Building Beyoğlu

Histories of place in a central district in Istanbul

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The city of Constantinople or Istanbul as a historical site of contact has attracted the research interests of historians for centuries. A common question in that context revolves around what it is that makes up Istanbul’s urban identity. Is it a (former) imperial capital? A port city? In a comparative study on Aleppo, Izmir and Istanbul, Edhem Eldem rejects the definition of Istanbul as a port city. He argues that it would be reductionist to frame the city’s local, regional and imperial impact entirely through the lens of its identity as a port city. The port of Istanbul is what made the city possible, it has been its lifeline. Eldem stresses, however, that Istanbul as the Ottoman capital introduces a significant differentiation from other Ottoman port cities, such as Tessaloniki, Izmir and Beirut. This does not nullify its significant identity as a centre of commerce and industry. Shirine Hamadeh for instance argues that labour migration to Istanbul rose dramatically from the mid-eighteenth century onwards. Mostly men would move from the Balkans and Anatolia to the capital in search of employment and stability. These bekâr men – bekâr meaning bachelor in the Ottoman setting, derived from the Persian bî-kâr or jobless, as pointed out by Hamadeh – were driven to Istanbul by the incentive of its economy, becoming a significant group in the city, as close to half the working population was made up of these single male working migrants. Eldem points out, however, that the complexity of the city’s identity and the dependence of its economy on politics, being the imperial capital, simply makes it impossible to frame it as ‘just’ a port city. Eldem furthermore argues that the divergent possibilities for analysis can be brought together by interpreting the city as a site of contact. From a different methodological point of view Christian Bromberger has in fact made a similar argument regarding a ‘Mediterranean system’. Reminiscent of Joep Leerssen’s characterization of Europe as a ‘house of mir-
errors’, reflecting continuously differing points of reference and identification, Bromberger argues that in the Mediterranean system ‘everyone is defined, here perhaps more than elsewhere, in a play of mirrors (costumes, behaviours, affiliations) with his or her neighbour.’

Nonetheless, the conclusion of Eldem et al. that these cities probably had more in common with each other or other port cities around the Mediterranean, than with their counterparts in the Ottoman hinterlands deserves merit for its potential comparative value. They call upon (urban) historians, therefore, to seek for a deeper integration of Ottoman cities into the broader historiography of cities, suggesting that they themselves would probably prefer to pursue further comparison of the three cities in the context of other Mediterranean or global port cities, rather than in the context of ‘Islamic’, ‘Ottoman’ or ‘Habsburg’ urban settings. They argue that it is likely that the citizens in such Mediterranean cities may in fact experience greater commonalities between their experience of the urban landscape than their counterparts in the same region, state, empire or under the same religion. This in fact connects to Michael Herzfeld’s observation that urbanites who identify themselves as ‘Mediterranean’ in fact do so not as Italians but as Romans, as an ‘othering’-device, distancing themselves from – for instance – the Milanese. Cultural attributes or characteristics are only Mediterranean, because they are articulated as such Herzfeld argues, and that is also why the category holds value for scholars. An important addition or nuance is, however, provided by Claudio Fogu, with an ironic reference to Italian statesman Massimo D’Azeglio’s famous quote, ‘we have made the Mediterranean; now we must make the Mediterraneans.’ He argues that Mediterraneanism, similar to Orientalism, is principally a strategy of othering, but argues that Mediterraneanism also has been internalized by the ‘Mediterranean other’.

As indicated before, in the case of Istanbul Eldem already points to the pitfalls of describing Istanbul as a ‘port city’, since its identity as the Ottoman capital was so pervasive and exerted such great influence over the commercial dimensions of Istanbul’s urban identity. Yet when considering the aspect of commerce, Eldem et al. indicate it is valid to conclude that this would make more sense to compare the Ottoman cities along the Mediterranean within the context of Mediterranean port cities at large, since the citizens of these cities would feel a greater deal of commonalities with the citizens in other port cities than those
in non-port cities. Henk Driessen argues that such a statement would hint towards anthropological reductionism and geographic determinism. He nuances this by arguing that not all citizens of Mediterranean port cities at large would feel equal impact from their proximity to the sea, some living with ‘their backs turned to the sea’. Others from the mainland, in the case of Istanbul significantly the group of bekâr labour migrants from the Balkans and Anatolia, might have experienced significantly more exposure to the influence of the cultural synergies emanating from the urban ports than the Istanbulites who had been living there for generations, but ‘lived with their backs turned to the sea’. Equally significant therefore, Driessen indicates that the orientation towards a ‘cosmopolitan’ identity does not exclude orientations towards ‘more parochial orientations’. Driessen furthermore stresses that this fragmentary exposure towards cultural flows also obstructs the identification of a particular city as ‘cosmopolitan’ since not all port dwellers would identify in similar ways or have the same exposure to transnational networks. Doing so would ignore that such identifications were much rather applicable to highly particular groups: Driessen for instance mentions those professionally involved in the pan- and supra-Mediterranean networks (seamen, merchants and brokers). Eldem has elsewhere also made similar arguments in the context of the Ottoman Bank’s personnel in the nineteenth century, as an example of limited – and very marginal – ‘cosmopolitanism’.

The Ottoman Bank matters particularly in the context of Beyoğlu as it is an example of how cultural hybridity and fluidity in the area could take shape in an institutional form. Up to the foundation of the Turkish Republic the Ottoman Bank, was fundamentally what Eldem describes an ‘a-national’ institution. Financially the bank was largely dependent on British and French capital, yet the bank was careful not to become dependent on whichever political authority. The bank’s top cadre mostly consisted of French and British nationals, while the segment directly below it was largely made up of non-Muslims. The lower cadres had a working population in which Muslim Ottomans held a high percentage of the jobs. Foreigners, however, also worked as clerks, while non-Muslim Ottomans also could hold high positions. Eldem attributes the overrepresentation of foreigners in the higher echelons of the bank’s hierarchy to the knowledge of French and the necessary education in banking. Ottoman Muslims were considered a necessary group in the bank as there was an obvious need for Ottoman Turkish in order to perform its function as a commercial bank in Ottoman society. It seems thus that the cosmopolitan constellation that the Ottoman Bank had gradually become, was an almost natural outcome of the institution’s historical development and a ‘status quo’ that no-one questioned since it was a necessity for the bank’s role in the Ottoman society.

