



Sequences of Threshold Spaces Formed by the Gecekondu in the City

Sevda KÜTÜK^{1,*}, İrem KÜÇÜK², Adnan AKSU³

¹ 0000-0003-3111-9787, Vocational School of Technical Sciences, Amasya University, Amasya, Turkey

² 0000-0002-5725-6002, Faculty of Architecture, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

³ 0000-0002-0369-3207, Faculty of Architecture, Gazi University, Ankara, Turkey

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Abstract

The development of cities is shaped by crises arising from the dynamics that bring them into existence. In order to resolve these crises and to ensure that cities follow healthier development processes, it is necessary to develop unique insights and ways of doing about the formation of cities. With this understanding, this article analyses the gecekondu in terms of its creative formations in the context of urban spatial production, and examines it through the threshold spatial systems it creates in the city. In the first part of the article, which is structured in two main sections, the research on gecekondu is deepened and the necessity of addressing its creative aspects in the context of urban spatial production is explained. With the argument that the creativity of gecekondu can be read in the context of the thresholds it creates in the city, the commonalities between two are identified and a conceptual framework for reading gecekondu through thresholds is developed. In the second section, the thresholds created by gecekondu in the city are examined in physical and socio-cultural contexts, and visual and conceptual mappings are conducted to reveal formation areas, forms of relation, action patterns, and spatial attributes. The mappings, carried out in the context of three sections the thresholds in gecekondu from different perspectives. Finally, the original aspects and the creative formations that gecekondu can inspire within the context of urban spatial production are discussed, and the potential contributions that can inspire urbanization, urban planning, and policy-making processes are evaluated.

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of cities is shaped by crises arising from the very dynamics that bring them into existence. Factors such as migration problems, economic imbalances and lack of social integration lead to structural and functional crises in cities. In order to resolve these crises and to ensure that cities follow healthier development processes, it is necessary to develop unique insights and ways of doing about the formation of cities. Seeing urban crises as an opportunity not only to solve current problems but also to create more resilient, inclusive and vibrant urban structures is critical for cities to evolve to meet the needs of the future. With this understanding, this paper identifies a problematic area in the context of urbanization processes where the increasing need for labor in cities as a result of industrialization has accelerated migration from rural areas to cities. In the face of the housing crisis that emerged within these processes, it examines the urban production realized by the gecekondu. The rapid, temporary and low-cost solutions developed by the gecekondu as a spontaneous formation in the face of urban crisis offer a productivity that opens different perspectives in terms of urban planning and architecture. Halil Dincel and Nevnihal Erdoğan emphasize that gecekondu settlements do not only produce negative spaces, but that their potentials should also be utilized. In their study, they stated that these settlements produce flexible and open spaces that are open to changing demographic, economic, social and cultural conditions and can be shaped according to these changes. They also stated that gecekondu settlements offered an alternative solution to the housing problem that the country's housing policy, production, technology and scientific level could not foresee (Dincel and Erdoğan, 1989). Thus, gecekondu settlements are not only a temporary means of shelter, but also a formation that has developed critical interventions in urban crisis management and social adaptation processes. Despite the negativities it brings with it such as lack of

* Corresponding author: sevda.kutuk@amasya.edu.tr

infrastructure, environmental problems, unhealthy living conditions, and security issues, it constitutes urban spatial production references for existing in and adapting to the city through the unique and creative physical, social and cultural formations it has developed. This article, which explores these references, aims to go beyond simply evaluating gecekondu as marginal and problematic structures, and aims to reveal how these settlements can make creative and harmonious contributions to the urban fabric. However, this is far from being an affirming analysis of the gecekondu. The study, which does not ignore the non-productive and depressing negative aspects of gecekondu, builds a broad and comprehensive perspective by emphasizing the importance of exploring the potential and positive aspects of these areas that can contribute to urban integration and development processes. Thus, it encourages a reassessment of the role of gecekondu settlements in urban transformation and development processes.

Communities migrating to cities to create labour force with industrialisation, faced with the problem of housing, have established temporary, unplanned settlements in many cities around the world. These settlements, which are generally addressed under the title of 'gecekondu' in the international literature, are expressed with different concepts in the local context. It has been observed that unplanned settlements were formed under the names of colonias proletarias in Mexico, barriadas in Peru, favelas in Brazil, villas miseria in Argentina, gourbivilles in Tunisia, sarija in Iraq, bidonville in Morocco, bustee in India and gecekondu in Turkey (Karpat, 2022:36). Gecekondu, which first appeared in Cumhuriyet newspaper in 1947, is derived from the combination of the words 'night' and 'konmak' (Nişanyan, 2020:309). According to the Turkish Language Association, gecekondu means 'a dwelling built in haste without the knowledge and consent of the landowner on land or plots belonging to others or to the public in violation of zoning and building laws; a dwelling house'. It is also metaphorically defined as 'hastily built, makeshift structure' (TDK, 2023). According to the Gecekondu Law No. 775 dated 1966, it is defined as 'unauthorised structures built on land or plots that do not belong to the owner without the consent of the owner, without adhering to the legislation and general provisions regulating zoning and construction works' (Gecekondu Law, 1966). In this direction, it is possible to summarise gecekondu settlements as unplanned and unauthorised, makeshift, in-between and temporary spatial formations created by migration from rural to urban areas, which are built quickly and in a short time by individuals on their own initiative to meet the need for shelter in the city.

Gecekondu is a comprehensive subject that has been analysed in the context of different disciplines and a large literature has been built on it. The formation, development and change of gecekondu, the problems of integration of gecekondu with the city, the effects of urban transformation on gecekondu and the rent problem have been the focal points of research in this field. Especially the recent studies deal with gecekondu settlements as depressed areas that are the target of urban rent and labelled with crime and poverty. However, discussing the gecekondu only as a marginalised, illegal settlement and the anomaly it creates in the city risks overlooking the creative spatial formations it creates. As a product of a collective power that shapes the space with its resistance and struggle to exist in the city, the gecekondu settlement has created a creative spatial production practice that is shaped by complex patterns of co-operation and develops unusual and unique forms of interaction with the physical, social and cultural structures of the city. Although there are similar examples in the world, it is important to evaluate the gecekondu as a local spatial production practice specific to the spatial, temporal, social, cultural, ideological and economic contexts in which it developed, and to reveal its unique aspects that can inspire urbanisation, urban planning and policy-making processes, in order to structure a local and global reference research on the formation of cities.

The existence of the gecekondu in the city has created resistance in line with its struggle for survival and opened thresholds at various levels. The thresholds encountered by different actors and different elements in the city, while functioning as areas of social and economic conflict, have also paved the way for the formation of new ways of communication and interaction between these actors. This process has been effective in shaping the socio-economic fabric of cities by revealing opportunities for restructuring and adaptation within the urban structure. In this sense, the threshold spatial systems formed by the gecekondu in the city have constituted the creative source of its spatial production. In order to reveal the unique aspects of the gecekondu in the context of urban spatial production, researching it in the context of the threshold space formations it creates provides a perspective framework that enables cross-sections at

different scales. However, in order to develop a perspective on gecekondü in the context of the threshold spaces it creates, it is necessary to define gecekondü and threshold spaces and to reveal the relationships between them. With this understanding, this study defines gecekondü and threshold spaces, evaluates them in relation to each other and reveals the qualitative and operational relations between them. In this way, it establishes a concept set for defining the threshold space systems formed by gecekondü settlements. Using this set of concepts, it analyses the gecekondü and examines it in the context of physical and socio-cultural thresholds. In order to analyse the contexts in which the thresholds are formed, the forms of relationships they create, the patterns of action they harbour and the spatial qualities they produce, it forms an overview through three different cross-sections at three different scales: housing spaces, communal spaces and neighbourhoods.

2. METHOD

In this study, it is aimed to develop a comprehensive perspective on the threshold space system formed by the concept of gecekondü settlement. Accordingly, in order to define the concepts of gecekondü and threshold space in the first stage and to reveal the relationality between these two phenomena, studies on gecekondü and threshold space in national and international literature were examined in detail. The literature review was conducted through the National Thesis Center, Web of Science, TÜBİTAK ULAKBİM, Gazi University Proquest Public Available Content Database, JSTOR and Elsevier E-Books databases. In the National Thesis Center, 21 theses in the field of Architecture, 23 theses in Urban Regional Planning and 23 theses in Sociology were examined. In Web of Science, gecekondü research is discussed under the titles of “gecekondü, squatter settlements, slum”. These concepts were examined in the fields of Architecture, Urban Studies, Regional Urban Planning, Sociology. In the field of Architecture, 6 articles on gecekondü, 12 articles in Urban Studies, 14 articles in Regional Urban Planning and 4 articles in Sociology were analyzed. 31 articles on squatter settlements were analyzed in Architecture, 72 articles in Urban Studies, 11 articles in Regional Urban Planning and 3 articles in Sociology. 32 articles on slum in Architecture, 66 articles in Urban Studies, 13 articles in Regional Urban Planning and 17 articles in Sociology. Gecekondü research in Elsevier E-Books is examined under the titles of “gecekondü, squatter settlements, slum”. Forty-six articles on gecekondü, 44 articles on squatter settlements and 22 articles on slum were analyzed. The gecekondü research in Tubitak Ulakbim was analyzed under the titles “gecekondü, squatter settlements, slum”. These concepts were analyzed in the fields of architecture, sociology and urban studies. Ten articles on gecekondü were analyzed in architecture, seven articles in sociology and three articles in urban studies. 14 articles on squatter settlements were analyzed in the field of architecture. 7 articles about slum were analyzed in the field of architecture. In Proquest Public Available Content Database, gecekondü research is examined under the titles of “gecekondü, squatter settlements”. 18 articles related to gecekondü were analyzed. Squatter settlements was examined in the field of Architecture and Urban Planning. There are 5 articles on squatter settlements in Architecture and 4 articles in Urban Planning. In JSTOR, gecekondü research is discussed under the titles of “gecekondü, squatter settlements, slum”. These concepts were analyzed in the fields of Architecture and Architecture History, Urban Studies and Sociology. Regarding gecekondü 33 articles in Architecture and Architecture History, 42 articles in Urban Studies and 4 articles in Sociology were analyzed. 25 articles on squatter settlements were analyzed in Architecture and Architecture History, 23 articles in Urban Studies. 13 articles on slum in the field of Architecture and Architecture History, 41 articles in the field of Urban Studies. In the second stage, the studies examined in the literature on the concept of gecekondü were analyzed and evaluated using Vosviewer software, one of the bibliometric analysis methods. The bibliometric analysis method aims to gain an in-depth understanding of the structure, development process and current trends of research areas through the examination of scientific publications and citations. VOSviewer, which is used in this context, enables data analysis with visual mapping method based on the frequency analysis of the concepts mentioned in the keywords and abstracts of the studies in the literature (Dereli, 2024). However, since the number of studies on threshold space in the literature is not sufficient, VOSviewer analysis could not be performed. Therefore, “conceptual content analysis” was used to analyze the threshold concept. In the third stage, content analysis or thematic analysis method was used to evaluate the concept phrases in the conceptual maps created on gecekondü and threshold space by associating them together.

