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Spatial Memory of Clothing: A Cultural Reading of Pera/Beyoğlu Fashion Houses From The Ottoman Empire to The Republic

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the tailors and fashion houses operating in Pera/Beyoğlu during the period spanning from the late Ottoman Empire to the early years of the Republic as memory spaces that produce cultural memory, social representation, and public visibility in the process of modernization. The scope of the research is limited to the example of Pera/Beyoğlu, with the cases of Madam Katia Kiracı analyzed in the context of professional continuity and spatial memory. The study adopts an interdisciplinary approach based on qualitative research methods. Literature review, archive and visual document analysis, oral history interviews, and spatial analysis were used as methods. Ultimately, the study aims to make a unique contribution to the literature on urban memory and spatial representation in the modernization process by examining fashion houses in Pera/Beyoğlu.

Keywords: *Fashion houses, interior design, culture, memory, space.*

Giyimin Mekansal Belleği: Pera/Beyoğlu Moda Evlerinin Osmanlı'dan Cumhuriyet'e Kültürel Bir Okuması

Öz

Bu çalışma, Osmanlı'nın son döneminden Cumhuriyet'in erken yıllarına uzanan süreçte Pera/Beyoğlu'nda faaliyet gösteren terzihaneler ve moda evlerini, modernleşme sürecinde kültürel bellek, toplumsal temsil ve kamusal görünürlük üreten bellek mekânları olarak ele almayı amaçlamaktadır. Araştırma kapsamı, Pera/Beyoğlu örneği ile sınırlandırılarak Madam Katia Kiracı örnekleri, mesleki süreklilik ve mekânsal hafıza bağlamında analiz edilmiştir. Çalışma, nitel araştırma yöntemlerine dayalı disiplinlerarası bir yaklaşım benimsemektedir. Yöntem olarak literatür taraması, arşiv ve görsel belge incelemesi, sözlü tarih görüşmeleri ve mekânsal analiz birlikte kullanılmıştır. Sonuç olarak çalışma ile Pera/Beyoğlu'ndaki moda evlerini, modernleşme sürecindeki kent belleği ve mekânsal temsil literatürüne özgün bir katkı sunmaktır.

Anahtar kelimeler: *Moda evleri, iç mimari, kültür, bellek, mekân.*

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1. Introduction

Dressing is one of the basic needs that has been continuous in human life throughout history. This need, which initially served to protect the individual from physical environmental conditions, evolved over time and acquired social and cultural meanings. The cutting and sewing of fabric and the production of clothes according to human body measurements gave rise to the tailoring profession, and the interiors where these activities were carried out were called tailors. In the process, dressing has gone beyond being just a physiological need and has turned into a basic practice that reflects the individual's identity, social status, religious preference, social structure, and cultural values. This transformation process paved the way for the institutionalization of the tailoring craft and the transformation of tailors into interiors that produce social memory.

Developments in the textile industry, the incorporation of new materials into production, and changing tastes and the emergence of the concept of fashion have led to the formation of new building typologies that transcend closed and individual spaces such as tailor shops. As Bayram & Turgut (2021) emphasize in their evaluation of the facade and plan characteristics of the period's buildings, these new typologies formed the spatial infrastructure of modernization. Fashion, which is directly linked to social tastes, identity, and representation, is an important indicator that reflects not only individual preferences but also the social and cultural dynamics of the period. In this context, clothing is no longer an object produced for personal use but becomes an element of representation displayed in public spaces, and the spatial counterpart of this transformation is fashion houses. Fashion houses are places that not only produce clothing but also display it in their windows, bringing it into public view. At this point, fashion houses, unlike tailor shops, make visible through space not so much individual needs as period tastes, the aesthetic understanding of society, images of modernity, and the social and symbolic dimensions of dressing. Furthermore, interior spaces function as carriers of cultural narratives. As Turan & Erçevik Sönmez (2021) argue in their analysis of architectural spaces and artistic elements, the interior design acts as a medium for social memory. Similarly, the interiors of Pera fashion houses served as stages where the modernization of the Ottoman society was visually and spatially negotiated.

According to the view accepted by fashion historians, the concept of fashion first emerged during the reign of King Louis XIV of France (1643–1715) at the Palace of Versailles. Louis XIV's 1668 law supporting nobles who dressed fashionably clearly demonstrated the importance given to beautiful clothing. During this period, the influence of fashion was not limited to clothing; it was also reflected in laws, fairy tales (Sleeping Beauty, Little Red Riding Hood, etc.), and various organizations such as the World's Fair, thus ensuring the continuity and importance of the concept of fashion (Ökten, 2022, p.19).

The concept of custom tailoring, which began in Europe between 1825 and 1895 through Charles Frederick Worth, led to the spread of the tailoring profession as the bourgeoisie, who produced their own clothes, became the dominant class controlling trade in cities. However, with the invention of the sewing machine, mass production of clothing became widespread, and these machines were also adapted for home production. Istanbul became a center where Western clothing styles were followed and adapted to local clothing styles in the 19th century. French fashion of this period attracted the attention of Ottoman women, who adapted Western fashions to their own clothing (Görünür, 1996, p.99).

With the adoption of fashion by the court officials during the modernization period of the Ottoman Empire, tailoring, initially seen as a basic necessity, evolved into an understanding of fashion and fashion houses, creating change in production processes. The influence of Western fashion, which began in the court environment, was not limited to the ruling elite of the state; it also paved the way for the opening of fashion houses that attracted the interest of the urban population.