**REPRESENTATIONS OF COSMOPOLITANISMS AND THE URBAN LANDSCAPE IN GALATA/PERA**

Beyoğlu or Galata/Pera has become the iconic site of Istanbul’s imagined ‘cosmopolitanism’. The settlement of the Genovese has been known as Galata since the eighth century, its borders formalized since 1303 with significant expansions of its territory in the fourteenth century. The settlement was lined with defense walls and watch towers, of which the Galata Tower from 1349 is the most prominent and one of the few visible remains. Following the transition of Istanbul from Byzantine to Ottoman rulership in 1453, the Genovese held their rights but were forced by the sultan to decrease the height of their fortifications. Following the settlement of the Ottoman rulership in Istanbul, non-Muslims were no longer allowed to settle in the old city centre and were thus pushed towards Galata, as well as areas along the Golden Horn and Bosphorus. Eldem provides a beautiful description of the impressions of Dominique Fornetty, second dragoman to the French embassy in Constantinople at the end of the seventeenth century, who he describes to ‘be at a loss when he tried to explain that variety [of people in Galata and among those defined as ‘Levantines’] to foreigners’. He points out that the travellers coming to Istanbul were eager to find ‘the Orient’ and were often underwhelmed by Galata, which reminded them of other port cities along the Mediterranean, yet were at the same time amazed by what appeared to be a Christian enclave and to them was surprisingly diverse for such an oriental place. Eldem argues that for them it was not the most spectacular place in the city, since it may have resembled Venice, Genua or Marseille. Paolo Girardelli nuances this, however, and points out that the district in historiography has been compared by some to
a ‘typical, fortified North Italian town’, which he argues is rather exaggerated. Eldem suggests that it might be possible to call the Galata district in the seventeenth (and eighteenth century) a city in itself, within Constantinople, as it was walled until the late nineteenth century. The ‘otherness’ of this district, however, is a representation, or one might suggest even a representational culture, that has been – and continues to be – actively cultivated. The cultural and religious otherness of Galata, Eldem argues, neglects the gradual integration of the district into the city with a growing community of Muslims moving towards the district, reflected for instance in the presence of twelve mosques against six churches following a major city fire in 1696. This pushed the non-Muslim communities to expand the district further beyond the walls, towards the Pera hill and Taksim cemeteries.

The appearance of the Galata/Pera area, its architecture more specifically, poses a highly revealing example of how the area’s cultural hybridity was expressed in physical form. As Girardelli indicates, the newcomers that would populate Istanbul would integrate elements distinct to the architectural traditions of their native regions, which resulted in a fairly homogeneous typology of residential architecture, based on community traditions of constructing in timber. Maurice Cerasi indicates that broadly speaking what became known as the ‘Ottoman house’ was the staple of the Ottoman urban landscape, in Istanbul and beyond during the eighteenth century. Timber constructions, despite of their vulnerability to the all too common city fires, were the standard in much of Istanbul without bearing reference to any particular identity in the architectural language. This would hold true for both districts on the shores of the Golden Horn, Stamboul and Galata/Pera. Girardelli indicates that apart from the higher density of buildings in Galata and despite the emphasis that is typically put on the alleged difference between the two quarters, they in fact were strikingly similar. Even many of the buildings occupied by the foreign representations appeared in various cases to be decisively more ‘local’ than ‘foreign’.

Monumental architecture on the other hand reveals a breach with the typological boundaries of the ‘classical period’ in Ottoman architecture and a new phase in the cultural hybridity of Ottoman monumental architecture. Hamadeh points out that the eighteenth century added a broader lexicon to the monumental elements in the urban landscape, with old and new as well as local and foreign elements. She
attributes the change to a disintegration of stable power elements and a diffusion of artistic patronage, from the traditional elite to, among others, a growing urban middle class. This new social order invoked a response of the imperial elite to press its stamp on Istanbul's public spaces, claiming its presence. This imperial elite expressed its presence and power through the public space, which had previously been the privilege of the sultan and grand vizier, with their own tastes and preferences for self-representation. Representation and display of power, moreover, moved from Stamboul to the shores of the Bosphorus. 

Hamadeh argues that – in fact similar to the construction of 'Ottoman houses', which were essentially also architectural testimonies of cultural hybridity – eighteenth century monumental Ottoman architecture is wrongly considered to have suddenly shifted towards Western vocabularies. This, she explains, on the one hand poses a reductionist view of the preceding centuries during which there had been continuous (political, economic, diplomatic and cultural) interaction with European powers, while on the other hand the novelties in architectural style were equally appreciative of Western and Eastern traditions of building. Rather than 'Westernization' it thus seems that 'novelty' was the key word in the changing architectural vocabularies of the Ottoman urban context, with attention for a variety of local and foreign styles. This architectural bricolage had been a reality before, it became even more visible in the urban landscape since the imperial elite could lay claim to it as well.

As strong as the impact of the eighteenth century may have been on Istanbul's urban landscape, the events that unfolded in the Ottoman Empire during the final years of the eighteenth century and, most significantly, the first half of the nineteenth century would have a decisive effect on the physical integrity and appearance of the imperial capital again. This time, however, the impact would be particularly large in Galata/Pera. As the Ottoman rulership became aware of the limits of the imperial army's power, particularly in contrast with the modernizing armies of the dominant European powers. The successive failures of the Ottoman army against the revolting Ottoman governor of Egypt, Mehmet Ali Pasha, and the war against the Greek independence movement, which resulted in the reluctant acknowledgment of an independent Greek state by the Ottoman government, made Sultan Mahmut II aware of the need for an extensive reform program. Before him, earlier attempts at reform and modernization had already been initiated. As Erik-Jan Zürcher points out Mahmut II followed in the footsteps of his predecessor Selim III as well as his rival in Egypt Mehmet Ali, by identifying the need for a modern army which was backed by a modern state structure, with an extensive bureaucracy, taxation system, as well as Western-style education and legislation. Though it would not be right to pinpoint Mahmut II as the sole initiator of this process, it was ultimately his decision-making that would set the agenda for an extensive wave of reforms in the Ottoman Empire. Zürcher argues that Mahmut II's push to set up a new army entirely under his control in 1826, would incite a response from the traditional military core in the Ottoman Empire – the janissaries – which was quite rapidly suppressed and the old corps were disbanded, effectively ending their military and social influence in the Empire. Prussian army officers were invited to guide the Ottoman leadership in building a modern army virtually from scratch. Eventually the new army and the infrastructure it required would initiate a period which is often described as the Tanzimat-i Hayriye (Beneficial Reforms), formally starting with the Edict of Gülhane focusing on the introduction of new legislation on equality of Ottoman citizens, taxation and military conscription. Even before, however, the term Tanzimat had been used and reforms affecting the Ottoman state structure had obviously already been set in motion by Mahmut II, who died a few months before the realization of the Edict.