In sample selection, purposive sampling technique and maximum variation sampling method, which is one of the sub-methods of this technique, are used to examine examples of different situations related to the subject. Purposive sampling technique is the process of selecting the units or situations to be examined within the scope of the research, not randomly, but for a specific purpose. In this technique, the researcher selects situations that can answer the research questions and provide information about these questions (Dede, Demir, Aydın, Güngör, Bukova Güzel, Karakırık, 2015:209). In the maximum variation sampling method, it is defined as “revealing the common or divergent aspects and patterns between different situations determined consistently with the purpose of the research and thus describing the problem in a broader framework” (Büyüköztürk, Akgün, Demirel, Karadeniz and Çakmak, 2015:93). In this context, the criteria determined for the selection of gecekondu settlement areas;

- How his relationship with nature
- How it follows a path in its placement on the topography
- According to which parameters the space is created
- What construction methods and what kind of materials are used
- How the infrastructure problem is solved
- How property rights are created
- How space is used at private, public and urban scales
- How it interacts with the rest of the city around the headlines.

By focusing on specific spatial and social characteristics of gecekondu areas, certain differences were taken into account in the selection of the sample in order to examine the concrete equivalents or change processes of the concepts defined in the literature in the field. In this context, factors such as the fact that Istanbul receives migration due to industrialization, Ankara attracts migration due to the gravitational pull of being the capital, and the need for housing in Amasya, where there is no industrialization, leads to the construction of gecekondu were taken into consideration.

The methods followed to obtain spatial data are as follows: First, archival research was conducted and Turkish movies about gecekondu life were analyzed. Secondly, we focused on the gecekondu neighborhoods in the Mamak district of Ankara province on the grounds that 90% of the district's population lived in gecekondu in the 1990s and there were traces of rural life (such as vineyards, gardens and poultry farming). Third, fieldwork was conducted in the central district of Amasya, one of the medium-sized cities, in order to examine gecekondu areas that have not been shaped by the impact of industry.

In this context, it is thought that the method developed in this context will form a basis for evaluating how gecekondu produce space in line with which behaviors and what kind of spaces they produce afterwards. In addition to the gecekondu examples in this article, it is estimated that the use of the similar method in other gecekondu examples will produce different results, reveal different originalities and creative formations, make various contributions to the production of urban space and offer different possibilities. Thus, it is envisaged that each study to be presented with different examples will generate new discussions on what new forms of space production can be.

3. GECEKONDU AND THRESHOLD SPACE

When the treatment of gecekondu in the literature is examined¹, it is seen that in national studies; gecekondu formation and transformation, urban transformation and its effects in gecekondu areas, urban integration problems, socio-cultural, spatial, economic and morphological analyses of gecekondu and comparisons with other housing types are made, theoretical discussions are produced in relation to the issues of common space, right to housing, right to the city, resistance, memory and nostalgia, and analyses are created in the context of cinema. In international studies, similar to national studies, urban transformation and its effects are questioned in the context of gecekondu and similar settlements,

¹ These examinations were carried out from National Thesis Centre, Web of Science, TÜBİTAK Ulakbim, Proquest Public Available Content Database of Gazi University, JSTOR and Elsevier E-Books databases.

morphological and socio-cultural analyses are made, gecekondu and other housing types are compared, theoretical discussions related to the right to the city, gecekondu, liminality, immigration, resistance, memory, poverty and nostalgia are developed. In addition, gecekondu and similar settlements are discussed in the context of rural-urban dichotomy, cultural heritage value, housing policies, gecekondu and similar settlements in third world countries are compared, vertical gecekondu, transformation of gecekondu, production of gecekondu space and spatial behaviours are discussed and gecekondu are included in the context of common space discussions.

When we look at the development of the gecekondu house over the years; it is seen that it first emerged in the early 1900s as illegal construction on vacant and uncontrolled lands and that these structures were in the nature of 'shacks' rather than dwellings, as mentioned by Tansı Şenyapılı (Şenyapılı, 2004: 95). The outbreak of World War II between 1940 and 1950 had serious effects on the country's economy. The economic depression caused by the war and the beginning of mechanisation in agriculture with the Marshall Aid changed the balance in rural areas. With the migration to the cities, a housing deficit emerged and the migrants who settled in the city through 'fellow townsman' relations built gecekondu with the materials they found through collective labour. Gecekondu, whose visibility in the city increased day by day, started to be covered in the press. In her Altındağ interviews in Zafer Newspaper published in 1949, Advıye Fenik described the profiles of the people living in gecekondu, their daily lives, their relations with the city, the neighbourhoods they lived in and the spatial characteristics of the houses (Fenik, 1949). In the 1950s, the multi-party system was adopted and no action was taken to prevent the increase in squatting in cities. This was because the gecekondu, as it was, both met the cheap labour force of industrialising cities and solved the housing problem in itself.

According to Tekeli, gecekondu both kept the low-wage working class together by cheapening urbanisation and cheapened the production of life and labour by lowering the standard of living. Thus, it became a functional construction for industrial capital (Tekeli, 1996: 17). In the 1960s-1970s, the increase in job opportunities in the cities and the development of industrialisation accelerated migration, increasing the number of gecekondu settlements and leading to the transformation of these settlements into neighbourhoods. According to İbrahim Yasa's research on gecekondu settlements in Ankara during this period, the gecekondu family was located on the threshold between rural and urban identities, maintaining some village characteristics, gradually accepting the urban characteristics it found appropriate, carrying a small sample of its field in the village to its gecekondu settlement but hoping to see itself as a worker in the factory (Yasa, 1970). In the gecekondu settlement research conducted by Charles Hart in Zeytinburnu, Istanbul during this period, it was mentioned that the gecekondu settlement created a permanent formation as a settlement unit specific to Turkey, that it was a necessary act of keeping a dwelling due to the lack of a housing solution for migrants in the city, and that the residents of the gecekondu settlement, who insisted on settlement by resisting government and opposition pressures, had an urban approach in terms of interest, taste and work (Hart, 1969: 100-101). By the 1970s, the gecekondu had become a commodity that was built and sold.

The first generation of gecekondu were replaced by decent, low-density neighbourhoods with infrastructure. With the growth of cities, the remaining gecekondu in the centre were taken over by construction companies and gecekondu owners started to move to the peripheries of the developing city. According to Tahire Erman, gecekondu, who started to be otherised in this way, were classified as 'Peasant Other' in the 1950s and 60s, 'Exploited/Disadvantaged Other' in the 1970s, 'Others' in the 1980s and 90s, and 'Gecekondu as Subject Against Gecekondu as Disadvantaged Other' in the late 1990s and 2000s (Erman, 2004). In the post-1980 period, liberal economic policies started to be implemented in the country and legal regulations were made on gecekondu. With these practices, the gecekondu became a market and turned into a commodity used for financial gain, moving away from its identity in the first period. İlhan Tekeli, Yiğit Gülöksüz and Tarık Okyay categorised the interest groups in gecekondu that have become commodities as: those with a single gecekondu, those with multiple gecekondu, gecekondu speculators or intermediaries, gecekondu tenants, shopkeepers and those who carry out their professions in gecekondu neighbourhoods, landowners whose land is taken over by gecekondu dwellers, industrialists who benefit from the labour of gecekondu dwellers, etc. (Tekeli, Gülöksüz and Okyay, 2020: 225-227). In the 1990s, ethnic, sectarian and gender-based divisions in

gecekondu settlements deepened and conflicts started to occur within these settlements themselves (Erman, 2004). By the 2000s, gecekondu had become a ‘varoş’ and was perceived as a formation that embodies violence, poverty, anarchy and social threat. Another development in this period was urban transformation practices. With this practice, gecekondu started to be destroyed by transforming them into mass housing estates and low-rise gecekondu settlements were replaced by multi-storey mass housing estates.

As research in the literature reveals, gecekondu settlement is an illegal, makeshift, urban spatial formation that varies according to the period, physical, social and cultural context in which it was built, and that is spontaneously formed and marginalised. Gecekondu, which describes a formation that emerges on the peripheries of the city, in intermediate or residual areas, expresses a content that encompasses a wide variety of characterised constructions. In addition to being discussed in the literature as closely related or related to various concepts, it is also discussed and explained in terms of certain actions and qualities. The presentation of the concepts related to the gecekondu with a visual network of relations constitutes a reference in terms of revealing its ties with the threshold space and analysing the threshold space strings it forms in the city. With this understanding, the space-defining concepts related to the gecekondu are shown in the chart below and the concepts that are common with the threshold space are emphasised and expressed(See Figure 1).