In the 19th century, the Western style of dress that came with the influence of modernization in the Ottoman Empire became more pronounced during the reign of Mahmud II (1808-1839) and increased

its influence even more during the reign of Sultan Abdülmecit (1839-1861) (Tezcan, 1988, p.45-51). The uniform of the "Asâkir-i Mansûre-i Muhammediye" army, established in the European style to replace the Janissary Corps, which was abolished in 1826, consisted of a Western-style jacket, trousers, fez, and boots (Olcaytu, 1998, p.46). An English journalist in Istanbul at the time described Sultan Mahmud II's efforts regarding clothing as follows: "While religious scholars and officials retained their traditional attire, a European-style uniform consisting of a jacket and trousers was introduced for civil servants, and the fez was accepted, thus abandoning traditional clothing (Şehsuvaroğlu, 1952, p.4). With the proclamation of the First Constitutional Monarchy by Sultan Abdülhamit II, the impact of the reform movement was also seen in the field of fashion. The Sultan's and the palace's official tailor, famous Dutch fashion designer and stylist J. T. Botter, the Sultan's official tailor, and Charvet, the Sultan's tailor in Paris, dressed Abdülhamit II (Duhani, 1982 p.45-50).

The famous Italian architect Raimondo D'Aronco first came to Istanbul in 1893 at the invitation of Abdülhamit II and served as the palace architect for 12 years. Combining Ottoman culture with the Art Nouveau style, which was particularly evident in most buildings in Istanbul during the Westernization period, D'Aronco achieved a unique style and designed a fashion house in Pera for the sultan's tailor. He completed the Botter Apartment, Botter's fashion house, in 1907 (Çelik, 1986, p. 96-97). The customers of this fashion house were predominantly highranking individuals: Abdülmecit Efendi, Enver Pasha, and Mustafa Kemal Pasha, among others. In addition, Sultan Abdülhamit II also dressed from the Parma workshop, founded by M. Parma, which was primarily known for its military clothing designs. The transformation to European clothing styles, which began with the Tanzimat period and continued with the proclamation of the Second Constitutional Monarchy, was first seen in men's military clothing, while its influence on women's clothing became apparent in the second half of the 19th century (Tezcan, 1988 p.45-51).

In the existing literature, Ottoman modernization has mostly been examined through large-scale architectural structures or directly through clothing practices. However, the question of how social memory and Westernization practices were produced and spatialized within the interiors of Pera’s fashion houses has remained in the background. In this context, the central problem of this research is to conduct a spatial analysis of how the fashion house typology that emerged in Pera at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries (particularly in the context of pioneering examples such as the Botter Apartment) functioned not merely as a commercial production space; but also as active “stages of representation and negotiation” where social identity, status, and aesthetics were constructed during the Ottoman modernization process. Within this framework, the aim of the study is to reveal how the interior spatial organization and design elements of fashion houses reflected and shaped the socio-cultural dynamics of the era.

2. Material and Method

This study, which examines the role of space in social memory and cultural continuity, is based on a qualitative research design and case study strategy that addresses phenomena in their natural environments from a holistic perspective. The theoretical framework of the research is built on Pierre Nora's conceptualization of memory spaces and Jan Assmann's theory of cultural memory; in this context, the relationship between fashion and space is interpreted as a plane where social memory is reproduced, beyond a mere physical coexistence.

The material for the research is the Pera/Beyoğlu district, which was at the center of Istanbul's socio-cultural transformation during the transition from Ottoman modernization to the Republic. Purposeful sampling was used to determine the study area; Hacopulo Passage was selected as the sample due to its spatial continuity, preserved architectural fabric, and symbolic importance in fashion history. Within the passage, the Butik Katia (Madam Katia) Hat Workshop, representing a craft tradition passed down from mother to daughter since 1929, is the primary focus of the research. This selection was determined not only by the fact that the space is a commercial enterprise, but also by its nature as a

living “memory space” that carries the clothing culture and minority heritage of the period into the present.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, data diversification was employed, and the process was conducted in a three-stage framework. In the first stage, a comprehensive literature and archive review on Pera's urban morphology, Ottoman-Republican period clothing codes, and fashion sociology was conducted to establish the conceptual framework of the study; the role of fashion houses in social stratification was examined through periodicals and photographs of the era. In the second stage, fieldwork conducted on May 31, 2024, involved observing and photographing the architectural design of Hacopulo Passage, the interior organization of the store, window displays, and production tools (hat molds, etc.). In the third stage, oral history methods were used to read the spatial memory through subjects; a semi-structured interview was conducted on the same date with Madam Katia, the second-generation representative of the business. This interview yielded in-depth data on the intergenerational transfer of craftsmanship, the spatial journey from Aznavur Passage to Hacopulo Passage, and the changing customer profile.

All qualitative data collected were evaluated using descriptive analysis and content analysis methods. Field observations, archival documents, and interview transcripts were interpreted in light of Jürgen Habermas's theories of the public sphere and Richard Sennett's theories of the public person, revealing the dialectical relationship between the role of shop windows as a “stage of representation” in the construction of modern identity and the privacy of the workshop as a “private sphere.”

3. Findings and Discussion

3.1. The Social Transformation of Pera (Beyoğlu) in the 19th Century and the Early Republican Period

At the beginning of the 20th century, Europe entered a period of profound transformation thanks to the technological advances and economic expansion brought about by the Industrial Revolution. The shift to mass production, the strengthening of industrial infrastructure, and the development of international trade networks brought with them a dynamic that reshaped the spatial and social structure of cities. This new social structure went beyond economic relations to transform cultural production and consumption practices, making art accessible to wider audiences. The acceleration of urbanization during this period led to diversification in the needs and expectations of modern life. Metro systems facilitating transportation were introduced in major European cities, public spaces were illuminated with electricity, and the use of elevators in multi-story buildings became widespread. Central heating systems and bathrooms with hot water redefined the concept of comfort in the home, while the introduction of electricity in interior spaces led to significant standardization in everyday practices. These technical and spatial developments raised individuals' expectations regarding the quality of life and paved the way for the idea of progress to become one of the fundamental concepts of modern culture.

