his life because he feared attacks by Stalin's agents. As of 1917, as already stated, there were also many Russian emigrants in the city who had fled from the Bolsheviks after the Russian Revolution. Since Trotsky had been one of the spokespersons of the revolution, he had to reckon with the anger of the Russian White Guard émigrés (Service 2012, 475). For a number of reasons, Büyükkada/Prinkipo seemed to offer him protection: from Istanbul, the island could be reached only by boat, and thus arrivals could be easily seen. Since 1846 a regular ferry service had existed from Istanbul to the islands. After the founding of the Turkish Republic in 1923 the "Devlet Deniz Yolları İdaresi" (State Shipping Line) increased the frequency of ferry traffic to the Princes' Islands – the trip took roughly 90 minutes from the European side of Istanbul; in addition, the island could be reached by motor boat from Galata (Heijenoort 1978, 7; Deleon 2003, 154–156; Althof 2005, 193). Moreover, motorised vehicles were prohibited on the island, and movement from place to place was possible primarily by hackney cab, on donkeys or by bicycle (Deleon 2003, 150). To this day the island has preserved – especially on weekdays – its atmosphere of being out of time. Thus, for instance, Joachim Sartorius, in his book *Die Prinzeninseln*, writes:

After our arrival we took a horse-drawn cab, for there are no cars on the island, and drove all the way round it once. When the village was behind us, including the villas and a few grand

estates, the road took us uphill through green pine forests that exuded a resinous aroma. That's what I remember more than anything else, this aroma, and then later, back in the valley again, the cypresses, pines, plane trees, their deep shadows and another scent that streamed into our cab. (Sartorius 2010, 9)

In other words, potential assassins had a pretty hard time stepping foot on the island without attracting attention and leaving it again quickly without being noticed. The two villas Trotsky lived in on Büyükkada/Prinkipo were surrounded by gardens and walls and thus kept their distance from their immediate neighbours. The *Yanaros Villa* had direct access to the water, and the house could be approached only by a cul-de-sac. In the garden grounds, Turkish policemen were continuously stationed (Simenon 2002, 218f.). Additional protection was provided by Trotsky's entourage, which was armed (Urgan 1998, 155f.), as can be seen in a photo of his close confidant Heijenoort (Heijenoort 1978, 19). The two-storey *Yanaros Villa* had room for numerous bedrooms and offices; Trotsky's study was set up on the second floor (ibid., 11).

Based on Trotsky's life and work on Büyükkada/Prinkipo, it is possible to formulate some basic thoughts about exile as an insular space of experience. Islands can stand for both isolation and protection. The word *exile* comes from the Latin *exilium*; it means sojourn in a foreign land and is "a metaphor for alienation" (Schlink 2000, 12). In other words, exile marks a distance from a point of departure. The fact

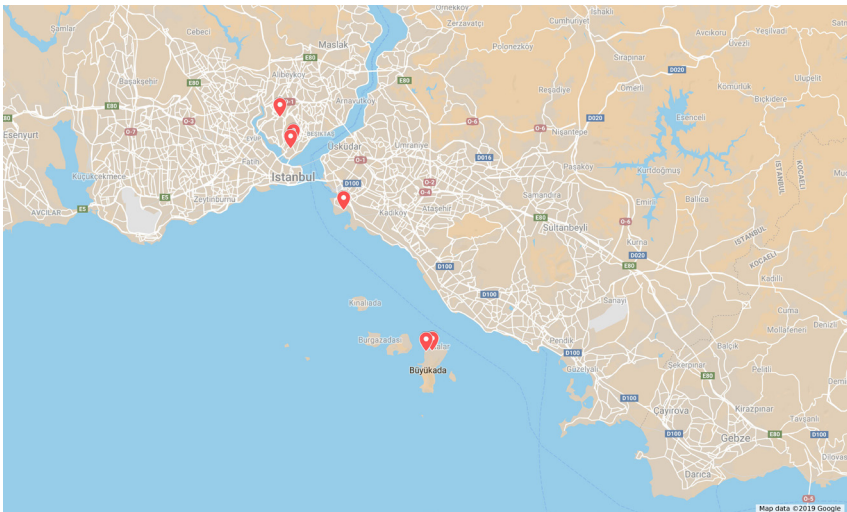


Fig. 8: Leon Trotsky's places of living during his Istanbul and Büyükkada/Prinkipo exile, 1929–1933 (© Google).

that the island is a place bounded by water that cannot be reached on foot or on wheels increases the effect of this distance.

At the same time Büyükada/Prinkipo is an island in a group of islands or archipelago; in these cases Ottmar Ette makes a distinction between “Insel-Welt” (“island world”) and “Inselwelt” (“archipelago world”): “Island world” means “an island that is self-contained, has clear-cut boundaries and is dominated by a clear internal order [...], forming in itself and for itself a unit that is delimited from the outside” (Ette 2011, 25). On the other hand, says Ette, “archipelago world” is associated with “the awareness of a fundamental relationality, which integrates the island ‘proper’ in a multitude of connections and relationships to other islands, archipelagos or atolls, but also to continents” (ibid., 26). From the perspective of the largest Princes’ Island it is possible to look not only at the surrounding inhabited and uninhabited islands but also at the mainland – the Asian part closest to it and the distant European part of Istanbul. Hence Büyükada/Prinkipo is part of an island community and exists in relation to Europe and Asia, to both halves of Istanbul and their respective histories. Between them is the sea, which is always an intermediary *and* a boundary or barrier (Wilkens 2011, 64): between the individual Princes’ Islands, between islands and the city of Istanbul and between the continents. Independence, isolation, but also participation and a multi-perspective approach to the world, or at least to two continents, are thus associated with island exile.