As the Tanzimat both explicitly and implicitly aimed to bring the Ottoman Empire up to speed with its European allies and rivals, the influence of the Western powers, intellectually, financially, culturally and politically, over the Ottoman Empire grew tremendously. Lorans Baruh points out how this also had rather immediate effects on the planning of Istanbul's urban environment. She refers to a letter by one of the leading figures behind the Gülhane Edict, Ottoman statesman Mustafa Reşit Paşa who wrote to the sultan in 1836 that the dominance of timber architecture in Istanbul's urban landscape was criticized in European newspapers as they would pose a recurring problem in the destructive city fires that Istanbul was continuously faced with in its history. Mustafa Reşit Paşa, who admired the urban landscapes of Paris, Vienna and London during his diplomatic missions, therefore suggested to the Sultan to have buildings constructed in stone or brick rather than wood. The Ottoman government then tried to regularize the urban landscape
and in the second quarter of the nineteenth century several regulations were drawn up which stipulated, among other things, that apart from the lower classes, no-one was allowed to construct in timber any longer and that timber structures moreover were not allowed to be constructed across from masonry buildings, have significant distance from mason buildings and should be separated from other construction with a masonry wall reaching to the height of the roof. Girardelli points out that it would take until the second half of the nineteenth century before a noticeable difference in terms of architectural design became apparent between Muslim and non-Muslim communities. The great city fire of 1831 did, however, have an impact on the properties of the foreign embassies and upper class families. The embassies chose styles and sizes that would reflect grandeur and a 'European' identity, opting in most cases for neo-classical or neo-renaissance designs. Meanwhile the urban government was subjected to a program of reform as well. Zeynep Çelik points out in her seminal The Remaking of Istanbul: Portrait of an Ottoman City in the Nineteenth Century how the ‘classical’ Ottoman city had been organized along principles and theories adhering to Islamic modes of government, which did not recognize corporations and would leave administration in the urban setting to professional, ethnic and religious communities. Islamic judges, the kadıs, should according to Çelik be identified as the principal power bearers in the city as they were entitled to supervise all matters of a juridical nature, in the case of the city also notably that of the city’s real estate. Four juridical boroughs, the kadılıks, divided the city: Eyüp, Galata, Istanbul and Üsküdar, which further separated into smaller neighbourhoods (mahalle) and larger districts (semt). Municipal administration took a much more decentralized and, to a certain degree, informal character – based on traditions, jurisprudence and various written and unwritten sources, including imperial orders (ferman).

This would change during the Tanzimat. In line with the desire of the Ottoman state for full control of the governmental system, the administration of the capital also was brought under the control of a centralized bureaucracy, bringing the power of the kadıs and local councils to ministries instead. The government aimed to bring Istanbul’s urban landscape’s ‘quality’ to the standard of its European counterparts, regularizing, beautifying, lighting and widening streets, and improving construction methods. To that end the Commission for the Order of the City (İntizam-ı Şehir Komisyonu), set up by the Ottoman government in 1855, proposed to reorder the city in four arrondissements, after the French model, making Galata/Pera and Tophane the Sixth District – arguably with reference to the upscale sixième arrondissement in Paris. This Sixth District would become a pilot area for urban modernization, which was expected to be more broadly implemented in other parts of the city at a later stage. By then the status of the district had already been growing considerably while the social composition and existing architecture of the area made that the Ottoman government considered it particularly suitable for further modernization. Çelik quotes from the Takvim-ı Vekayi (Calendar of Facts, the Ottoman official gazette), which makes this point particularly clear: ‘Since to begin all things in the above-mentioned districts [meaning the thirteen districts except Galata] would be sophistry and unworthy, and since the Sixth District contains much valuable real estate and many fine buildings, and since the majority of those owning property or residing there have seen such things in other countries and understand their value, the reform program will be inaugurated in the Sixth District.’

As much as the reform program may have implemented significant and highly apparent reforms, Istanbul’s urban landscape would retain the hybridity and mixing of styles beyond the thresholds of community lines. As Girardelli indicates architectural typologies in Istanbul/Constantinople’s urban landscape have been a testimony to the cultural intricacies of Istanbul’s hybrid society since Byzantine times. The nineteenth century Ottoman capital is no exception: a reflection of the complex socio-cultural realities faced by Constantinople’s urban dwellers. As pointed out earlier in the context of the eighteenth century, Girardelli stresses in his work that the architectural languages used by the various communities in the city should not be considered as representations of nationality, religion or ‘lineage’ to a different geographic area, political or religious institution. This holds true for the attempts to reform the city’s urban landscape of the nineteenth century as well, which had by no means the effect of the urban planning strategies implemented in Paris and Vienna. Moreover, the urban redevelopment did also not resemble the increasing spatial segregation of ‘local’ and ‘foreign’ communities in semi-colonial urban settings such Alexandria, Cairo, Tunis or Algiers where sharp divides were cultivated by European communities. In Galata, the typologies remained much more mixed, while at the
same time an overhaul of building styles towards a ‘Western’ model was not observable. Girardelli argues that instead the model of the Ottoman house was further developed, using less timber and more masonry. Entering the second half of the nineteenth century, however, Galata/Pera’s growing significance as the centre in the city – in part due to the growing economic, cultural and political influence of foreign powers – gradually found spatial expression with a growing conglomeration of monumental buildings.45