These developments also found resonance in the Ottoman Empire, which had been in communication with Europe for centuries. Although its economy and military power were not as strong as before, the Ottoman administration incorporated the idea of keeping pace with the times through Westernization and modernization initiatives into a program and transformed it into a reform process. As a spatial counterpart to this transformation, the state's administrative center and the sultan's residence were moved from Topkapı Palace to Dolmabahçe Palace, which was designed and furnished in a Western style. The idea of modernization, which initially began in the military and industrial fields in the Ottoman Empire, permeated all layers of social life. In Pera (Beyoğlu), the center of Westernization in the capital Istanbul, European life became visible in social practices, cultural production forms, architectural fabric, street layouts, and interior designs.

The Pera district, the center of Ottoman Westernization, covers part of today's Beyoğlu district. At that time, Pera was a settlement preferred by non-Muslim citizens, Levantines, merchants, and artists. In this context, it was a meeting point for culture and art with its multicultural structure. Initially called

Cadde-i Kebir and now known as Istiklal Avenue, the area stands out with its Western-style foreign embassies, apartment buildings, places of worship, foreign schools, and service facilities comparable to those in Europe (Salbacak, 2019, p.33-34).

The Tanzimat Edict, which formed the constitutional basis for the transition to a modern society in the Ottoman Empire, accelerated the architectural development of Beyoğlu by guaranteeing the property rights of all Ottoman subjects, regardless of religion or race, and introducing legal and organizational regulations in urban areas (Ortaylı, 1979, p.297). The Tanzimat reforms brought about a systematic and controlled change based on laws, creating a centralized administrative system that was the opposite of the traditional situation. As the first step toward a modern municipal organization in the Ottoman Empire, the Istanbul City Trust was established in 1855, based on the French city management system (Rosenthal, 1980, p. 39).

The Tunnel, Istanbul's first metro system, was built between 1871 and 1875 by French engineer E. H. Gavand as a solution to facilitate transportation on the sloping terrain between Karaköy and Galata (Çelik, 1986, p. 96-97). The sewerage system, clean water, street cleaning, firefighting, and natural gas services were developed. Following the establishment of the first power plant in Istanbul in 1911, electric trams joined the transportation system from 1914 electric trams joined the transportation system. The streets were lit with electric lamps. After the proclamation of the Republic, the City Trust was reorganized in 1930 and the Municipality was established (Lewis, 1968, p.400).

In Pera: Among the building types that most strikingly displayed Western architectural styles were embassy buildings, inns in the Galata and Beyoğlu districts, arcades, clothing, perfume, and furniture stores, hairdressers, florists, photo studios, bookstores, printing houses, cafes and restaurants, pastry shops, delicatessens, landscaped parks and gardens, residences, and theaters and circuses, which were an integral part of social life, were built throughout the 19th century to meet the needs of modern life (Akın, 1998, p.191). Embassy buildings, arcades, religious structures, and apartment buildings, constructed by foreign architects in the Neoclassical, Eclectic, Baroque, Rococo, and Art Nouveau styles, became architectural representations of Westernization in Pera with their magnificent facades and Western-style interiors.

The renowned Italian architect Raimondo D'Aronco first came to Istanbul in 1893 at the invitation of Sultan Abdulhamid II and served as court architect for 12 years. Combining Ottoman culture with the Art Nouveau style, which was particularly evident in most buildings in Istanbul during the Westernization period, D'Aronco achieved a unique style and designed a fashion house in Pera for the sultan's tailor. Construction of the Botter Apartment, which housed Botter's fashion house, began in 1900 (Çelik, 1986, p.96-97) and was completed in 1901. The building has five floors and a terrace floor. Before D'Aronco began construction, Jacques Vitalis' jewelry store was located on this plot. The ground floor was designed for the fashion house, the first floor for the workshop, and the other floors for his son and three daughters (Göncüoğlu, 2012, p.142).

The Botter Apartment Building, designed by Raimondo D'Aronco, is the first significant example of Art Nouveau architecture in Istanbul on an urban scale (Batur, 2005, p.15). The reason the Botter Apartment Building is defined as the first example of Ottoman Art Nouveau architecture is that it is not an eclectic structure but embodies the characteristics of Art Nouveau entirely. The building has two separate entrances. Separate from the store entrance, the apartment entrance is located on the right side of the facade. Raimondo D'Aronco separated the entrance hall from the hall where the elevator staircase is located with a step and preferred circular shapes unique to Art Nouveau in these halls within a solid rectangular formation. The narrow spaces outside the circular lines were planned as small rooms for secondary functions. The plant motifs on the stair railings and metal elevator cage are also typical Art Nouveau characteristics (Erol, 2023, p.110).

In the spatial analysis of the Botter Apartment, the architectural layout demonstrates that the space transcends mere functional tailoring and physically embodies the modernization concepts discussed earlier. For instance, the inclusion of large, street-facing glass display windows on the ground floor is

not merely a structural preference; rather, it signifies the transformation of clothing from a private, functional necessity into a public 'object of representation'. Unlike the traditional, closed, and secluded tailor shops of the Ottoman past, this transparent boundary between the interior fashion house and the street invited the Pera public to visually consume European fashion, thereby actively constructing a new modern urban identity.

Furthermore, the grand reception hall inside the Botter fashion house served a purpose well beyond that of a simple waiting area. It served as a spatial 'stage of negotiation' where the Ottoman elite and the emerging bourgeoisie performed, displayed, and validated their new social status. The spatial hierarchy of the building, transitioning from the highly visible, ornate public display and reception areas to the private, unseen production workshops on the upper floors, directly mirrors the socio-cultural dynamics of the period: the public showcasing of modernity versus the hidden labor of its production.