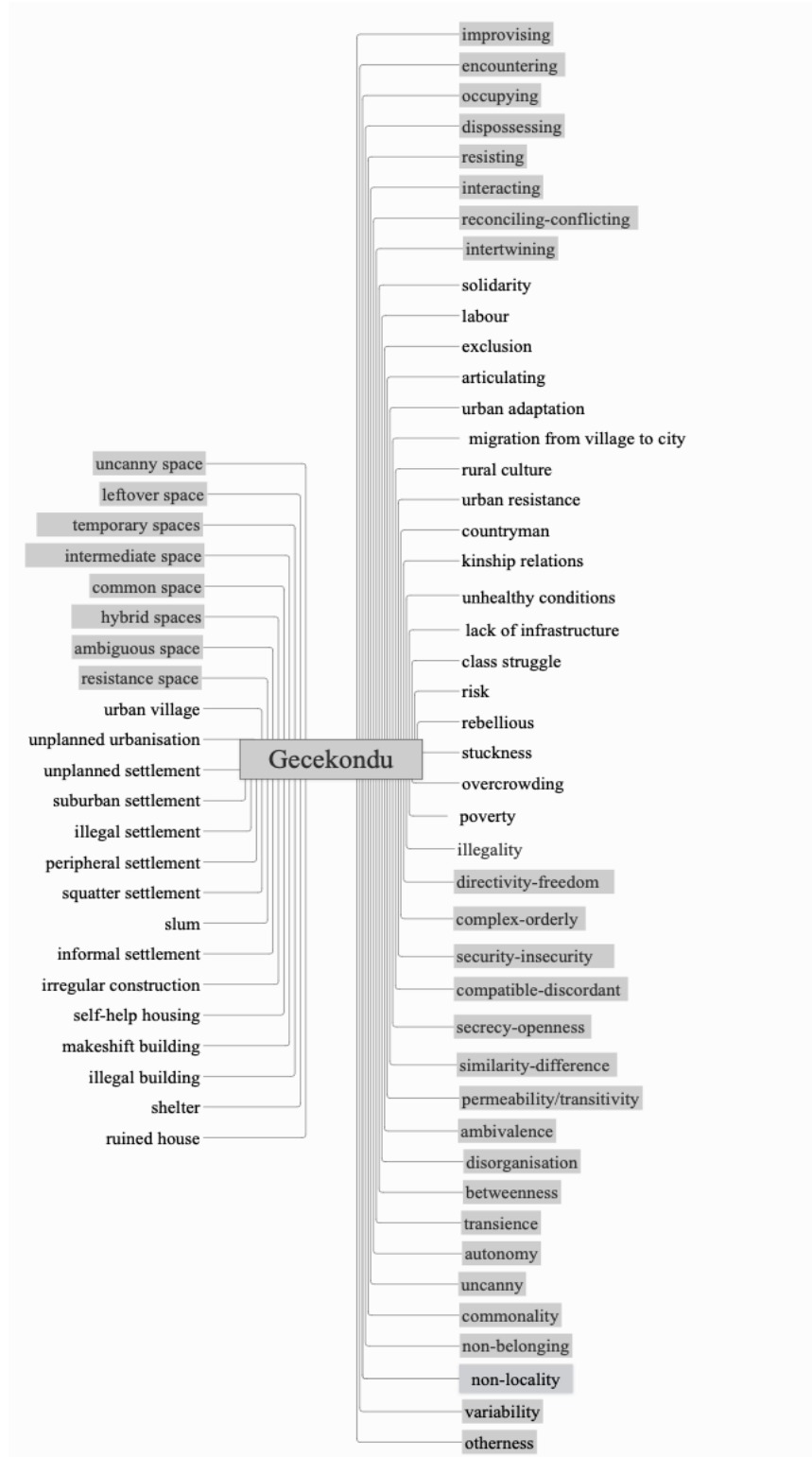


Figure 1. Gecekondu and Related Concepts

When the treatment of threshold space in the literature is analysed², it is seen that it is investigated both in the context of architecture and the city. Although the researches and discussions on the subject generally focus on the urban context, there has been an increase in the researches in the field of architecture in the 2000s and perspectives have started to diversify. In the national studies in the literature, it is seen that the

² These examinations were carried out from National Thesis Centre, Web of Science, TÜBİTAK Ulakbim, Proquest Public Available Content Database of Gazi University, JSTOR and Elsevier E-Books databases.

subject is addressed in the context of historical cities reshaped by urban transformation, coincidental situations in daily life, encounters, instant events, search for alternative spaces and structural elements that define borders such as walls. In international studies, threshold space is analysed in contexts such as building facades, cultural spaces such as museums and exhibition spaces, commercial spaces (such as restaurants and cafes), private buildings (such as residences), public buildings, settlements with traditional architecture, streets, low-income settlements and migrant settlements.

It is possible to categorise the studies on the subject in architectural and urban contexts. The works of Till Boetger have a wide place in the threshold space discussions in the architectural context. Boetger defines the threshold space as a fragile and unstable spatial region and carries out analyses under a number of headings to reveal the design parameters that constitute the threshold space. He identifies these headings as open-closed, delimitation, sequence, geometry, topography, materiality and furnishings, and analyses a wide range of examples from the Acropolis to the Pantheon, from Japanese houses to passages, and from Mies Van Der Rohe and Le Corbusier buildings (Boetger, 2014:61-117). Pierre Von Meiss, on the other hand, discusses the threshold space through the roles it plays in spatial production. According to Meiss, the threshold assumes three basic roles: utilitarian, protective and semantic. In these roles, the threshold is both a barrier and a transition point that fulfils the function of separation and connection between two different spaces (Von Meiss, 1990: 149). Alban Janson and Florian Tigges, on the other hand, discuss the threshold space in terms of borders by addressing dichotomies such as inside and outside, public and private. According to them, the threshold is a structure that enables the transition from one space to another by crossing these boundaries. In this context, intermediate spaces that play a role in entrances and exits, intersections of nested spaces, supermarket checkouts, counters in libraries or banks, various control barriers and turnstiles constitute examples of threshold spaces (Janson and Tigges, 2014:331-334).

Looking at the threshold space debates in the urban context, the works of Stavros Stavrides draw attention. Stavrides defines threshold space as 'the emergence of a potential spatiality of emancipation' (Stavrides, 2016: 12). He uses spatial freedom to refer to other spatial formations that mobilise action and collective dreams outside of existing spatial orders. While discussing threshold space in the urban context, Stavrides refers to Michael Foucault's work on 'heterotopia', Walter Benjamin's 'flaneur and porosity', Pierre Bourdieu's 'Kabyle household', Arnold Van Gennep's 'rituals of passage', Victor Turner's 'thresholdness', Marc Augé's 'no-places' and George Simmel's 'bridges and gates'. In addition, Marxist thought and the debates of David Harvey, Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri on the commons in urban space have also been influential in Stavrides' development of his understanding of threshold space. He has made threshold readings in social housing, migrant settlements, occupied city squares and urban encounter spaces. Catherine Dee, on the other hand, considers threshold space as a spatial component that connects different spaces and provides transition. She categorises thresholds in four groups: topographic thresholds, vegetation thresholds, built thresholds and water thresholds. According to Dee; small transitional spaces between larger spaces or paths, spaces in between, spaces on the edge, landscapes connecting one place to another, entrance spaces and passages, end, beginning, resting and waiting places constitute threshold spaces (Dee, 2004:170). Aldo Van Eyck designed more than 700 playgrounds in Amsterdam between 1947-78 and the theoretical readings on these spaces also provide important content about threshold space (Van Eyck, 2019:74). Georges Teyssot refers to Eyck's playgrounds as threshold or in-between space in his article. For Eyck, these spaces are based on spatial dialectics; they are spaces that open a space between opposites such as interior and exterior, home and city, here and there, public and private, part and whole, in order to create a place, an event (Teyssot, 2008). Van Eyck's student Hertzberger, on the other hand, defines intermediate/threshold spaces as spaces that provide the key to transition and connection between regions with different characteristics, and as a place in itself, create spatial conditions for meeting and dialogue between areas at different levels (Hertzberger, 1991: 32). Till Boettger defines it as a transitional space in which spatial boundaries are crossed during the act of crossing, which both connects and separates spaces and constitutes a preparatory phase for the space that comes after it (Boettger, 2014:49).

As can be understood from the definitions in the literature, threshold spaces are intermediate spaces that construct encounter and transition in the interaction between the changing characteristics of space and the opposition/reciprocity of experiences. By creating breaks in ordinary spatial orders, it enables the

discovery of new spatial formations. In the literature, threshold space, which is handled as closely related or related to various concepts, is explained through various operational and qualitative contents. In order to conceptualise threshold space and to make the conceptual and spatial dimensions of the subject visible, the concepts related to threshold space in the literature and the architectural and urban formations in which this subject is discussed are examined. Thus, the conceptual contents of the threshold space are shown in the chart and the concepts that are common with the gecekondü are emphasised and expressed. At the same time, the architectural and urban contexts in which the threshold space corresponds have been revealed(See Figure 2,Figure 3).