Giradelli suggests, however, that the idea of a top-down imposition of urban reform in Galata/Pera underplays earlier attempts at introducing novel modes of construction.46 Considering this also means retracing greater continuity in the changing urban landscape. Much of the radical shifts in Galata/Pera, moreover, were not incited by planning ideals, but by the need to rebuild or reconstruct after city fires such as the ones in 1831 and 1870, as will also become clear in a number of the case studies. The urban form and architecture of the area that constitutes Galata/Pera, or Beyoğlu nowadays, should nonetheless be considered as an evolution in which ‘local’ methods and styles were mixed with ‘Western’ ones. The fragmentary change and combination of styles in the district counters ideas that the Sixth District became a regularized space with clear demarcations imposed from the top.47 Girardelli describes this as the ‘Levantine environment’, in which rigid models either ‘Ottoman’ or ‘Western’ are very much the exception and in the latter case limited to the embassy buildings. The categories here are hyphenated, as Girardelli indicates that the Levantine practice of construction and architectural design can simply not be limited to either of these categories. He explains furthermore that this hybridity was also recognized by various local and foreign observers: for Young Turks and Republican architects it was too cosmopolitan, for foreign observers it was not quite exotic enough.48

It is this hybridity that has been represented by artists, public administrations, NGOs, novelists, journalists, politicians and citizens, particularly since the 1980s, as a cosmopolitanism in which there was a seemingly colorful and nearly idyllic coexistence of various communities and classes in this urban center. This representation has been extensively criticized by Eldem over the past decades.49 He questions the validity of using the term in the context of the communities in Galata/ Pera which rather than with each other, more often appeared to have
lived alongside each other. Superficial observation from an outsider would not reveal the relative lack of intermingling between members of the various communities. Eldem typifies cosmopolitanism as a community which is constituted by the diversity of its members while simultaneously changing the members of such a community by the milieu as well. A form of cosmopolitanism that he identifies would only flourish in an institutional context such as the Ottoman Bank and was more than anything a concept defined by boundaries of class, shaped by education, linguistic proficiencies. This way of life was thus limited to a particular segment of society in the district, by people who were able to navigate between their various identities that they were required to perform in the different settings that they navigated through.

With regard to the district's demographic and cultural diversity, Stanford Shaw notes that the Ottoman census in the 1880s registered a heterogeneous urban population, in the case of Istanbul, but even more so in the case of Galata/Pera. For the year 1885 he presents the following segmentation of the urban society, in a total population of 873,565: 44.06 percent Muslim, 17.48 percent Greek Orthodox, 17.12 percent Armenian Gregorian, 1.74 percent Catholic, 5.08 percent Jewish, 0.09 percent Protestant, 0.5 percent Bulgarian, 0.12 percent Latin and 14.79 percent foreigner. For the Sixth District of Pera and Dolmabahçe there was a total population of 237,293 with 18.9 percent Muslim, 7.4 percent Greek Orthodox, 12 percent Armenian Gregorian, 1.3 percent Catholic, 9.6 percent Jewish, 0.001 percent Protestant, 0.04 percent Bulgarian, 0.03 percent Latin and 47 percent foreigner. Shaw notes that the large amount of foreigners overall, and in the Sixth District in particular, is not (exclusively) an effect of a sudden rise in the number of foreigners in the second half of the nineteenth century, but rather an effect of the decision of local Ottoman citizens to adopt foreign citizenship. One of the main instigators was the capitulations that the Ottoman Empire had granted to foreign powers. Particularly the right of foreigners to own property was important in the decision of members of the millets to adopt foreign citizenship. Greeks were thus drawn to Greek citizenship, Armenian Gregorian to that of Russia, Iran and Romania, Protestants mostly to German and Italian citizenship, and Catholics to France and Austria-Hungary.

The rising influence of foreigners in the Sixth District was nonetheless notable, through the rising popularity of Western architectural patterns and typologies in the Ottoman vernacular architecture or the capitulations towards European powers. Significantly also, through the course of the second half of the nineteenth century numerous schools and clubs catering to either a particular or several communities within the city were founded, establishing new secular or semi-secular places of encounter. These clubs, societies and schools would create important links among members of a linguistic, ethnic, or (later) national community. At the same time, in several cases, links between members of heterogeneous communities were built in these institutions. Clear examples are the Germanophone Teutonia, French Union Française and Italian Società Operaia di Mutuo Soccorso. The aims of these clubs could go from building ties with the ‘motherland’, to assisting members of the community or building social ties within community in the Ottoman capital. This can be said to a certain extent of some masonic lodges as well, who could in particular cases, cater to brethren who were also nationals of the country where the Grand Lodge was located or at least function in the language of the respective country. In other cases, however, the lodges would be internationalist and specifically aim for initiating men from a diverse range of communities, not in the least case to build networks between foreigners and local Ottoman nationals. This was also, from the onset, the goal of the gentleman’s club Cercle d’Orient, founded in 1882. The cultural diversity was one of the most remarkable features of the latter categories. The foreign schools as well, with their highly mixed communities, also present a condition of considerable diversity. What is more is that this condition of diversity in the case of particular schools endured until well into the twentieth century. This mostly re-emphasizes that processes of cultural exchange and the cultivation of culture existed within the boundaries of a particular institution and limited space rather than within the urban community, the district, or even the city in its entirety. As will be shown in the following chapters, these clubs and schools can be interpreted as ‘embodied communities’, nodes in transnational networks for what Joep Leerssen has defined as the cultivation of culture and its articulation as national.