It is known that the Italian-born Swiss architect Gaspare Fossati (1809-1883) came to Istanbul in 1837 to build the Russian embassy building and worked in the capital for many years with his brother Giuseppe Fossati, who arrived two years after him. It is also known that the Fossati brothers, who were involved in the restoration of Hagia Sophia, completed both the Russian and Dutch Embassy buildings together (Durudoğan, 1998, p.94). Alexandre Vallaury, an architect of Pera origin, also designed buildings here. For example, M. Decugis's house next to the Sixth District, the alteration involving the division of the Ottoman Bank General Manager's house in GrandChamp Square, the Union Française building, and his own private mansion at number 225, which he took great care in constructing, were among these (Duhani, 1984, p.110).

During this period, numerous apartment buildings were constructed in Istanbul, particularly in the Galata, Pera, Taksim, and Şişli areas. These apartment buildings, mostly designed by Greek, Armenian, and Levantine architects, displayed the eclecticism and richness of the period's characteristic styles, ranging from Neoclassical to Art Nouveau (Bozdoğan, 2008, p. 251). The growing need for temporary accommodation, linked to developing means of transportation and international trade, led to the construction of hotels, where various balls and entertainment events were also held, instead of traditional caravanserais. The Hotel de Paris, opened in 1862, the Pera Palas, opened in 1892, and the Tokatlıyan Hotel, opened in 1897, are just a few of the many hotels built here (Akın, 1998, p. 180,190).

Towards the end of the 19th century, the Pera Palace Hotel opened in Pera, the heart of Istanbul. When the world-famous Orient Express began its Paris-Istanbul route in 1888, construction of the hotel began in 1892 to accommodate passengers traveling on the train. The hotel welcomed its first guests in 1895 with an opening ball. The Pera Palace Hotel was also a place of firsts. It went down in history as the first building in Istanbul, outside of the Ottoman palaces, to have electricity. At the same time, the first electric elevator and the first running hot water were also at the Pera Palace Hotel. From the day it opened, it welcomed artists, writers, actors, directors, statesmen, and other famous guests from many countries around the world. One of the hotel's most distinguished guests was Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, the founder of the Republic of Turkey (Pera Palace, n.d.).

Influenced by the passage structures in Paris that brought together fashion houses, Pera is not only known for its beautiful clothing but also as the center of ready-to-wear fashion. The "Passage Hazzopulo," built in 1871 by M. Hazzopulo, the "Aznavur Passage," designed in 1883 by architect Hovsep Aznavur, and other passages designed in subsequent years, such as the "Şark Aynalı Passage, Avrupa Passage, Çiçek Passage, Karlman Passage, etc.," are important landmarks. The ground floors of these passages typically housed numerous shops such as hairdressers, tailors (Figure 1) , fabric stores, ready-to-wear/fashion houses (Akın, 2011, p. 245-255).



Figure 1. An advertisement for one of the shops in the arcade, where famous pattern makers and tailors were concentrated (Üsdiken, 1991, p.1-84)

The city's vulnerability to fires and the occurrence of 229 fires between 1853 and 1906 were among the most significant factors in the beginning of urban development and urban change. The significant losses incurred after the fires of 1831 and 1870, which greatly affected the city's history, brought the issue of Pera's reconstruction to the forefront. In the fire of 1831, many wooden buildings were destroyed, and the fire lasted 15 hours. The fire on May 24, 1870, which went down in history and books as the "Great Pera Fire," destroyed a large part of the city, especially the area between Galatasaray and Taksim. The fire caused many property and human losses, and the city suffered great economic damage. Due to these fires, many new regulations were introduced for the city, and many destroyed areas and their surroundings had to be reorganized (Tuna, 2015, p.30; Türker, 2016, p.40). The fires created turning points in Pera's transformation, and the first examples of urban planning began to appear, along with a cultural curiosity about the West.

While the collapse and demise of the Ottoman Empire, defeated in World War I, was expected, the Republic of Turkey was established after the victory of the war of independence led by Mustafa Kemal Pasha, and declared its independence to the world on October 29, 1923. The ideology of the Republic brought with it the ideals of building a new nation, and the efforts towards modernization and progress permeated all layers of social life. Urbanization and architecture, as well as areas such as education, health, economy, industrialization, and agriculture, benefited from these efforts. Ankara became the capital, and embassies, state institutions, and the intellectual circles of the period moved to Ankara, so the initial development progressed with a focus on Ankara. Although the Republican regime turned its face towards Anatolia during this period, Istanbul continued to be the country's gateway to Europe. Therefore, giving it a modern face was important to emphasize the Western identity of the new Republic, and special importance was attached to spatial arrangements in Beyoğlu, especially Taksim Square. The plan commissioned from Prost aimed to reorganize the city according to modern urban planning criteria. A monument, conceived as a symbol of the young Republic, was commissioned and erected in its current location, accompanied by a comprehensive square and surrounding area redesign. Prost's plan integrated green spaces into existing urban areas and development zones.

The aim is to create a continuous public space by constructing parks, promenades, viewing terraces, squares, and boulevards in a way that forms a cohesive system. According to this plan, the Topçu Barracks were demolished and replaced by the park area known as Taksim Gezisi, which opened in 1943 (Özaydın & Dinçer, 2011, p.31-37).

On April 3, 1930, the first Municipalities Law of the Republican era came into effect. Immediately afterwards, with Law No. 1612 dated May 21, 1930, the Beyoğlu District was divided into three, creating the districts of Beşiktaş and Sarıyer. Beyoğlu District was divided into six subdistricts: Beyoğlu Center, Galata, Kasımpaşa, Hasköy, Şişli, and Taksim (Ergin 1934, p. 1590).