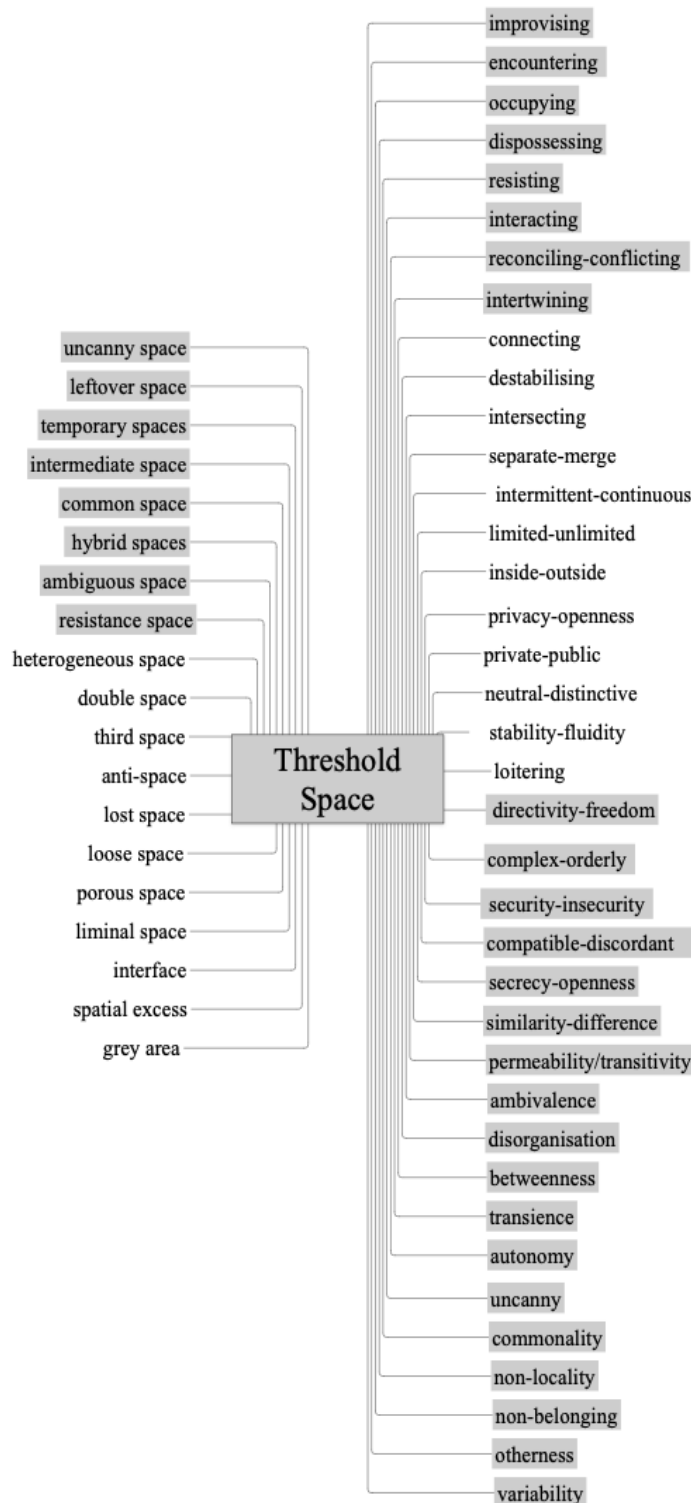


Figure 2. Threshold Space and Related Concepts

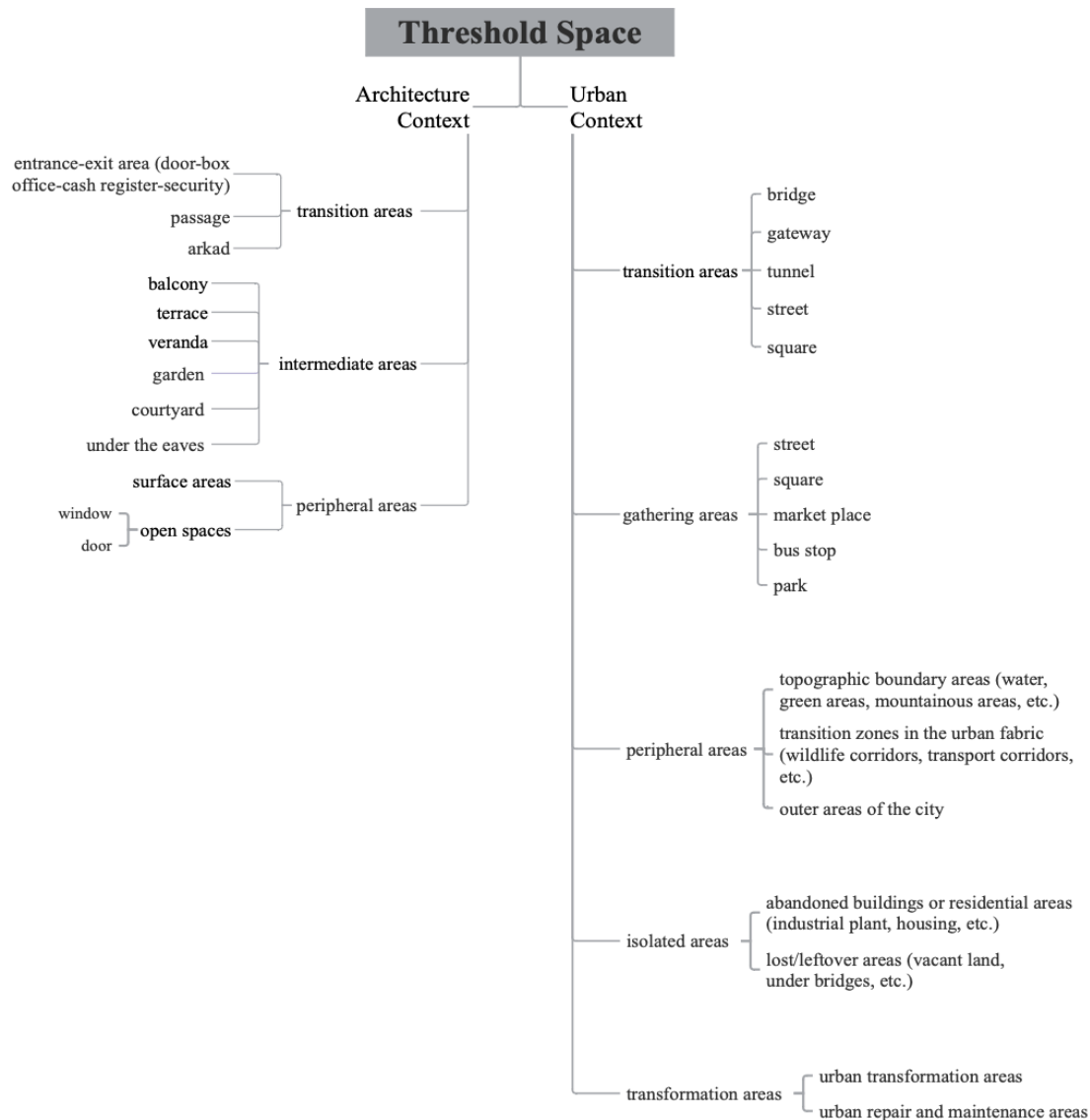


Figure 3. Threshold Space and Architectural-Urban Formation Contexts

When threshold space and gecekondu formations are evaluated in relation to each other, space-defining concepts such as uncanny space, leftover space, temporary space, intermediate space, common space, hybrid space, ambiguous space, resistance space and action-defining concepts such as improvising, encountering, occupying, dispossessing, resisting, interacting, reconciling-conflicting, intertwining. It has been observed that qualifying concepts such as complex-orderly, directivity-freedom, compatible-discordant, security-insecurity, secrecy-openness, similarity-difference, permeability/transitivity, ambivalence, disorganisation, betweenness, transience, autonomy, uncanny, commonality, non-locality, non-belonging, otherness, variability are concepts that emerge in both gecekondu and threshold space studies. These concepts play a key role in discussing the relations between gecekondu and threshold spaces. In addition, it is seen that the gecekondu is a formation that creates a series of threshold spaces in architectural and urban contexts. Gecekondu, which emerges in isolated areas and peripheral areas in the urban context and is included in the urban fabric, creates spatial formations that develop spontaneously improvised, changing, temporary and communal in the architectural context. The gecekondu, which is a place of exclusion from the city and of non-belonging and marginalisation, constitutes an ambiguous structure shaped by processes of reconciliation and conflict over ownership. While its temporariness, uncertainty, potential for rapid reproduction and occupation, and its autonomous stance make it an uncanny formation for the urbanites, gecekondu also feel uncanny in the city by seeing themselves open to intervention and under threat.

The gecekondu settlement, which opens a space of resistance in order to exist with the need for shelter, becomes a place of encounter for both the gecekondu and the urbanite within the duality of rural and urban areas. On the one hand, the gecekondu, which constantly changes and transforms itself, changes the city on the other hand, and emerges as a temporary formation that constitutes a driving, dynamic force in the evolution of the city. In this context, analysing the gecekondu settlement in the context of the threshold space strings it creates in the city provides data to discuss the impact of its spatial production on the city and its power to transform the city. It also enables to reveal the unique spatial productions created by the gecekondu and to trace the transfer of these productions to urban life. With this understanding, this study, which conceptually and visually maps the threshold spatial systems in the gecekondu, analyses the unique urban spatial formations created by the gecekondu in terms of areas of association, forms of association and relationship qualities. Such a research, on the one hand, enables a re-evaluation of the gecekondu by creating different spatial cross-sections of the gecekondu on an expanding trajectory from housing to the city, and on the other hand, it constructs a specialised understanding of threshold space through the local context created by the gecekondu in the context of threshold space debates. This conception creates a view of the formation of contemporary cities in the context of local dynamics and enables a discussion on the use of threshold space as a tool in urban spatial production (Figure 4).



Figure 4. Threshold Spatial Arrays Formed by the Gecekondu

4. THRESHOLD SPATIAL ARRAYS IN GECEKONDU

The analysis of threshold space formations in the gecekondu has been carried out through literature and archive review, as well as data obtained from field research through observation, interview and photography techniques. The analyses have been made on three different scales, namely housing spaces, communal spaces and neighbourhoods, within the framework of physical thresholds and social and cultural thresholds. The maps, produced in the form of diagrams consisting of visual and conceptual contents, describe the thresholds formed in each section in terms of formation areas, forms of association, action patterns and spatial qualities. Physical thresholds are analysed in terms of interaction with nature, topography, spatial arrangements, construction procedures, material use and infrastructure formation, while social and cultural thresholds are analysed in terms of the formation of property rights, use of space and interaction with the city³.

³ Archives, films made on the subject (Sultan, Canım Kardeşim, Gelin, Düğün, Düttürü Dünya, Diyet, Derdim Dünyadan Büyük, Bitmeyen Yol, Gülen Adam, Taşı Toprağı Altın Şehir, Çiçek Abbas, Zügürt Ağa and Veda Busesi), Pinteres, Salt Research, Babak Pourbager photo archive, interviews and plans, observations and photographs obtained during field investigations were used. The field surveys were carried out on the basis of the gecekondu samples of Savadiye Mahallesi, Helvacı Mahallesi, Üçler Mahallesi, Beyazıtpaşa Mahallesi in Amasya; Ekin Mahallesi, Harman Mahallesi, Gülveren Mahallesi, Boğaziçi Mahallesi, Kutludüğün Mahallesi, Fahri Korutürk Mahallesi, Yeni Bayındır Mahallesi, Peyami Safa Mahallesi, Türközü Mahallesi, Üreğil Mahallesi, Başak Mahallesi in Ankara Mamak district. The gecekondu highlighted within the scope of the research have been realised through examples that have not deteriorated within the system and have not lost their characteristics of being a gecekondu.

4.1. Physical Thresholds in Gecekondu













Interaction with Nature

The interaction of the gecekondu with nature has opened thresholds for mutual development and co-existence and has been shaped by the tendency to repeat rural life practices in the urban context. As a result of the repetition of agricultural and animal production practices such as fruit-vegetable and small cattle breeding and sustainable living practices such as the use of natural materials and rainwater collection in the gecekondu, the development of cyclical processes that include natural production in shelter and common spaces and use nature has been in question. In the neighbourhoods, which are generally formed with low-rise construction on the periphery of the city, a settlement form that incorporates nature into the settlement of the space, interferes little with the surrounding vegetation, and determines the boundaries of the surrounding area with permeable and temporary materials is observed. The construction of gecekondu settlements through occupation and without any planning has led to the emergence of temporary, permeable spatial formations that are dispersed, compromising, containing complex orders in the establishment of gecekondu-nature interaction.