Others, however, have attributed a somewhat broader interpretation of diversity in the area. Ulrike Tischler speaks of the ‘Pera society’, with ‘Perotes’ being the representatives of an ambivalent cross-cutting identity in which ethnodenominational criteria separated them from other communities, while at the same time relying on intercultur-
alism or ‘cosmopolitanism’. Interestingly, she notes how in the interviews with the oldest group (born 1900-1927, speaking mostly Greek or French and little Turkish) among her informants, there was a recurring shifting between the times of childhood and the present. The intermittent periods in which the transformation of their lives and that of Beyoğlu occurred were largely exempted or mentioned only in passing. They speak of the milieu de mémoire or, in Tischler’s words, ‘the authentic Pera’ that they witnessed, but appear to exclude the shifts in their livelihoods caused by ‘the authentic Pera’s’ displacement or erasure to or, in Tischler’s words, ‘the authentic Pera’ that they witnessed, but appear to exclude the shifts in their livelihoods caused by ‘the authentic Pera’s’ displacement or erasure to the fringes of their recollection. The younger generations typically reproduce the idyllic memories of the district that they have heard from the oldest generations, while adding experiences of rupture, such as the 6-7 September 1955 pogrom, the Cyprus crisis, and ‘targets of animosity’, establishing a dichotomy between themselves and anything or anyone Turkish or ‘other’.

For the most part the surroundings of that ‘authentic Pera’ would be shaped during the second half of the nineteenth century. Çelik indicates that the Ottoman government considered beauty to be causally associated with regularity, taking obvious inspiration from contemporary European cities. She argues furthermore that many of the most crucial reforms took place in the Sixth District. She adds, however, that many of the plans could be executed only after fires had destroyed parts of the district and city at large. Quite to the contrary of European cities or European districts in colonial cities?, the street plans of Galata/ Pera would remain patch-like, with grid planning implemented in places where fire had created empty lots. The Grand Rue de Pera (current İstiklal Caddesi) is a notable example from that perspective, since its enlargement was incited by the 1870 fire which blazed from the Taksim area westwards, destroying much of Tarlabası, Taksim, the Grand Rue de Pera itself and the area around the Mekteb-i Sultaniye at Galatasaray. At first planners had imagined to build a second monumental artery through Tarlabası, but by that time such a high degree of monumental buildings had amassed around the Grand Rue de Pera that, as Çelik indicates, it was no longer feasible to follow such a plan through. Instead the Grand Rue was significantly widened, which meant that remaining buildings were at times also required to be demolished. Girardelli refers to the case of the Saint Anthony Church, directly adjacent to the Grand Rue de Pera. The municipality forced the Franciscan friars to demolish part of their prayer hall or choose a new site. The first alternative was not considered an option by the friars as their prayer hall could already not meet the high demand of believers, whereas the French embassy, under whose protectorate the Saint Anthony Church lay, was not willing to support the second option. Eventually in 1895 the friars asked for help from the newly founded Italian state, which considered it an excellent opportunity to stake Italian belonging in Constantinople and ‘the Orient’. Harking back to the long-standing Genoese and Venetian presence this cooperation between the friars and the Italian state resulted in the current neo-Gothic Saint Anthony church with numerous references to the Venetian past.

The many improvements in the district – sewage works, street lighting, road improvement and embellishment, tram lines, electricity – were of particular benefit to the higher classes concentrated around the Grand Rue de Pera, both the Ottoman bourgeoisie and Europeans. The neighbourhoods of Kasımpaşa, parts of Taksim and Pangaltı, predominantly inhabited by the poorer Armenian, Greek and Turkish classes, would experience little benefit from the new facilities. This is a notable issue to emphasize as it renders clearly how Pera was a mixed place beyond the mix of ethnicity, but very much so in terms of class as well. The economic divisions that ran through the district segmented various communities not only in terms of ethnicity or religiosity, but also in terms of class. It appears that these then were further emphasized by the authorities’ decision to provide the new municipal services only to the neighbourhoods inhabited by the communities who could be considered to be in the upper echelons of the socio-economic strata. Çelik, following Steven Rosenthal, argues that the services were mostly directed to benefit the Europeans in the district. This, however, disregards the significant economic divides within the ‘European’ communities as well. As the case of the German community shows – and this would likely be applicable in part to the larger European communities of Italian, French or English origin as well – several Germanophone residents of Pera in fact belonged to the working classes or lower middle classes and it seems unlikely that they would be able to afford living in the upscale areas around the Grand Rue de Pera. Taking in consideration the large share of residents that the Sixth District held in comparison to the rest of Istanbul – 237,293 for the Sixth District and 389,545 for Istanbul in total – makes it fair to assume that a variety of income groups from for-
eign origin would live in the poorer neighbourhoods.\textsuperscript{65}

Architecturally, the district also retained much of its hybridity, with the Levantine influences still visible in the architecture constructed between the 1930s and the 1960s, notably in Cihangir, Teşvikiye, Şişli and other parts of the older districts on the city’s European and Asian shores. This image would in fact continue to influence the urban landscape until the 1950s Girardelli argues. He also stresses that the top-down impositions that architects and urban planners had imagined were therefore often disregarded.\textsuperscript{66} A notable example is the ‘National Architecture Renaissance’. Sibel Bozdoğan describes how the ‘National Architecture Renaissance’ took shape around 1908, which not coincidentally, coincided with the Constitutional Revolution of the Young Turks which brought their Committee of Union and Progress (İttihat ve Terakki) to power and effectively ended the autocratic regime of Sultan Abdülhamit II. The national style that took shape, in various cities of what would soon be the Turkish Republic, was based on the combination of novel elements from modern architecture, reinforced concrete, steel, iron, beaux-arts principles and decorative elements that took inspiration from what Bozdoğan refers to as classical Ottoman architecture, with semispherical domes, roof overhangs, tile decoration and pointed arches. This new national style also found expression in Beyoğlu, as the style was widely used for various public buildings, such as banks, offices, cinemas and ferry stations. In that sense it was strikingly similar to the way public buildings with neo-Gothic and neo-classical buildings style elements were imagined and constructed in Europe and North America.\textsuperscript{67} The effects of this ‘National Style’ on Beyoğlu’s landscape were relatively limited, with notable exceptions such as the building of İş Bankası and Tütün Han (Union Han) at Bankalar Caddesi in Karaköy.\textsuperscript{68} Girardelli argues that in contrast to the Levantine image, which was visible throughout the urban landscape, the examples of the National Style remained isolated icons within the landscape, rather than becoming integrated environments.\textsuperscript{69} Ironically, moreover, Bozdoğan argues that the architects responsible for the National Architecture Renaissance, most notably Kemalettin Bey and Vedat Bey, were also trained and cultured by the eclectic typologies of the nineteenth century against which they reacted.\textsuperscript{70} Kemalettin Bey was educated in Germany and Vedat Bey in France and they were Muslim architects in an industry which for a considerable time had been largely dominated by non-Muslims and Eu-

\begin{center}
Image 8: Tütün Han, Bankalar Caddesi, Galata/Karaköy, 2000.
\end{center}
Europeans. They were, however, contemporaries, colleagues or students of other influential architects such as Vallaury and Giulio Mongheri and should therefore also be considered as elements within a larger professional community, simultaneously influencing and being influenced by this community.71