During that period, the Beyoğlu/Pera Region, which most resembled 19th-century Paris, began to decline and change character as non-Muslim minorities left the area. Boulevards such as Vatan and Millet Streets were opened, and many monumental structures of cultural significance were

demolished during their construction. Between 1945 and 1950, the labor force freed up by mechanization in agriculture led to mass migration, particularly to large cities, accelerating the development of shantytown-type settlements on the outskirts of large cities. A large number of people were confronted with the conflicting emotions of modernity for the first time. Those living in shantytown-type housing were introduced to the lifestyles, aesthetic norms, and high culture brought about by modernization, while at the same time becoming aware and conscious of its exclusionary aspects (Bozdoğan, 1999, p. 129).

3.2. The Social Transformation of Pera (Beyoğlu) in the 19th Century and the Early Republican Period

From the beginning of the 19th century, Pera (Beyoğlu) acquired the character of a region where diplomatic and cultural relations with the West were spatially concentrated in the Ottoman capital. The presence of embassy buildings, Levantine settlements, and non-Muslim communities transformed Pera into a multi-layered urban fabric, distinct from the traditional Ottoman neighborhood layout.

The 19th century marked the beginning of Pera's golden age. Pera, which had been Istanbul's most Europeanized district since the 16th century, became an even more significant place in the 19th century as European influence over the Ottoman Empire grew. During this period, the neighborhood's population grew, and with the rise in income from the increased commercial activities of Greek, Armenian, and Jewish merchants and the dissolution of the traditional millet system, non-Muslims and Levantines began to live in Pera and its surroundings, moving away from the specific neighborhoods where they had resided for centuries (Karpat, 2006, p.498-501).

For the people of Beyoğlu, who were eager and striving to be like Europeans, the winter months meant going to the theater and concerts, attending dinner parties and balls. Theaters in the area usually opened their stages in mid-October and continued their activities until the beginning of the summer season. After the theaters closed for the summer, circus performances took their place (Sakaoğlu, 1994, p.214).

As one of the physical changes that occurred at the neighborhood level with modernization, the opening of new spaces that allowed people to be together reflected the "individual"-based structure, one of the fundamental parameters of modernization, in outdoor spaces as well. Spending time alone or with the opposite sex in public spaces became normalized and widespread. These changes began in Istanbul, specifically in Beyoğlu, due to its demographic structure, and then spread throughout the city (Meriç, 2000, p.52).

Balls, known as mixed-gender entertainment gatherings, were entertainment events organized by foreign embassies in the Bosphorus, and in the 19th century, Ottoman statesmen also began to participate in such entertainment. During the years of the Second Constitutional Era, the Ottoman bureaucracy, except for the Palace, also lifted the ban on such mixed-gender entertainment gatherings. However, women and men did not officially come together in the entertainment life of Ottoman society. Mixed-gender social life and official protocol, official balls and entertainment were only introduced with the Republic (Ortaylı, 1979, p.148-150).

The habits of French and British soldiers who came to Istanbul due to the Crimean War also influenced traditional life. These officers, who came to Istanbul as allies of the Ottoman Empire to fight against Russia, mostly brought their families with them and settled in the most prestigious parts of the capital. The relatives of the allied soldiers played a pioneering role in the spread of tea consumption in Istanbul and, in particular, the emergence of tea parties. During the modernization process, which also saw a noticeable change in the culture of eating and drinking, European-style family gatherings with drinks and food began to enter Ottoman life (Kuzucu, 2012, p.84-86).

Population movements during the Armistice period transformed Istanbul's social structure, with high-ranking officers of the occupying forces choosing to reside in the famous hotels of Beyoğlu, where they could maintain their accustomed lifestyle. Another wave of migration was the White Russians who came to Istanbul as refugees. Arriving in the spring of 1919 as the first wave, these refugees, who were

mainly wealthy Russians, took their place in Istanbul's entertainment and nightlife within a few weeks (Bakar, 2015, p. 197). Tens of thousands of Russian men and women settled in Istanbul. In Beyoğlu, restaurants, concerts, bars, cabarets, and casinos quickly fell into Russian hands. Istanbul's fur and jewelry markets became active. The people of Istanbul adopted the hairstyles of Russian women as fashion, and the arrival of many Russian immigrants, penniless and destitute, fueled social problems such as alcohol, gambling, and prostitution (Toprak, 1994, p.5).

While the Armistice made Istanbul the scene of these events, it also turned into a rallying point for national resistance against the occupation, becoming a source of manpower, ammunition, and information sent to Anatolia. During this period, Istanbul was a place that struggled to adapt to change under the harsh conditions of the Armistice, experiencing chaos and turmoil alongside profound transformations and cultural interactions (Aksel, 2000, p.12).

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, balls, entertainment nights, and carnivals were held in Pera. As the traditional Turkish and Western cultures grew closer day by day, everything seen in the West, from calendars, clocks, writing, clothing, lifestyle, and everyday items, began to appear in this region of the Ottoman Empire long before the Republican reforms. Jardin Des Fleurs de Pera, a restaurant that hosted balls and entertainment events of considerable quality alongside its dining services, opened in 1860. It is also known that masked balls were regularly held at the restaurant. This plot of land and the restaurant were completely destroyed in the Pera fire (Akıncı, 2018, p.164).

After the proclamation of the Republic, when official balls began to be held, dance teaching became a highly sought-after profession, especially in large cities. This was because no one knew how to dance. Very few people knew how. Recognizing this need, Panosyan opened a private dance school in Beyoğlu. At that time, taking dance lessons from Panosyan was a way to "show off" in society. He was so successful in teaching tango and charleston dances that it was said he gave appointments months in advance (Boyazoğlu, 1996, p.68).

Following the abolition of the monarchy in 1922 and the caliphate in 1924, various reforms were made in education with the Law of Unification of Education, and a secular system was adopted. In the same year, the abolition of Sharia courts and the adoption of civil law enabled a complete change in the social order. Following the hat and clothing revolution in 1926, the alphabet revolution in 1928 created great excitement in society and played an important role in the formation and development of the concept of "national consciousness." The granting of voting rights to Turkish women in 1934 added a new dimension to the process of advancement towards achieving a modern level of civilization (Uzunarslan, 2002, p.4). The abolition of the capitulations with the Treaty of Lausanne on July 24, 1923, put an end to the activities of foreign capital. Thus, foreign corporations, merchants, insurance companies, bankers, and postal administrations left Beyoğlu.