Interaction with nature is observed in intermediate areas, transition areas and peripheral areas in housing spaces, while in communal spaces, in addition to these areas, it is seen that a relationship is established in vague areas and gathering areas. At the neighbourhood scale, transitional areas, peripheral areas and isolated areas are the contexts where interaction with nature is established. While the forms of interaction defined as improvising, interacting, intertwining, reconciling and articulating are seen at all scales, there are also forms of interaction such as encountering and dispossession in communal spaces. In addition to these, occupation emerges as a form of association in the formation of the neighbourhood. In housing spaces and communal spaces, it is seen that there is a relationship with nature during activities such as growing fruits and vegetables and animals, performing daily chores such as hanging laundry, cooking, resting, and playing games. In addition, actions such as collecting rainwater, which arise due to the lack of infrastructure in housing spaces, draw attention in terms of establishing sustainable relations with nature. In addition to special events such as weddings organised in communal spaces, interaction with nature is also established in social events such as meetings and aid distributions. At the neighbourhood scale, actions such as low intervention to nature and the construction of the settlement space intertwined with nature, and the creation of borders with temporary/permeable materials ensure the establishment of strong relationships with nature. In line with the actional patterns developed at different scales, it is possible to say that the qualities of transience, permeability/permeability, directivity-freedom, variability, compatibility can be observed at all scales in the interaction of spaces with nature, while the qualities of limitation in housing spaces, limitation and betweenness in common spaces, and disorganisation, complex-orderly in the neighbourhood emerge(See Table 1).

Table 1. Interaction with Nature in the Formation of Physical Thresholds in Gecekondu (1-(Kartal,1989); 2- (Kütük, 2022); 3- (Aksoy, 1978); 4- (Ankara Mamak Municipality, 2007); 5-(Pourbager, 2017); 6- (Akad,1973a))

Physical Thresholds / Interaction with Nature

	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces		Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups	
Spatial Formations				
				
				
Formation Areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas vague areas	transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas	transition areas peripheral areas isolated areas
Forms of Relation	improvising interacting intertwining reconciling articulating	improvising interacting intertwining reconciling articulating encountering dispossessing	improvising occupying dispossessing intertwining interacting reconciling articulating encountering	improvising interacting intertwining occupying articulating reconciling
Action Patterns	•growing fruit and vegetables •raising small cattle and cattle •play the game •rest •to hang laundry •collect rainwater •create firewood	•growing fruit and vegetables •raising small cattle •play the game •rest •to hang laundry •eat food •to receive guests	•organising social events (meetings, distributing aid, etc.) •organising special events (weddings, circumcisions, etc.)	•to interfere less with nature •to intertwine the use of nature and space •demarcation (temporary, with permeable materials)
Spatial Attributes	transience permeability/transitivity compatibility directivity-freedom	transience compatibility limitation	transience permeability/transitivity variability betweenness	transience disorganisation directivity-freedom complex-orderly

Placement on Topography





The placement of gecekondu settlements on the topography has created thresholds that allow for positioning and developing forms of intervention depending on the characteristics of the geographical area. For example, in a threshold analysis conducted by the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality of the gecekondu settlements on the Yeni Mamak-Samsun road in Ankara, 26% of the total area was found to be above 30% slope (Ankara Metropolitan Municipality). According to Şenyapılı's research, while gecekondu settlements were initially established on high slopes, later they were also established on flat areas around the zoned neighbourhoods on the main roadside and their street textures were shaped by the orientation of the topography (Şenyapılı, 2004:245-246). According to the information obtained from the interview with Celal Özdemir about Ankara, the foundations of the gecekondu dwellings were dug with the cooperative method, using picks and shovels (Özdemir, 2022). Thus, it can be said that the intervention to the topography was at a minimum level and that the structures were built in harmony with the natural shaping of the topography.

While topographical settlement is observed in intermediate areas and transition areas in housing spaces, it is seen that in communal spaces, in addition to these areas, relationships are established in peripheral areas, gathering areas and vague areas. At the neighbourhood scale, transition areas, peripheral areas, isolated areas and gathering areas are the contexts where topographical settlement is addressed. While

forms of association defined as improvising, occupying and connecting are seen at all scales, forms of association such as dispossession are also in question in communal spaces and neighbourhood formation. In housing spaces, communal spaces and neighbourhood formation, space creation in disadvantaged areas is common. In housing spaces, it is observed that a relationship with topography is established in actions such as settling in accordance with the topography, facing the view, taking advantage of the elevation difference, playing games, and creating specialised spaces. In communal spaces, the slope of the topography is used in actions such as carpet and street washing, creating terraced gardens, organising specialised spaces such as tea gardens and bakeries. This slope also plays a role in the realisation of actions such as waiting and gathering of individuals. On the neighbourhood scale, actions such as settling in accordance with the topography, facing the view, not blocking each other's view, creating specialised areas, taking advantage of the elevation difference, directing the water with small channels according to the slope of the land are observed. In line with the actional patterns developed at different scales, it is possible to say that the qualities of temporariness and variability in the placement of spaces on the topography can be observed at all scales, and that the qualities of intermittence, open-closed, indecision in housing spaces, open-closed in communal spaces, open-closed, complex-orderly in the neighbourhood, directivity-freedom, complex-orderly, intermittence and indecision emerge (See Table 2).

Table 2. Placement on Topography in the Formation of Physical Thresholds in Gecekondu(2- (Kütük, 2022);4- (Ankara Mamak Municipality, 2007); 7- (Tibet, 1978); 8-(Erakalın,1965))

Physical Thresholds / Placement on Topography

	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces		Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups	
Spatial Formations				
Formation Areas	intermediate areas transition areas	intermediate areas transition areas	transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas vague areas	transition areas peripheral areas isolated areas gathering areas
Forms of Relation	improvising occupying connecting	improvising occupying connecting	improvising occupying dispossessing connecting	improvising occupying dispossessing connecting
Action Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •creating space in disadvantaged areas •to settle in accordance with the topography, facing the view •to take advantage of the grade difference •play the game •creating specialised areas (hearth, rest area, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •creating space in disadvantaged areas •play the game •creating specialised areas (tea garden, bakery, etc.) •to take advantage of the grade difference •create terraced gardens •to utilise my skills (washing carpets, streets, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •creating space in disadvantaged areas •creating specialised areas (tea garden, bakery, etc.) •waiting •gathering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •creating space in disadvantaged areas •to settle in accordance with the topography, facing the view •not blocking each other's view •creating specialised areas (football pitch, assembly area, etc.) •utilising the difference in elevation •directing the water with small channels according to the slope of the land
Spatial Attributes	transience betweenness open-closed ambivalence variability	transience variability open-closed	transience variability complex-orderly	transience variability directivity-freedom complex-orderly betweenness ambivalence

Space Organisations

In order to adapt to the changing needs of the gecekondu dwellers and to be produced rapidly, the spatial arrangements in the gecekondu have formed thresholds where rural spatial practices and urban practices meet. According to Tansı Şenyapılı's analyses, the one-room gecekondu built with adobe in Istanbul and Ankara in the 1950-60 period were planned as an interval, a sofa and a room. On the other hand, the wooden-baghdadi shanties built in Istanbul have a plan scheme of an interval, a sofa and two rooms (Şenyapılı, 2004:190). At the same time, it was stated that the spaces were expanded or the rooms were divided within themselves with the additions made to the rooms depending on the situations such as the improvement of the economic opportunities of the gecekondu, the expansion of the family, the marriage of children and living with the family or the provision of rental income (Şenyapılı, 1986). In the field studies, it is observed that the first gecekondu plans have rural traces in the spatial setup and contain similar spatial constructions in some gecekondu neighbourhoods. In communal spaces, it is seen that the continuity of the interior space continues on the street with the equipment such as armchairs and tables that the users integrate into the street, and thus permeable, transitional, limited and ambiguous spaces are produced. These spatial formations, which are located in the public-private space dichotomy and intertwined with the rest of the street, become a part of daily life on the street. At the same time, it is

possible to say that these areas are used for more than one function, and spatial continuity is ensured through instantaneous or repetitive actions. In events such as street weddings, it can be said that temporary spatial transformations are observed at the threshold and spatial breaks occur.

While spatial arrangements are observed in intermediate areas, transition areas and peripheral areas in housing spaces, it is observed that relationships are established in intermediate areas, transition areas and gathering areas in communal spaces. At the neighbourhood scale, intermediate areas, transition areas, gathering areas, peripheral areas and isolated areas are the contexts established by spatial arrangements. While improvisation is a form of association seen at all scales, there are forms of association defined as reconciling-conflicting, intertwining, destabilising, intersection in housing spaces; encounter, interaction, intertwining, occupation, dispossession, separation-unification in communal spaces; and occupation at the neighbourhood scale. It is observed that spatial arrangements were made during activities such as playing games, resting and doing daily chores in shelter and communal spaces. Actions such as using found and old furniture in sheltering spaces, creating new spaces by adding/subtracting rooms, leaving some spaces such as WC, barn outside the dwelling, using a room for more than one function, transforming some rooms for commercial purposes, not separating the wet volume, solving rainwater with the roof slope, raising cattle and sheep, growing fruits, vegetables and receiving guests draw attention as spatial situations that reveal threshold formations. In communal spaces, gathering, washing clothes, cooking, hanging vegetables and fruits to be dried on the walls, shopping, organising social activities and special events on the streets, creating common use areas, swimming in places such as rivers and stream beds, and washing clothes are actions that are associated with spatial arrangements. When the spatial arrangements made at the neighbourhood scale are examined, spatial arrangements are shaped by actional approaches such as positioning relative to each other, creating space through improvisation, settling in accordance with the topography, facing the view, intertwining nature and space use, determining boundaries, using vague areas. In line with the actional patterns developed at different scales, the qualities of compatible-discordant, similarity-difference, complex-regular, ambivalence, betweenness, variability and transience are observed in housing spaces; directivity-freedom, permeability/permeability, limited-unlimited, transience, variability, privacy-openness, non-locality and private-public qualities are observed in communal spaces. In the neighbourhood, it is possible to say that the qualities of directivity-freedom and complex-orderly emerge (See Table 3).