The hybridity that was strikingly visible in the built environment also remained a social reality in Beyoğlu's demography. The so-called minorities (in terms of their numbers it would be in fact wrong to frame them as such in the context of Beyoğlu's population) were part of Ottoman society across all social classes and a significant factor in the Ottoman economy.72 Alexis Alexandris indicates that 50 percent of capital investments in 1914 were made by the Greek community, followed by the Armenians with 20 percent, the Turks with 15 percent, foreigners with 10 percent and Jews with 5 percent. He argues that this asymmetry in wealth distribution over different ethnic groups in the empire paved the way for hostility and animosity against the Ottoman multi-ethnic constellation.73 As will be made clear in the following chapters, apart from capital, education was an important factor in the advantages that the middle and upper classes of the non-Muslim communities had over the Muslim communities. Alexandris points out that in the case of the Greek millet, efforts to educate the community had been highly successful through its advanced school system. By 1912 the community had 112 schools, complemented by a large number of private high schools.74 These institutions also would turn out to be efficient vessels for disseminating Greek nationalism. Alexandris argues that in the rapidly nationalizing Ottoman capital, the Greek community would remain the second most important around the turn of the century and puts forward an interpretation of the city's cosmopolitanism typified by two groups which co-existed: ‘each perfectly distinct and each perfectly at home, there was remarkably little assimilation of one element by the other’.75

BEYOĞLU AND ISTANBUL IN TRANSITION FROM IMPERIAL TO POST-IMPERIAL SPACES

Animosity and tension had been growing between communities nonetheless. The distance between different communities became apparent for instance with the constitutional regulations calling all young male Ottoman citizens for obligatory military service, which prompted many young men of the minorities, particularly Greek, to leave the country or take on a different citizenship.76 The Ottoman leadership was confronted first with the Balkan Wars in 1912-1913, in which large parts of its territory in Southeastern Europe were lost to the countries of the Balkan League. This caused mass immigration to the Ottoman capital, with Murat Gül suggesting that the city's population rose to 1.6 million. Without further reference to this number it is hard to check its veracity. Shaw provides the census data from 1906 and 1914, which are 782,231 and 909,978 respectively. A sharp rise in the number of Muslims in the city is noticeable though, the community's numbers rising from 370,343 in 1906 to 560,434 in 1914.77 Ayhan Aktar moreover indicates that the influx of 250,000 Turkish/Muslim refugees led to a special law, the Law for the Settlement of Immigrants, which installed a special directorate for the settlement of these refugees.78 Meanwhile the CUP tried to modernize the city, with a new bridge between Galata and Eminönü and introduce street lighting and a power station, the latter being built in 1914. Telephone services were set up by a consortium of British, French and American companies in 1911 and an electric tramway was put into service in 1912 between Karaköy and Ortaköy. More large-scale modernization was cut short, although mayor Cemil Pasha managed to push forward significant improvements between 1912 and 1914.79

Following the Ottoman Empire's unsuccessful attempts to form an alliance with France, tension in Europe was rapidly rising. Finally the CUP settled in making an alliance with the Central Powers. Zürcher argues that the CUP knowingly brought itself in an alliance that would lead to war, as the German Empire had accepted to treat the Ottoman Empire as an equal partner; a significant gain for the CUP which tried to break with its semi-colonial status in Europe.80 The war situation, however, incited a further escalation of domestic tension and brutality between factions, which resulted in the mass expulsions and fleeing of non-Muslim communities from the Ottoman Empire and of Muslim communities from the surrounding countries towards the Ottoman Empire. It moreover, led the CUP to aggressively take on the issue of a possible foundation by Armenian nationalists of an independent state in Eastern Anatolia, while siding with Russia. Uğur Üngör argues that the nationalist elements in the CUP welcomed the prospect of war as a way to deal with the elements in Ottoman society.
which were considered to have undermined the state as well as cut short
the humiliating capitulations. Driven by paranoia and panic the CUP
became increasingly aggressive towards the non-Muslim populations
and set up numerous initiatives to eradicate the presence of Armenians
from public life. Armenians were fired from public offices at first, while
Armenian conscripts were disarmed and treated as traitors. Gradu-
ally, the CUP government, under the direct control of members of the
CUP triumvirate leadership, fronted in this case by Talaat Pasha, set
up a vast campaign to exterminate the Armenian population, carefully
micromanaged by Talaat Pasha and brutally executed by CUP officials
such as Mehmed Reshid, governor of the Diyarbekir Province. At a local
level the persecutions targeted oftentimes indiscriminately Orthodox
Armenians, Catholic Armenians, non-Ottoman Armenians and numer-
ous other Christian communities. Hundreds of thousands of people
were murdered, raped, enslaved, while those who resisted to comply
with the vigorous campaign of pillage and destruction were dismissed,
prosecuted or murdered.81 These tragic events have now widely been ac-
knowledged in international historiography as the Armenian Genocide,
a reality which is vehemently denied by the Turkish state and a circle
of nationalist historians. 82 The genocide would be a significant step in
an ensuing project of social engineering, including mass deportations
and massacres against various ethnic or religious communities, that
would continue during the Turkish Republic. Üngör points out that the
campaigns of resettlement and deportation, particularly of the Kurdish
communities in the 1920s, were supported up to the highest ranks of
the Kemalist regime, with pivotal figures as İsmet İnönü claiming that
it was solely the Turkish nation who had to right to make any claims to
ethnic and racial rights.83