The modernization of the Republican era would take over the modernization approach initiated by the Ottoman Empire and strive to ensure that women participate more in education, state life, and cultural and scientific activities through new initiatives. One of the most important indicators of this situation is in the field of education, which the state considers one of the most important tools of modernization. It is evident that women now play a greater role in both domestic and foreign education. Thus, modernization spread to all segments of society without gender discrimination. For this reason, during the Atatürk era, women were also sent abroad for education in various professions that were necessary for modern life (Yıldırım, 2014, p.82).

Cemal, recognized as the first Turkish and Muslim tailor of the Republic, began practicing the tailoring profession by sewing coats for women living in his neighborhood after the clothing revolution. When his first workshop in Beyoğlu could not meet the increasing demand, he moved to his workshop in Mısırlı Han (Şeftalici, 2005, p.54).

During the early Republican period, clothing fashions that described the balancing role of the female body in the new modern life were shaped by various institutions and actors under the influence of

Kemalist reforms These included educational programs such as Girls' Institutes, Sümerbank Institutions influenced by local goods policies, Village Institutes, Maturity Institutes, and Sewing courses.

In addition, the non-Muslim tailors of the period are also of great importance because they passed on this profession, which they had been practicing for many years, to young Turkish tailors and were perhaps the first practitioners of Western fashion in these lands (Himam & Tekcan, 2014, p.250).

Urban planning and building types during the reconstruction process developed under the influence of the growing trend of "modernism" and were accepted as the completion of the transition from Islamic/Eastern culture to Western culture. During this period, when ties to the old social order were severed one by one, the spatial layout, usage patterns, and furniture types of residences also changed with the implementation of modern architecture within the context of the philosophy of "modernity in all areas." Modern housing, with modern comforts and furnishings, became a status symbol and a sign of modernity for its owners. The furniture and home furnishings used by the upper income groups during the Ottoman period became widespread among the middle classes after the Republic (Uzunarslan, 2002, p.2).

The events of September 6-7, 1955, were devastating for the Beyoğlu district. For a very long period, the face of the Empire and the Republic that was open to the West was destroyed, burned, and demolished. As a result of these events, which lasted all night, the colors of society disappeared, a sense of resentment and indifference emerged, and the sense of belonging was lost (Genim, n.d).

The news of the bomb attack allegedly carried out on Atatürk's house and the Turkish Consulate building in Thessaloniki was also reported by other newspapers in Turkey, primarily the Istanbul Express Newspaper. The Hürriyet newspaper reported the news with headlines such as "Warning to Greeks for terror in Cyprus," "Sign saying 'Cyprus is Turkish' hung at the Patriarchate," "Unpleasant incidents in the city," and "Greek who insulted the flag and elders was almost lynched," while the Akşam newspaper ran the headline "London Conference Reaches Deadlock" (Keser, 2004, p.222). As a result of these developments and the calls made, the crowds that gathered in Taksim Square became increasingly agitated by the speeches revealing national consciousness and the slogans chanted in this direction, and they marched towards the shops. They began attacking shops belonging to Greeks (Mütercimler, 2007, p.104).

Starting in 1956, the central government began implementing the Prost plans in Istanbul. The road widening works between Karaköy Square, Karaköy, and Dolmabahçe, the Salı Pazarı Port Facilities, and the redevelopment of Taksim Square were works carried out in the Beyoğlu District. Meanwhile, many buildings were demolished, especially during the widening of Kemeraltı and Meclis-i Mebusan Streets (Genim, n.d.).

During the Republican Era, until the 1950s, Turkish businessmen and enlightened Turks, known as the most modern district of the city on the Beyoğlu side, competed for the places vacated by foreigners and the minorities who worked for them. With its cinemas and theaters, restaurants and pastry shops, art galleries, and luxury stores, it was still the most prestigious district of the city. After the 1950s, Istanbul's excessive growth due to rural migration and rapid urbanization, the development of new neighborhoods, the distribution of entertainment facilities, commerce, and wealthy families to these newly developing modern sub-centers, and the cultural change in society reduced interest in Beyoğlu. The Karaca Theater and the Elhamra Cinema and Theater closed. The Tepebaşı Theater burned down. The Ses Theater, formerly known as the French Theater, was demolished to make way for a commercial building. After the 1970s, the granting of the right to show pornographic films in cinemas completely changed the people using Istiklal Avenue, and the number of stores selling cheap goods, previously unseen in Beyoğlu, increased. Even today, the fact that some luxury stores have not left Istiklal Avenue and the heavy traffic it attracts ensure that it retains its liveliness, even if it is not at its former cultural level. However, many buildings stand empty or are used as workshops (Dökmeci & Çıracı, 1987, p.42-47).

3.3. Memory Spaces: Fashion Houses and Continuity Hats and Social Image-Boutique Katia

From the perspective of women's clothing culture, tailoring came first, followed by the craft of hat-making, and this hierarchy was also reflected in the Pera district. Hat workshops in Pera were generally. It had an architectural layout where the upper floors were used as workshops. Production in the workshops was carried out by women of Greek and Armenian descent. The shop owners would visit Paris at the beginning of each season, bring back models from there, and give them to the master craftsman in the workshop. Each worker would then work on a different pattern, and the resulting products would be displayed in the shop window. The most famous hatmakers until the 1960s were: Madam Trpphe's hat shop, Vitali Hakko's Vakko Şen Hat shop (ready-made hat sales), Marinet, Pier, Filipuçi, Margrit, Mod Kristin, Fransuad'Apola, Filippa, and Evidis' George brand shop. Additionally, Vaso Muratoğlu-Katırcıoğlu, Dimosteni Sotiropulos, and finally Madam Katia's Boutique Katia Evening Hat shop can be given as examples (Bozis, 2023, p.179).