Table 3. Spatial Organisations in the Formation of Physical Thresholds in Gecekondu(2- (Kütük, 2022); 9-(Google Earth,2002);10-(Pinterest, 2024);11-(Ökten, 1988), 12- (Akad,1974))

Physical Thresholds / Spatial Organisations

	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces		Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups	
Spatial Formations	 2	 12	 11	 9
	 2	 12	 11	 9
	 10	 2	 11	 9
Formation Areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas isolated areas
Forms of Relation	improvising reconciling-conflicting intertwining destabilising intersecting	improvising encountering interacting occupying intertwining dispossessing separating-uniting	improvising encountering interacting occupying intertwining dispossessing separating-uniting	improvising occupying
Action Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •found, using old furniture •creating new spaces (adding/subtracting rooms) •leaving some spaces outside the dwelling (WC, barn, etc.) •using a room for more than one function •to convert some chambers for commercial purposes •not separating the wet volume •resolving rainwater with roof slope •raising small cattle and cattle •growing fruit, vegetables •play the game •rest •doing daily chores (preparing food, washing dishes, etc.) •receiving guests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •play the game •rest •doing daily chores (chopping fruit, vegetables, etc.) •gathering •laundry •cooking •dry fruit, vegetables •creating specialised areas (by adding seats, tables, etc.) •shopping •to chat on your feet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •organising social events (meetings, distributing aid, etc.) •organising special events (weddings, circumcision weddings, etc.) •creating common areas (fountain, common wc etc.) •gathering •play the game •to chat on your feet •using river and stream beds (swimming, washing clothes, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •being positioned in relation to each other (according to relations of kinship and fellow countrymen) •creating space by improvisation (parcelisation, street etc.) •to settle in accordance with the topography, facing the view •to intertwine the use of nature and space •demarcation (temporary, with permeable materials) •vague areas to use (car park, garden, etc.)
Spatial Attributes	compatible-discordant similarity-difference complex-orderly ambivalence betweenness transience variability	directivity-freedom permeability/transitivity limited-unlimited transience variability private-public privacy-openness non-locality	permeability/transitivity limited-unlimited transience variability disorganisation non-locality complex-orderly neutral-distinctive private-public intermittent-continuous	complex-orderly directivity-freedom

Construction Methods

The way the gecekondu relates to construction methods is shaped in the context of thresholds formed by the use of different construction methods together for reasons such as functionality and economy, rather than adopting a single construction method. Şenyapılı, in his research on gecekondu, mentions the construction methods such as adobe, timber, masonry, stone, Tekin Kurucu in Istanbul and İbrahim Öğretmen in Ankara (Şenyapılı, 2004:190). In the field study, it was observed that timber, adobe, masonry and reinforced concrete systems were used. In some of the examined examples, mudbrick-masonry, masonry-concrete, masonry-concrete-steel systems, as well as in makeshift shanties, it has been determined that different methods that cannot be classified are used together and the structural

relationship between these uses exhibits an eclectic approach. In the shanties where rural traces are observed, it was determined that traditional traces were observed and the ceilings of some gecekondü examples were made with the traditional wooden ceiling method. It was also observed that structural elements such as doors and windows were added with temporary solutions in these gecekondü.

While construction methods are observed in intermediate areas, transition areas and peripheral areas in housing spaces, it is seen that in communal spaces, in addition to these areas, relationships are established in gathering areas. At the neighbourhood scale, intermediate areas, transition areas, peripheral areas and gathering areas are the contexts established through construction procedures. While improvising, destabilising, connecting and separating-uniting forms of association are seen at all scales, there are also forms of association such as intersecting and intertwining in housing spaces and neighbourhoods. In housing spaces, it is possible to construct spaces through collective labour, to use different construction methods together, and to create eclectic spaces. In communal spaces, on the other hand, creating specialised areas, joining historical buildings, creating procedures for the unusual use of existing materials, creating common areas, joining to the existing structure, and temporarily transforming the space are realised through the construction procedures used. In the neighbourhood, on the other hand, constructing a space through collective labour, using different construction procedures together, and creating common spaces include observations that can be considered in the context of the threshold. In line with the actional patterns that develop at different scales, it is possible to say that complex-orderly, compatible-discordant, neutral-distinctive, similarity-difference, transience, variability, instability and betweenness qualities emerge at all scales in the relationship of spaces with construction procedures(See Table 4).

Table 4. Construction Methods in the Formation of Physical Thresholds in Gecekondu (2- (Kütük, 2022); 4- (Ankara Mamak Municipality, 2007); 13-(Samsun Canik Municipality, 2017))

Physical Thresholds / Construction Methods










	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces	Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups
Spatial Formations			
Formation Arcas	peripheral areas intermediate areas transition areas	intermediate areas transition areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas
Forms of Relation	destabilising improvising connecting separating-uniting intersecting intertwining	destabilising improvising connecting separating-uniting	destabilising improvising connecting separating-uniting intersecting intertwining
Action Patterns	•constructing a space by improvisation •using different building methods together (rural-urban, masonry-concrete construction, etc.) •creating eclectic spaces	•creating specialised areas (entrance, veranda, etc.) •articulation with historical buildings •to create a procedure for the unusual use of existing material	•creating specialised spaces (sitting, chatting, etc.) •creating common spaces (market, gathering, etc.) •to articulate with the existing structure •temporarily transforming the space (with light, portable materials)
Spatial Attributes	complex-orderly compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference transience variability ambivalence betweenness	complex-orderly compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference transience variability ambivalence betweenness	complex-orderly compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference transience variability ambivalence betweenness

Use of Material

The gecekondu's relationship with the use of materials is shaped in the context of thresholds formed by the combination of materials used in rural and urban areas and different materials suitable for reuse, with an approach similar to construction methods. Şenyapılı states that the first shanties were mostly built using adobe and wood, the roof was covered with mud or tin, there was no flooring, and the doors and windows were collected from demolished constructions (Şenyapılı, 2004:184). İbrahim Öğretmen, on the other hand, states in his research that stone, brick, adobe, tile and tin are used in gecekondu (Öğretmen, 1957:26). During the field survey, it was determined that: brick, mortar brick, stone, chipboard, briquette, adobe on the wall; wood, wallpaper, concrete, nylon, chipboard, plywood, plasterboard on the ceiling; concrete, ceramic coating, laminate parquet, wood on the floor; interlocking cobblestone, soil, paledyen (broken marble) on the garden floor; corrugated sheet, onduline, alaturka and Marseille type tiles on the roof. The diversity in the use of materials in the gecekondu can be summarised as a result of factors such as repeating rural construction practices in the urban context, material selection based on economic and functional factors, and material additions to the gecekondu at different times.

While the use of materials is observed in intermediate areas, transition areas and peripheral areas in housing spaces, in communal spaces and neighbourhood scale, in addition to these areas, relationships are also established in gathering areas. While improvisation, intertwining and separation-uniting are observed at all scales, destabilisation and intersection are also observed in housing spaces and neighbourhoods. In housing spaces, patterns of action such as using different materials together and reusing old materials are observed. It is observed that the materials used in communal spaces, areas where actions such as sitting, resting and gathering take place are portable and lightweight, while the materials used in rural usage practices are also used in the first gecekondu settlements. In the neighbourhood, using different materials together, creating common areas and organising social and private activities with lightweight, portable materials constitute remarkable observations in the context of the threshold. In line with the developing actional patterns, it is possible to say that complex-orderly, compatible-discordant, neutral-distinctive, similarity-difference, transience, variability, instability qualities can be observed at all scales in the relationship of spaces with the use of materials, and that intermittent-continuous qualities emerge in housing spaces and in the neighbourhood(See Table 5).

Table 5. Use of Material in the Formation of Physical Thresholds in Gecekondu(2- (Kütük, 2022); 4- (Ankara Mamak Municipality, 2007); 6- (Akad,1973a); 12- (Akad,1974))

		Physical Thresholds / Use of Material		
		Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces	Neighbourhood
			Small Groups	Large Participation Groups
Spatial Formations				
				
				
Formation Areas		peripheral areas intermediate areas transition areas	peripheral areas intermediate areas transition areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas
Forms of Relation		destabilising improvising separating-uniting intersecting intertwining	improvising separating-uniting intertwining	improvising separating-uniting intertwining
Action Patterns		•using different materials together (country-urban, brick-biriket etc.) •reuse old materials	•using different materials together (country-urban, plastic-wood etc.) •creating specialised areas (with temporary, portable materials)	•using different materials together (rural-urban, plastic-wood etc.) •creating common areas (temporary, with portable materials) •organise social events (with light, portable materials) •organise special events (with light, portable materials)
Spatial Attributes		complex-orderly compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference transience variability ambivalence intermittent-continuous	complex-orderly compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference transience variability ambivalence	complex-orderly compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference transience variability ambivalence intermittent-continuous




Infrastructure Development

Infrastructure formation in gecekondus presents a content that gradually systematises over time and enables the formation of common space practices in gecekondus life. It is seen that these services, which include electricity, water supply, sewerage and communication, produce various thresholds in gecekondus life. The lack of infrastructure in the first gecekondus settlements and the fact that these services were left to the gecekondus' own efforts for a while paved the way for each gecekondus to access the same service at different times. In a 2013 study conducted in Altındağ district, it was observed that the infrastructure rate in gecekondus neighbourhoods was 16%, while it was 70% in other neighbourhoods of the same district (Bektaş and Yücel, 2013). Kemal Karpat's study on gecekondus settlements in Baltalimanı found that before 1974, 2% of the houses had running water and 11% had electricity (Karpat, 2022:116). The lack of mains water service paved the way for the use of common fountains to solve the water problem in the neighbourhood. A similar situation was experienced in the sewerage system, and the insufficiency of this system led to the establishment of common toilets, as mentioned by Fenik in his Altındağ interviews (Fenik, 1949). Communication services constitute another service heading in gecekondus life that was later made accessible to everyone. Yasa stated that three of the five telephones in the neighbourhood were located in the houses, one in the neighbourhood grocery store and one in the yoghurt factory. He mentioned that the grocery store and yoghurt factory were preferred for telephone calls (Öğretmen, 1957:28). Thus, the lack of infrastructure has led to the emergence of social and spatial formations that provide interaction between people living in gecekondus settlements, develop an organisational structure and struggle or resist against the infrastructure needs demanded, and produce solutions with their own means in the process until the infrastructure deficiency is eliminated.

While the formation of infrastructure is commonly observed in intermediate areas, transition areas and peripheral areas in housing spaces and communal spaces, in communal spaces and neighbourhood scale, it is seen that relationships are established in gathering areas in addition to these areas. While improvising, interacting, encountering, separating-uniting are observed at all scales, there are also forms of relating such as occupying and dispossessing in communal spaces, and connecting and resisting in housing spaces and neighbourhood. The binding feature of the lack of infrastructure is effective in the realisation of actions such as storing, gathering, communicating and organising at all scales. In housing spaces, actions such as creating infrastructure through collective labour, producing alternative solutions, leaving some spaces outside the dwelling, not separating the wet area, solving rainwater with the slope of the roof, leaving the installation elements outside are also associated with the formation of infrastructure. In communal spaces, in addition to these, actions such as creating a common space and directing the water with small channels according to the slope of the land are encountered. In line with the actional patterns developed at all scales, it is possible to say that transience, variability, complex-orderly can be observed in the infrastructure formation of the spaces, neutral-distinctive, compatible-discordant, intermittent-continuous in the housing spaces; while in the common spaces and neighbourhood scale, qualities such as disorganisation, directivity-freedom also emerge(See Table 6).