Following the defeat of the Central Powers at the conclusion of
the First World War, Istanbul was occupied by Allied Forces. The Allied
Forces set up their headquarters in the Pera district. Istanbul’s minori-
ties had not been affected as devastatingly as their counterparts in An-
tolia by the mass persecutions of the CUP and the multi-ethnic demog-
raphy of the city therefore remained largely intact. New complexities
started to materialize, however, as Alexandris indicates that the Greek
community decided to no longer acknowledge the sovereignty of the Ot-
toman government and released itself from its civic duties. Greek repres-
entatives and sailors visiting Istanbul were welcomed as liberators by
Istanbulite Ottoman Christians, symptomatic of the cooperations be-
tween Armenian and Greek Ottomans. The communities were enthu-
siastic in expressing their hopes that the Allied Forces would protect
them. 84 Alexandris cites the Turkish-language press, which meanwhile
complained about ‘the recent ostentatious display of the city’s Greek
character’. 85

A turning point would arrive when the Greek army landed at
Anatolia and occupied Smyrna. This would in part incite a Turkish
national resistance to come together, putting the position of the Is-
tanbulite minorities in a more precarious position. Greek flags were
taken down at various places in Istanbul and Turkish pamphlets were
spread throughout the Muslim parts of the city, further contributing
to the resentment against Christians in the city. The Treaty of Sèvres
imposed harsh conditions on the Ottoman side and further provoked
revolt among the Turkish National Movement (Türkiye Ulusal Hareketi).86
Parallel governments were formed in Istanbul and Ankara and ensuing
clashes between the resistance army and the Greek army eventually led
to the Greeks being pushed out of Anatolia. A new treaty was negoti-
ated on the initiative of the Entente Forces in Lausanne. Both the rep-
resentatives from the Ottoman and national Turkish government were
invited, after which Grand Vizier Ahmet Tevfik Pasha suggested that a
joint delegation should be sent to Lausanne. This caused the National
Assembly in Ankara to adopt a motion to abolish the sultinate, after
which Tevfik Pasha resigned his office to the Istanbul representative
of the Ankara government who ordered the termination of the Otto-
man ministries. Sultan Mehmet VI fled to Malta, while his cousin Ab-
dülmeçit became the new caliph. 87 The Turkish delegation, instructed
by Ankara and under the leadership of İsmet İnönü, took a very rigid
stance against the opposing side which on its part treated the Turks
with considerable contempt. Eventually, however, they were forced
to give in to the Turkish demands and accepted the full sovereignty of
Turkish territory and the new state. During the First World War and
right afterwards hundreds of thousands Greeks and Armenians had
left Anatolia, but following the stipulations of the Lausanne Treaty
900.000 of Greeks (among others Turkish speaking Greek Orthodox
communities) were ‘exchanged’ for 400,000 Turks, which finalized the
dramatic demographic change of Anatolia which had turned from 80
percent Muslim to 98 percent Muslim between 1913 and 1923.88
The non-Muslim communities in Istanbul would retain their position as a significant minority in the city, in part secured by the major share they held in the urban economy. Charles King cites numbers of Greeks owning 1169 of 1413 restaurants in the city, compared to 97 owned by Turks, 57 by Armenians and 44 by Russians. Still, the city had lost significant parts of its population and no longer held the privileged position of the capital of a vast empire. Gül argues that near to no public buildings were built in Istanbul until 1940. The new regime under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal in Ankara was heavily invested in making the new capital a spatial showcase of the new republic. Based on the model of the Istanbul municipality, the Ankara municipality was established and started expropriating and developing an area of the which was called Yenişehir (New City). International competitions were launched to attract urban planners and architects to design the outlay of the new capital. Following the German urban planner Hermann Jansen’s winning of the first prize, the Ankara urban planning office was set up and from 1932 onwards the plans of Jansen were implemented, setting up infrastructure, government buildings and other public facilities. Sinem Türkoğlu Önge argues that the buildings in particular would in fact aim to communicate the power of the new regime. The German architects who were invited to design these new public buildings would have a vast impact on a new modernist architectural paradigm for early republican Ankara.

It would be fair to say that the Kemalists and the one-party government of the CHP (Cumhuriyet Halk Partisi/Fırkası – Republican People’s Party) gave priority to Ankara and even Izmir over Istanbul’s urban development after the foundation of the republic. Yet to say that the city was entirely disregarded would be nonsensical and would moreover neglect the significant bottom-up efforts to develop the city on the micro- or meso-level. İpek Akpınar argues that the discourse on Istanbul’s post-1923 neglect is in fact a result of the manner in which revisionist historians have criticized the one-party regime since the 1990s. On the other hand, she points out that much less attention was paid to developments in Istanbul by the Kemalist regime than those in Ankara, for which the Kemalists were at pains to indicate how much progress they made in the new national space. Akpınar furthermore explains that the 1920s were in fact a significant period for Istanbul as these were the years when new cadastral city maps were drawn up by Jacques Per-
that he could hardly see any Turks between the Beyoğlu crowd. Woodall indicates that in 1934 cultural critic Ercüment Behzat Lav would argue that other countries ‘where the musical culture is not as weak as our own’ did not allow their people’s taste in music to be perverted by jazz and simply forbade it, probably hinting at the Nazi regime’s banning of jazz as Entartete Musik.