To be sure, Trotsky in his insular seclusion was capable of acting only to a limited degree. Thus, in view of Trotsky, Wolfgang Althof’s definition about islands, too, must be qualified: He describes them as a “symbol of hopelessness, isolated from the world, untouched by historical events, without any influence on events, with their own internal order” (Althof 2005, 7). For from the distance of the island, Trotsky managed to participate in world events through publications, through reading newspapers and visits by political supporters.

On Büyükada/Prinkipo, Trotsky subscribed to international daily papers and political organs, which arrived after a two- or three-day delay (Heijenoort 1978, 20). The author Georges Simenon, who visited Trotsky on the island in 1933 for an interview, writes:

On the desk there is a chaos of newspapers from all over the world. *Paris-Soir* lies at the very top of one pile. Doubtless Trotsky has skimmed through the paper before I arrived. [...] The rest of the time he stays in his study, which is so far from the world outside and yet at the same time so close to it. “Unfortunately I get the papers with several days delay.” (Simenon 2002, 223)

Moreover, photos of his desk (fig. 9), which are also evidence of a self-presentation as a politician who is still influential, show international newspapers such as *The New York Times* and the American Trotskyist paper *The Militant*. Also, Trotsky regularly read the French daily *Le Temps*, the right-wing conservative *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, received Turkish daily papers whose headlines he was able to deduce even without knowing the language, and had international papers produced in Istanbul purchased for him in the shops on the jetty (Heijenoort 1978, 20). Trotsky thus consumed a geographically and politically broad spectrum of media. It is this that probably enabled him to have as differentiated a view of the world as possible from his island exile.



Fig. 9: Trotsky at his desk, Büyükkada/Prinkipo, 1931 (Service 2012, ill. 18).

He was thus able productively to reverse the (enforced) seclusion of island life and from his exile to develop a keen and sympathetic eye for world history. Consequently, Trotsky's work in exile is not far removed from the kind of archipelagic thinking regarding which Édouard Glissant writes that it is "non-systematic but inductive, it explores the unpredictability of the world as a whole, it correlates oral and written expression, and vice versa" (Glissant 2005, 34; see also Glissant 1999, 26). Archipelagic thinking means the ability not only to see the island but rather to be aware of the connection of the particular to the larger whole (see Pearce 2014, 18f.).

In his island exile Trotsky was highly productive, wrote newspaper and magazine articles, and authored several books: During his time on the Princes' Island Trotsky

published a history of the Russian Revolution, and his autobiography; advance copies were released in international newspapers (Service 2012, 500; Deutscher 1972, 37ff.).¹⁰ Furthermore he wrote about fascism in Europe and about National Socialism in Germany, and published articles on the political situation in Austria, on the Spanish Revolution and on Stalinism in the Soviet Union (Deutscher 1972, 97–109, 132–135, 149ff.). The library and the archival material he had brought with him from the Soviet Union and his own memories formed the basis for his publications (Service 2012, 500).

In his play *Trotsky in Exile* (1970) the writer Peter Weiss shows the revolutionary leader as an exile. In scene one, when Trotsky in 1928 is informed of his impending banishment, he instructs his secretaries and family members to put together his luggage. Weiss writes:

Trotsky: “Diary, writing tools go in the hand luggage. Where are the dictionaries, Poznansky? English, German, French, Spanish. Are there enough pencils? Ink, pens? [...] Materials on China, India. South America. Liberation movements of the colonial peoples. Struggle of black Americans. Documents on the Internationale. I still need reports on the position of the Indian Party. Smirnov, will you send it to me? and, Rankovsky, have the newspapers sent on to me as quickly as possible. [...] Seryozha, have you packed the maps?” Sergei Sedov: “In a folder. With the newspaper archive.” Trotsky: “For the trip, the Asia study. Geography, economy, history. Glasmann, the latest reports from China.” (Weiss 2016, 10f.)

Peter Weiss presents Trotsky as an exile whose archive, library and the possibility of writing are essential prerequisites for his survival while living in banishment.

Although Trotsky hardly left the island – beside his stay in Moda, we know of a lecture tour to Copenhagen (Service 2012, 525) and only one visit to the Hagia Sophia (Althof 2005, 22) – he participated in world events. Moreover, he was regularly visited by supporters, and exchanged letters with like-minded political friends and Trotskyist followers, family members, intellectuals (Pinguet 2013, 117). In contrast with this intellectual exchange stood an island existence characterised by routine: the recurring daily cycle, with work beginning in the early hours of the morning, lunch with his household and regular boat trips to go fishing (see Coşar 2010, 148).