Table 6. Infrastructure Development in the Formation of Physical Thresholds in Gecekondu(2- (Kütük, 2022); 5-(Pourbager, 2017; 10-(Pinterest, 2024); 11-(Ökten, 1988); 12- (Akad,1974); 13- (Saltresearch,2024); 14- (Fenik,1949); 15- (Eğilmez, 1973); 16-(Akad,1973b))

Physical Thresholds / Infrastructure Development

	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces		Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups	
Spatial Formations				
Formation Areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas	transition areas gathering areas	transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas
Forms of Relation	interacting improvising encountering separating-uniting connecting resisting	interacting improvising occupying dispossessing encountering separating-uniting	interacting improvising occupying dispossessing encountering separating-uniting	interacting improvising encountering separating-uniting connecting resisting dispossessing occupying
Action Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •to create infrastructure through collective labour •to produce alternative solutions (line, well, etc.) •leaving some spaces outside the dwelling (WC etc.) •not separating the wet volume •solving rainwater with roof slope •leaving the installation elements outside •store •gather •communicate •organise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •creating a common space (fountain, WC, etc.) •directing the water with small channels according to the slope of the land •using the installation elements for different functions (hanging laundry, etc.) •to produce alternative solutions (drawing lines, making wells, etc.) •leaving some spaces outside the dwelling (WC etc.) •storage •gather •communicate •organise •wait 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •to create infrastructure through collective labour •creating a common space (fountain, WC, etc.) •directing water through small channels according to the slope of the land •gather •wait •communicate •store •organise 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •to create infrastructure through collective labour •creating a common space (fountain, WC, etc.) •to produce alternative solutions •organise
Spatial Attributes	neutral-distinctive compatible-discordant transience variability complex-orderly intermittent-continuous	neutral-distinctive compatible-discordant disorganisation transience variability	transience variability complex-orderly disorganisation directivity-freedom	transience variability complex-orderly disorganisation directivity-freedom


4.2. Social and Cultural Thresholds in Gecekondu

Formation of the Right to Property

The relationship between the gecekondu and the formation of property rights is shaped in line with the situations that create property uncertainty and the thresholds opened by situations that cause property conflicts. According to the information obtained from the interview with Celal Özdemir, the location of the dwelling to be established in the city by the migrant coming from the countryside is determined by the relations of kinship and fellow countrymen. Other gecekondu are positioned according to the spatial orientation of the squat built before them. Thus, spontaneous parcelisation and street texture are formed (Özdemir, 2022). In later times, according to Article 28 of the Law No. 6188 published in the Official Gazette in 1953, it was decided to demolish the shanties and it was decided that the shanties under construction would be demolished immediately and the shanties that had become housing would be demolished within 15 days (Law on Encouraging Building Construction and Unauthorised Buildings, 1953). This practice, which was continued with many subsequent decisions, paved the way for the demolition and reconstruction of gecekondu. Thus, the ownership status of the gecekondu house, which was under the threat of demolition at any time, became uncertain and was positioned on the threshold between residentialisation and dispossession. With the amnesties and rights granted in the following years, the ownership status of gecekondu changed. According to Alpar and Yener's research, gecekondu are now divided into tenants and homeowners, while gecekondu belonging to homeowners are grouped as detached with title deed, with share deed, without title deed and with allocation certificate. While this ownership status in gecekondu changed depending on variables such as length of stay in the city, income status, occupation, it affected the number of storeys and thus the structural status of the gecekondu (Alpar and Yener, 1991:108-110). The right to property is an issue to be addressed not only in housing spaces but also in communal spaces. The use of vague areas, the use of the facades of houses to write graffiti, electrical panel surfaces, billboards, security shutters of shops and roofs shows that the understanding of property has spread to common spaces (Doyduk, 2019).

While the formation of property rights is observed in intermediate areas, transition areas and peripheral areas in housing spaces, it is seen that in communal spaces, in addition to these areas, a relationship is established in vague areas. At the neighbourhood scale, transitional areas, gathering areas, peripheral areas and isolated areas are the contexts associated with the formation of property rights. While improvisation and occupation are seen at all scales, intertwining and dispossession in housing and communal spaces; at the scale of housing and neighbourhood, there are also forms of association such as resistance, reconciling-conflicting, connection and interaction. In housing spaces, actions such as determining ownership according to temporary social relations, setting boundaries, building a new one in place of the demolished squat, and using common areas are seen in the formation of ownership. In communal spaces, actions such as using common areas, writing graffiti, using vague areas, creating privatised areas, and using public property are encountered. At the neighbourhood scale, property is formed through actions such as determining ownership according to temporary social relations and setting boundaries. In the formation of the right of ownership of spaces in line with the actional patterns developed at different scales, the qualities of limited-unlimited, permeability/transitivity, complex-orderly, transience, non-belonging, and variability are observed in housing and communal spaces. It is possible to say that complex-regular and autonomy qualities emerge in the neighbourhood (See Table 7).

Table 7. Formation of the Right to Property in the Formation of Social and Cultural Thresholds in Gecekondu(1-(Kartal,1989); 2- (Kütük, 2022); 9-(Google Earth,2002); 13-(Samsun Canik Municipality, 2017))

	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces		Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups	
Spatial Formations				
Formation Areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas	transition areas peripheral areas vague areas	transition areas peripheral areas isolated areas gathering areas
Forms of Relation	improvising occupying dispossessing resisting reconciling-conflicting intertwining connecting interacting	improvising occupying dispossessing intersecting intertwining	improvising occupying dispossessing intertwining connecting	improvising occupying resisting reconciling-conflicting interacting connecting
Action Patterns	•determining ownership according to temporary social relations (relatives, fellow countrymen, slumlord, etc.) •to determine the boundary (with temporary, permeable materials) •building a new one instead of the demolished slum •using shared spaces (stacking materials, adding space, etc.)	•using common areas (stacking materials, adding space, etc.) •writing graffiti •use vague areas (parking, creating a garden, etc.) •creating specialised areas (airing wool, washing carpets, etc.)	•using communal areas (stacking materials, creating a market area, weddings, etc.) •writing graffiti •using vague areas (parking, creating a garden, etc.) •creating an area of resistance (action, protest, etc.) •using public property (hanging objects on electricity poles, etc.)	•determining ownership according to temporary social relations (relatives, fellow countrymen, slumlord, etc.) •demarcation of boundaries (with temporary, permeable materials)
Spatial Attributes	limited-unlimited open-closed inside-outside private-public permeability/transitivity transience variability	limited-unlimited permeability/transitivity complex-orderly transience non-locality non-belonging variability	limited-unlimited permeability/transitivity complex-orderly transience non-locality non-belonging variability	complex-orderly autonomy

Use of Space

The use of space in gecekondu settlements includes spatial formations that are shaped by the thresholds that emerge during the use of communal spaces that come to the forefront in gecekondu settlements. In this context, social, cultural and commercial space utilisation practices in communal spaces need to be examined. As a result of the observations made, it is possible to divide social activities into two as activities that do not affect the space and activities that transform the space. Social activities that do not affect the space are spaces that develop spontaneously in daily life, do not produce a permanent space, are formed instantly and consumed quickly. Such spaces may include activities such as sitting, meeting, gathering, playing games. On the other hand, social activities that transform the space are defined as temporary formations in which the different functions that the user ascribes to it in addition to its fixed function are realised together with spatial transformation. In the field study on this subject, henna night and circumcision wedding organisations were encountered; in addition, a market area was encountered in the data obtained from the archives. Commercial activities, on the other hand, provide an assessment of the activities of peddlers, street markets, coffee houses, shops and hawkers in gecekondu settlements.

While the use of space is observed in intermediate areas, transition areas and peripheral areas in housing spaces, in communal spaces, in addition to these areas, it is seen that relationships are established in peripheral areas and gathering areas. While improvising and occupying are observed at all scales, in communal spaces, forms of association such as interacting, dispossessing, encountering, separating-

uniting, intertwining, reconciling-conflicting, connecting are observed. Spatial uses such as resting, playing games, doing daily chores, drying vegetables and fruits, cooking, hanging laundry, receiving guests, raising cattle and sheep, growing fruits and vegetables, and storing materials are encountered in housing spaces. In communal spaces, organising social activities, organising special events, gathering, chatting on foot, using river and stream beds, waiting, washing streets, carpets, etc., shopping, airing quilts, carpets, etc. stand out as prominent actions in the gecekondu. At the neighbourhood scale, actions such as organising and forming resistance against the rights demanded also emerge. While permeability/transitivity, transience, transience and variability are observed at all scales in the installation of space in line with the actional patterns that develop at different scales, it is possible to say that the qualities of neutral-distinctive, compatible-discordant, complex-orderly in housing spaces; non-locality, non-belonging, limited-unlimited, directivity-freedom and disorganisation in communal spaces; and autonomy, commonality in the neighbourhood also emerged(See Table 8).