The Katia Abiye Şapka boutique, which was observed and examined in the field as part of this study, is located in the Hacopulo Passage connecting Meşrutiyet to İstiklal Avenue (Caddei-kebir). At the Meşrutiyet corner of the aforementioned passage, there used to be Adam Music Stores (Halefi Keller Store) (Duhani, 1982, p.130).

3.3.1. Architectural identity analysis

Hacopulo Passage: It is a complex structure consisting of three blocks, connecting Istiklal Avenue and Meşrutiyet Avenue, providing access to Han Geçidi Çıkmazı and Panayia İsodion Church, with a central courtyard and an open roof. The passage, known to have been built at the end of the 19th century, bears the date 1871 on the inscription above the courtyard entrance arch on the Istiklal Avenue side. The passage, which has the narrowest facade on Istiklal Avenue, consisted of production and consumption stores serving the fashion industry, such as fabric, yarn, tailor supplies, fashion houses, and hat shops when it opened (Figure 2).

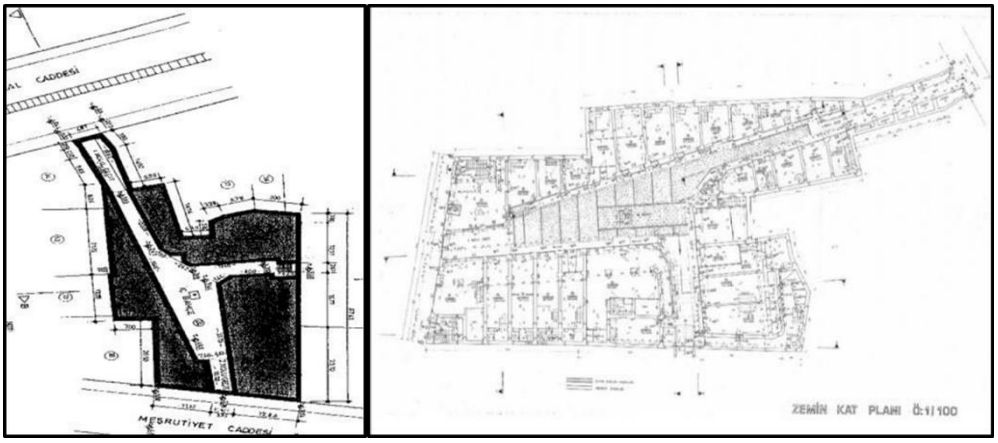


Figure 2. Site plan, arcade floor plan (Council of Monuments Archive, 2006)

In its past uses, the passage, known as the place where Ahmet Mithat Efendi and Namık Kemal published their newspaper İbret Gazetesi, is understood to have housed furniture and piano stores, based on advertisements placed in newspapers and magazines of the period (Figure 3). Architecturally, the passage has a rather modest design compared to its contemporaries on Istiklal Avenue. However, it has contributed to the passage's representation in cultural memory by hosting Yeşilçam productions, music videos, and commercial shoots. Today, it is an important stop for photography enthusiasts and travelers (Figure 4). One of the most distinctive features of the passage is Madam Katia's hat shop, which has been operating continuously since the day it opened. Madam Katia continues the craft she inherited from her mother to this day, producing hats for special occasions such as weddings and balls.

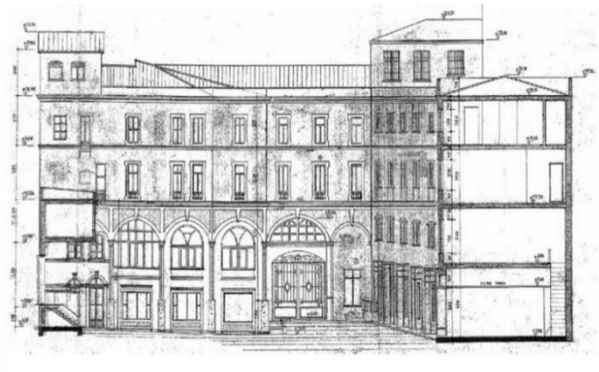


Figure 3. Facade drawing (Council of Monuments Archive, 2006)

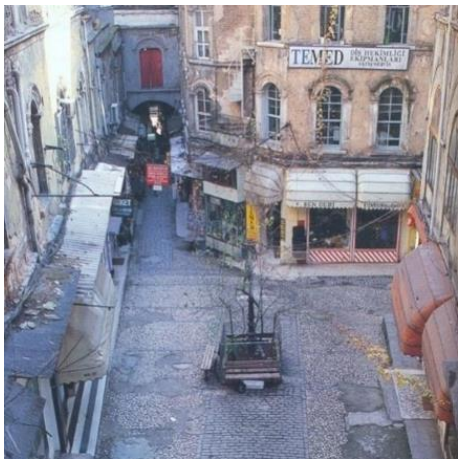


Figure 4. Inner courtyard of the arcade (Maison Française Magazine, 2002)

3.3.2. Spatial and oral history readings Madam Katia

Madam Katia Kiracı, who continues her activities in her boutique store in Hacopulo Passage today, maintains her professional presence as one of Pera's most established hatmakers. Continuing her work discipline with great meticulousness, Madam Katia states that she mostly carries out her production processes standing up and by hand. Newspaper clippings covering the walls of the workshop, spanning from the past to the present, document the historical and cultural influence of the hats designed. As Madam Katia points out, these designs are used in period productions such as Club and Pera Palas at Midnight, in fashion shows, fashion festivals, weddings of Russian, Italian, and Greek embassy ladies, and in events attended by high society.