The caesura of exile that had hurled Trotsky out of his familiar environment was at odds with the regular rhythm of daily life. Exile on Büyükada/Prinkipo connected Trotsky with historical island exiles such as Napoleon Bonaparte, who from 1815 until 1821 was banished to the South Atlantic island of St. Helena (Willms 2007) and the writer Victor Hugo, exiled from 1855 until 1870 on the British Channel Islands of Guernsey and Jersey, who like the Russian exile became highly productive. Trotsky's island life was an exile within exile – a self-contained existence outside the world and at the same time a window on it.

Footprints: Traces of emigration in Istanbul

Istanbul was a destination city for migrants and refugees at the beginning of the 20th century that presented special challenges and opportunities for orientation or re-orientation. The city's history, its topography, its social statutes and its political structure offered new arrival experiences they could have had in no other metropolis or, to be precise, every metropolis offered different possibilities and impossibilities of arrival. Édouard Glissant even goes so far as to say that the city has a physical, active presence in the flight histories of modernity and of the contemporary era:

The city of refuge is not like a poorhouse; it maintains connections with the guest whom it would like to welcome – connections of mutual familiarisation, progressive discovery, long-term interaction, which make this undertaking a truly militant exercise, an active participation in the general dialogue of “give” and “take”. (Glissant 1999, 229)

The city demands that the new arrivals engage with it. Conversely, the new Istanbulans left their traces in the city; they altered its skyline with their buildings, they designed monuments or initiated the installation of a scientific garden. In the case of some emigrants the symbiosis with their city of exile went so far that they were laid to rest in the cemeteries of Istanbul: Their attachment to Istanbul and the history they experienced there are indicated by the fact that after their deaths both Leonore and Curt Kosswig were buried in the Istanbul graveyard of Rumeli Hisarı – even though Curt Kosswig had already been teaching at Hamburg University since 1955. Thus, this glimpse of the émigré community of the city of Istanbul ends at yet another urban location, the cemetery. Also the architect Bruno Taut was interred at the Edirnekapi Martyrs' Cemetery (Edirnekapi Şehitliği), one of the oldest cemeteries of Istanbul, in late 1938 – one of the few non-Muslims

to be buried there. On Taut's gravestone there is a footprint which, symbolically as well as physically, refers to the traces the migrants left on the urban matrix of the city at the Bosphorus.

Translation: Ilze Mueller.

Notes

- ¹ Regarding the Park Hotel see <http://www.tas-istanbul.com/portfolio-view/gumussuyu-park-otel-2/>. Accessed 27 February 2019.
- ² Rudolf Belling to Alexander Amersdorfer, 23 January 1937 (Akademie der Künste, Historisches Archiv, Berlin, I/284).
- ³ With a few exceptions, the term emigrant or exile refers to architects who had to leave Germany or Austria for political reasons. The essay also includes architects such as Ernst Egli and Clemens Holzmeister, who were already active in Turkey in the 1920s. At least for Holzmeister it can be postulated that he could not return to his home country for political reasons after the „Anschluss“ of Austria. Holzmeister then became exiled in Turkey.
- ⁴ The connections between Istanbul and emigration movements of the 1920s to 1940s has not yet been made, and the metropolis on the Bosphorus has been mainly investigated as a laboratory for urban planning by foreign planners (see Akpınar 2003; Tanyeli 2005).
- ⁵ I would like to thank my colleague Zeynep Kuban in Istanbul for identifying the villa, which has been considerably remodelled, for me. Further studies of this building and its history will follow.
- ⁶ As the names of the guests in Kosswigs' house are not recorded – references to their home as a meeting place have been only sporadically recorded in a variety of memoir-type publications by some of the guests – it is not possible to make a conclusive statement about the involvement of local people in their social activities. But they spoke fluent Turkish, so it is reasonable that they had also friendships with Turks.
- ⁷ Bruno Taut to Carl Krayl, 5 June 1938 (Junghanns 1970, 86).
- ⁸ In 2018 the existence of the garden was threatened, since the Mufti of Istanbul laid claim to the property, <http://www.arkitera.com/haber/30391/alfred-heilbronn-botanik-bahcesi-tahliye-ediliyor>. Accessed 28 November 2018. However, the Turkish daily *Cumhuriyet* reported that the garden is to be kept intact after all; Egli's building, however, is to be razed, http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/cevre/1029836/Tepkilerin_ardindan_botanik_bahce_icin_istanbul_Universi_tesi_nden_geri_adim.html, 17 July 2018. Accessed 26 February 2019.
- ⁹ The building is still in existence. Today it houses an Armenian Catholic primary school. <http://www.turkiyeermenileripatrikligi.org/site/bomonti-ermeni-ilkogretim-okulu-cemaat-okullari/>. Accessed 24 November 2018.
- ¹⁰ Trotsky's *Moya zhizn* (My Life) was published in two volumes in Berlin in 1930; his three-volume history of the Russian Revolution was published in 1932/1933 in London as *The History of the Russian Revolution* (Service 2012, 476, 501).

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