Table 8. Use of Space in the Formation of Social and Cultural Thresholds in Gecekondu (2- (Kütük, 2022); 5-(Pourbager, 2017); 7- (Tibet, 1978); 8-(Erakalın,1965); 10-(Pinterest, 2024); 13-(Saltresearch,2024); 17-(Sinan,1982))

Social and Cultural Thresholds/Use of Space

	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces		Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups	
Spatial Formations				
Formation Areas	intermediate areas transition areas peripheral areas	gathering areas transition areas peripheral areas	gathering areas transition areas vague areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas isolated areas
Forms of Relation	improvising occupying	improvising interacting occupying dispossessing encountering separating-uniting intertwining reconciling-conflicting connecting	improvising interacting occupying dispossessing encountering separating-uniting intertwining reconciling-conflicting connecting	improvising resisting interacting occupying dispossessing encountering separating-uniting intertwining
Action Patterns	•rest •play the game •doing daily chores (preparing food, washing dishes, etc.) •drying vegetables, fruit •cooking food •hang laundry •to receive guests •raising ovine and bovine animals •growing fruit, vegetables •storing material	•play the game •rest •doing daily chores (chopping fruit, vegetables, etc.) •gathering •laundry •cooking •dry fruit, vegetables •shopping •to chat on your feet •quilt, carpet, etc. Ventilate •washing clothes, carpets, etc.	•organising social events (meetings, distributing aid, etc.) •organising special events (weddings, circumcision, etc.) •gathering •play the game •to chat on your feet •using river and stream beds (swimming, washing clothes, etc.) •waiting •washing street, carpets, etc. •Shopping •hang laundry	•organising social events (meetings, distributing aid, etc.) •organising special events (weddings, circumcision, etc.) •organising against the rights demanded (establishing an association, etc.) •organising resistance (action, protest, etc.)
Spatial Attributes	neutral-distinctive permeability/transitivity transience variability compatible-discordant complex-orderly	compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive permeability/transitivity transience variability non-locality non-belonging limited-unlimited disorganisation	permeability/transitivity transience variability directivity-freedom non-locality non-belonging limited-unlimited disorganisation	commonality permeability/transitivity transience variability directivity-freedom limited-unlimited autonomy

Interaction with the City

The last issue in the social and cultural thresholds, interaction with the city, is shaped by the relationship that the gecekondu establishes with the rest of the city and the formations at the threshold that emerge in these relationships. Interviews with Celal Özdemir reveal that the relationship established with the rest of the city in various business lines and the advantages and comforts of being urbanised have an impact on the gecekondu dwellers, and that this has led to a desire to move up in class (Özdemir, 2022). It is possible to say that this situation causes urban life to be included in rural life in the gecekondu. İbrahim Yasa, in his research, defines the gecekondu family as a transitional family with both rural and urban characteristics in terms of social values and habits (Yasa, 1970). Another relationship established with the city is through transport. Transport plays an important role both within the gecekondu itself and in its relationship with the rest of the city. Particularly during the period of transport by minibus, stops that are spatially definite but physically indeterminate, and later defined stops formed by public transport vehicles constitute threshold discussions. Another factor that enables the interaction of gecekondu dwellers with the city is the professions they have developed to make a living. Occupations that create a spatial impact in the city and can be associated with the threshold space are generally located in sectors defined as informal or marginal. According to Oğuz Işık and Melih Pınarcıoğlu's research, the jobs in these sectors are carried out by people who try to exist by developing their own or collective strategies, develop solutions by adapting local traditions to urban conditions, set their own rules to take advantage of legal gaps, and adopt an organisation style with the network relationship they form (Işık and Pınarcıoğlu, 2020:50-55). The professions in these sectors are added to the public spaces in the city in line with their own defined work and change the area and its environment.

While interaction with the city is observed in intermediate areas and transition areas in housing spaces, in communal spaces, in addition to these areas, it is also seen that a relationship is established in gathering areas. At the neighbourhood scale, intermediate areas, transition areas, gathering areas, peripheral areas and transformation areas are the contexts where interaction with the city is established. While improvising, encountering, interacting, separating-uniting, reconciling-conflicting are seen at all scales, there are also forms of interaction such as resisting, intersecting in common spaces, intertwining and connecting in housing spaces and neighbourhoods. In housing spaces, actions such as being influenced by urban culture, maintaining some habits from rural culture, surviving among high-rise houses, synthesising urban and rural building styles are encountered. In communal spaces, interaction with the city is established through actions such as creating different lines of work, shopping, playing games, providing transportation, travelling, spending time in social areas, establishing a network between informal jobs, and influencing public spaces. On the neighbourhood scale, action patterns such as creating introverted settlements, transforming, creating a threshold between the countryside and the city, ensuring social diversity, providing cheap labour and housing, and creating a mechanism of resistance appear. In line with the actional patterns that develop at different scales, it is possible to say that in the interaction of spaces with the city, compatible-discordant, neutral-distinctive, similarity-difference, otherness, autonomy can be observed at all scales, while the qualities of betweenness in housing spaces, limited-unlimited in common spaces, non-locality, non-belonging, variability, transience, disorganisation, loitering, permeability/transitivity, security-insecurity and uncanniness emerge in the neighbourhood (See Table 9).

Table 9. Interaction with the City in the Formation of Social and Cultural Thresholds in Gecekondu (2- (Kütük, 2022); 3- (Aksoy, 1978); 4- (Ankara Mamak Municipality, 2007); 13-(Samsun Canik Municipality, 2017); 17-(Sinan,1982)

Social and Cultural Thresholds/Interaction with the City

	Housing Spaces	Communal Spaces		Neighbourhood
		Small Groups	Large Participation Groups	
Spatial Formations				
				
				
Formation Areas	intermediate areas transition areas	intermediate areas transition areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas	intermediate areas transition areas gathering areas peripheral areas transformation areas
Forms of Relation	improvising encountering resisting interacting separating-uniting reconciling-conflicting	improvising encountering interacting separating-uniting reconciling-conflicting intersecting intertwining connecting	improvising encountering interacting separating-uniting reconciling-conflicting intersecting intertwining connecting	improvising encountering interacting resisting separating-uniting reconciling-conflicting connecting
Action Patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •being influenced by urban culture (clothing, goods, etc.) •to continue some habits from rural culture (raising cattle and sheep etc.) •to maintain existence among high-rise dwellings •to synthesise urban and rural building forms (construction methods, materials, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •creating different lines of business (peddling, tailoring, etc.) •shopping •play games •to provide transport (minibus, bus, etc.) •travelling •spending time in social areas (going to a bakery, tea garden, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •creating different lines of business (peddling, tailoring, etc.) •networking informal jobs •impacting on public spaces (with stalls, mobile cars, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •to create introverted settlements •transforming (liberated area, uncanny place, etc.) •creating a threshold between the countryside and the city •ensuring social diversity •providing cheap labour and housing •create a resistance mechanism
Spatial Attributes	compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference otherness autonomy betweenness	compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference limited-unlimited otherness autonomy non-locality non-belonging variability transience disorganisation loitering permeability/transitivity	compatible-discordant neutral-distinctive similarity-difference limited-unlimited otherness autonomy incongruity non-belonging variability transience disorganisation loitering permeability/transitivity	compatible-discordant security-insecurity neutral-distinctive similarity-difference otherness autonomy uncannyness

5. CONCLUSION

As an unplanned settlement emerging in cities in the context of Turkey, the gecekondü settlement, as an improvised spatial production of a community brought together by the commons, has been able to develop in different contexts, and by establishing cycles of reconciliation-conflict with the dynamics of urban spatial formation, it has created threshold spatial strings that form reciprocity in the city. While developing by articulating with the urban fabric, it has opened thresholds in physical, social and cultural contexts by creating resistance against urban dominant dynamics, and has made visible the possibility of developing multi-directional urban spatial dialogue. In order to create an integrated urban culture, it has created dynamic spaces where social and cultural differences can meet, which are not completely established. Thus, it has also supported urban resilience by creating buffer zones where the tensions arising from the urban crises that triggered its formation can be absorbed. In addition, the fact that an urban community that strengthens development mechanisms with its role in industrial production in the city, solves the burden it will cause to the city on its own, by taking an active role in urban production, with solidarity-based structures, has provided a sample to create models for urban sustainability.

Investigating the gecekondü through the threshold spatial patterns it forms in the city makes visible its effective role in urban production and its structures that have remained in a state of formation, which allows to reveal its dynamic mechanisms based on production. With this understanding, analysing and conceptually and visually mapping the thresholds created by the gecekondü in physical, social and cultural contexts has enabled the creation of interrelated data patterns to convey the spatial production interventions of these settlements. The threshold spatial patterns produced by the gecekondü settlement and its interventions in urban spatial production have enabled to read the specific aspects of the gecekondü settlement, to explain the creative formations in the gecekondü settlement and to reveal the contributions of the gecekondü settlement to urban spatial production.

Aspects specific to Gecekondü;

- Realisation of fast, temporary, variable, low-cost, collaborative collective spatial productions in the face of the spatial crisis
- Producing flexible and open to change spaces that meet the basic needs of the gecekondü dwellers
- Settlement in spatially non-intervened contexts that form boundaries in urban spatial production, such as intermediate areas, transition areas, peripheral areas and isolated areas
- Creating dynamic spatial constructions that are adaptable, articulable and allow change/transformation
- Use of readily available, cheap, sustainable and recyclable materials
- Formation of property rights based on community relations and consensus
- Formation of spatial structures based on collectivities, enabling social participation and supporting social integration
- It is explained as the gecekondü dwellers establishing mechanisms that develop social interaction and will to organise resistance and struggle processes by trying to improve their current living conditions for their needs that cannot be met from the city.

Creative becomings in the Gecekondü;

- The production of hybrid practices as a result of the encounter between rural and urban life practices
- Incorporation of nature into the spatial construction for production in order to establish sustainable cycles
- Evaluating the potential of topography with creative spatial constructions
- The space has an openness and temporariness suitable for addition, change and reproduction for changing needs
- The development of improvised construction procedures and the varied and creative use of reusable materials
- Develop mechanisms that build sustainable cycles in the face of lack of infrastructure
- A change-oriented solution to the property problem through the commons

- Development of collaborative improvised production practices that strengthen social participation in spatial production
- The opening of thresholds in the context of areas that form boundaries in urban interaction is counted as the invention of elements that create circulation in the city, such as the peddler, pedlar and minibus.

Contributions of the gecekondü to urban spatial production;

- Developing creative interventions against the housing problem in the city
- Increasing the crisis management and resilience capacity of the city
- Supporting the physical structure, cultural diversity, social and economic dynamics of the city
- Development of local initiative and co-operation in urban spatial production
- Production of urban space through inclusive and participatory processes
- Formation of settlements with distinctive identities in the city
- Increased environmental adaptive capacity of cities and utilisation of local resources for sustainable urban development
- It is determined as the development of urban spatial production knowledge and skills through learning by doing.

As the findings show, models that can be developed by learning from the unique aspects, creativity and urban spatial production contributions of the gecekondü have the potential to provide inputs for the sustainable integrated development of cities. Identifying the references provided for urban spatial production by a formation such as the gecekondü settlement, which has been tried and experienced in its development and results at various scales, is important in terms of recognising and evaluating its potential to support urban resilience, sustainability, practical knowledge and the integrated development of the city physically, socially and culturally. Taking this potential into consideration in the production of urban models will enable the development of an urban spatial production knowledge that will encourage the integration of local knowledge and experience in urban planning and design processes by creating a local input in the production of contemporary cities.

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