The historical origins of the Katia Abiye Hat boutique workshop date back to the first shop opened by Madam Katia's mother, Madam Eva, in Aznavur Passage in 1929. After completing her professional training alongside a French After the shop was demolished, Madam Eva moved to the current shop in Hacopulo Passage (Figure 5), which she owned, in 1964. Madam Katia, who learned the intricacies of the craft by helping her mother while still in school, Madam Katia learned the intricacies of the craft by helping her mother and took over the management of the business upon her mother's death in 1986. The artist emphasizes that among her designs, the hats prepared for the Gazi Race and Jewish weddings are of particular importance to her. She notes that in the past, hats bearing her mother Madam Eva's signature were preferred at balls held at the Markiz Pastanesi and the large hall of the French Cultural Center. The workshop's portfolio (Figure 6), also includes a wide range of famous names from Turkish cinema, such as Belgin Doruk, Türkan Şoray, Hülya Koçyiğit, Fatma Girik, and Ajda Pekkan.



Figure 5. Facade drawing (Council of Monuments Archive, 2006)



Figure 6. Front facade of Madam Katia Boutique (Salbacak, 2024)

Madam Katia, who works on the principle of personalized design and handcrafting, says that she produces high- quality work with fabrics brought from many European cities, especially France and Italy, while also stating that the rising costs in today's economy, based on the euro, have a restrictive effect on her customer profile. Madam Katia states that the decline in hat culture since the early 1900s, coupled with financial reasons, has weakened the craft's former splendor and commercial dynamism. Defining hat-wearing as a "cultural issue," (Figure 7). Madam Katia emphasizes that she continues production without compromising on quality, balancing seasonal stagnation with bridal headpiece designs. She notes that the models displayed in the workshop are preserved with great care and that her husband, Mr. Aleko, supports her. In order to preserve her professional legacy, Madam Katia raised her daughter as her successor, just as she was raised, teaching her all the intricacies of the profession and pointing out that someone will come to practice the hat-making profession in this shop.



Figure 7. Madam Katia's workshop and designs (Tanık, 2024)

Shedding light on Pera's social memory, Madam Katia mentions the traumatic impact of the events of September 6-7, 1955, stating that although her own shops were not physically destroyed, the chaos witnessed created a lasting anxiety among the non-Muslim minority in the area. She emphasizes that the wave of migration following this historical turning point irreversibly altered Pera's demographic and cultural structure, preventing the region from ever regaining its former multicultural identity.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study examines the tailors and fashion houses operating in Pera/Beyoğlu during the period from the late Ottoman Empire to the early years of the Republic, not only as functional spaces where clothing was produced, but also as memory spaces that generated cultural memory, representation, and public visibility during the modernization process. Analyses conducted in line with Pierre Nora's conceptualization of *lieux de mémoire* and Jan Assmann's approach to cultural memory reveal that fashion houses became active components of urban memory through continuity, transmission, and symbolic meanings, beyond their physical existence.

The findings of the study show that the spatial organization of fashion houses in Pera/Beyoğlu directly reflects the aesthetic and social codes of the modernization process. When evaluated in the context of Habermas's theory of the public sphere, shop windows, arcades, and customer reception areas functioned as threshold spaces mediating the public representation of clothing. Through these spaces, clothing ceased to be merely an object of individual consumption and became an instrument of modern identity, status, and social visibility. Therefore, fashion houses should be regarded as spatial stages that reveal the relationship between body, space, and representation in modern urban life.

Analysis of oral history data reveals that individual narratives play a decisive role in the production of spatial memory. The example of Madam Katia concretizes how the concepts of master-apprentice relationship, professional continuity, and spatial memory function in the intergenerational transmission of cultural memory. In this context, fashion houses can be considered not only as physical spaces but also as living memory archives where knowledge, aesthetic understanding, and professional practices are transmitted.

One of the important findings of the study is that the architectural and urban fabric of Pera/Beyoğlu has a decisive influence on the location and operation of fashion houses. Passages, apartment ground floors, and street-facing shop windows have been shaped as spatial counterparts of modern consumer culture and Western lifestyles. This situation demonstrates that modernity was articulated and constructed through space in the Turkish context, parallel to Sibel Bozdoğan's discussions on modernization.

Ultimately, this study proposes a holistic and interdisciplinary rethinking of the tailor shop and fashion house phenomenon, which is often addressed in a fragmented manner across the disciplines of fashion history, architecture, and interior design. Reading the fashion houses in Pera/Beyoğlu as memory spaces is not merely a historical observation of the past; it also offers a critical perspective on preserving professional and cultural memory, which is at risk of being lost in today's rapidly changing urban spaces. In this respect, the study contributes to the literature on architecture and urban memory with an original spatial reading developed through clothing and fashion.

When all these spatial and oral history findings are subjected to a comprehensive evaluation, it becomes evident that the typology of tailors and fashion houses in Pera goes beyond being merely functional spaces of production or consumption; rather, they serve as analytical stages where the socio-political and cultural transformations of the era are embodied. Indeed, the large window displays, entrance halls, and passageway extensions in the examined spaces have spatially redrawn the boundaries of public space by opening up dressing and bodily practices—traditionally considered private—to the outside world. These architectural features functioned as instrumental interfaces that brought the status and identity representations of the era’s new urban elites into public view and opened the image of the modern individual to negotiation.

On the other hand, the master-apprentice relationships and professional transmission processes derived from oral history data demonstrate how intergenerational continuity is maintained through the physical space. These micro-narratives and intangible professional memory transform physical spaces into “memory spaces” that keep urban memory alive. Consequently, these structures, shaped within Pera’s urban and architectural fabric, offer an argument parallel to theoretical debates centered

on space and modernization. The findings analytically reveal how Turkey's experience of modernity has moved beyond an abstract ideology of Westernization to become spatialized and constructed through the interior spatial organization and daily life practices of Pera's fashion houses.

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