As the demography of the city had only been relatively mildly affected compared to Anatolia, Istanbul was still a testimony to the Ottoman multicultural reality. Sossie Kasbarian notes that by 1927, 28 percent of Istanbul’s population did not speak Turkish as their native tongue. Nevertheless, existing tensions worsened and the Turkish state’s rhetoric and attitude towards foreigners and non-Muslim Turks became increasingly hostile. In Turkey’s Republican Archives numerous police reports can be found with the charge ‘Person who has insulted Turkishness’ (Türklüğe hakaret eden). This was in fact a recurring charge in Beyoğlu, but hundreds of reports (1032 in total) can be found from the years between 1926 and 1938 all over Turkey. The list becomes substantially longer if charges also include insulting the government, president, the army, or a combination of these. In its 17 September 1943 issue, the New York Times reports in an article titled ‘The Turkish Minorities’ on ‘(...) the extremely cosmopolitan nature of Turkish business enterprise’ and how particular groups within it have been targeted in the preceding months. They cite figures by the Foreign Chamber of Commerce which state that a wealth tax instated by a secret commission in November 1942 was effectively making it impossible for minorities or particular groups of foreigners to sustain their businesses. Turkish Muslims would have to turn over 4.96 percent of their annual income to tax authorities, against 156 percent for Greek Orthodox, 179 percent for Jews and 232 percent for Armenians. The enterprises of particular groups of foreigners – Greeks, Italians and Yugoslavs – were much more heavily taxed than those owned by French, Germans and Bulgarians, while taxes for American and British-owned businesses were even lower. In line with the nationalization policies of the 1920s and 1930s the Kemalist regime aimed to reduce the heterogeneity of Turkey’s population. To that end, elaborate and racist language policies, notably the ‘Citizen, Speak Turkish!’-campaign was launched, aiming to enforce speaking Turkish in the country’s multiglot environments, of which Beyoğlu can well be considered one of the prime examples. Other
initiatives included the 1934 Surname Law, which imposed surnames on individuals, which were required to be composed of elements from Turkish. These and other policies resulted in economic discriminatory policies, aiming at the development of an ethnically Turkish bourgeoisie and making it significantly harder for other communities to sustain their socio-economic standing. One of the most notorious instruments that the regime used was the previously cited wealth tax. Prior to that, particular professions were already blocked for non-Turks with legislation, such as civil service positions. Additionally, Aysun Akan indicates that religious trust properties of non-Muslims were confiscated by the state. With the pretext of finally taxing the people who had taken advantage of Turkey’s hospitality without paying their fair share, the government decided to instate the Wealth Tax in 1942. There was some economic rationale behind the policies, which was to put an end to the large share of non-Muslim business owners in the Turkish economy. Akan argues that this created a class of ‘war-rich’, with policies primarily driven by a racist ideology of the ruling elite, industrial bourgeoisie and the bureaucracy, stretching in particular cases towards a degree of sympathy towards Italian Fascism and German Nazism.

REIMAGINING THE OLD CITY

These examples show how also in Istanbul the Kemalists walked down their ambivalent and paradoxical path between nationalist and xenophobic resentment for anything foreign – i.e. not Turkish and Muslim – and a historical admiration directed towards ‘the West’. This also becomes clear in the plans for urban planning at the time at large and the plans of Prost for Istanbul. What Prost envisioned for Istanbul was modernisation, in line with the expectations of the regime in Ankara. Open public spaces and modern, clean residential areas would contribute to this goal. Bilsel explains that Prost’s plan essentially aimed for the enhancement of transportation, making better connections between the historic peninsula and the new residential districts developing to the north of Beyoğlu. What would prove to have a particularly destructive impact on the city’s urban landscape were the streets and avenues that were necessary to facilitate traffic circulation. Prost himself, however, did not consider his plans harmful, but rather ‘a chirurgical operation of the most delicate nature’, which would ‘protect the incomparable landscape’ with its ‘glorious edifices’. His plans would highlight imposing monuments from Byzantine and Ottoman times, emphasizing these landmarks while destroying significant parts of the late Ottoman urban landscape.

Sibel Bozdoğan and Esra Akcan argue that the Cumhuriyet Caddesi connecting Beyoğlu with the newer neighbourhoods of Nişantaşı, Teşvikiye and Şişli was planned by Prost as the new, modernist face of Istanbul. At the lowest point of the hill, the Dolmabahçe Stadium was constructed in 1946, leaving the green space in between unaffected according to the plans of Prost. The further development of residential architecture that Istanbul witnessed on the other hand did not affect Beyoğlu at first. The upsurge in construction concentrated on the newer districts on the developing axis north of Taksim Square towards Levent on the one hand and in districts closer to the Marmara Sea, such as Yeşilköy and Ataköy, on the other. Mass housing projects could in certain cases take the shape of planned and high quality dwellings. Bozdoğan and Akcan indicate, however, that the layout of these spacious houses – 140 square meters, with four bedrooms, maid rooms – countered the concept of social housing as it would in no way meet the possibilities and lifestyles of the people in need of social housing. What would have a much larger impact on the urban landscape of Istanbul, including that of Beyoğlu, which lost nearly all of its wooden residential architecture to concrete apartment buildings, is the so-called yap-sat (build-sell) construction that would start from approximately the late 1950s onwards. Referring to Rem Koolhaas’ concept of ‘Junkspace’, Bozdoğan and Akcan explain that cheap and anonymous (designer unknown) architecture became a trend in which contracts between landowners, contractors and buyers were made to develop individual slots of land with a building. Helped by an import-substitutive construction industry through which Turkey started to mass produce inexpensive building materials, the small contractors played a major role in the housing boom of Turkey, being responsible for 40 to 45 percent of the total development in the country’s main urban centres. New regulations regarding the maximum number of a building’s stories moreover gave property owners the possibility to have their house demolished and redeveloped into taller buildings – a trend which continues up to the present day.
In the 1940s the first efforts toward redevelopment were made by the Kemalists. Although the areas around the İstiklal Caddesi remained largely unaffected by the urban transformation the projects had a profound impact on the area surrounding Taksim Square. An important landmark from the late Ottoman era were the Halil Pasha Artillery Barracks, which flanked the square and had been in use as the Taksim Stadium since 1921 and used by the three major Istanbul football clubs, Beşiktaş JK, Fenerbahçe SK and Galatasaray SK. The barracks were demolished in 1940 and replaced by a large public park, with terraces, flower beds, trees and the new Taksim Belediye Gazinosu at its northernmost point. Yet it would be particularly during the 1950s, when the Democratic Party (Demokrat Parti) won a landslide victory during the national elections of 1950, that the most dramatic parts of Prost’s plans would be executed. The DP heavily criticized Prost’s plan, but would follow through with these by and large nonetheless. Bozdoğan and Akcan indicate that the DP would, however, interpret the plans of Prost in a more pragmatic fashion as they decided to build one of the most iconic examples of 1950s modernism in Turkey in a green space that Prost had planned to be left unaffected, the Hilton Hotel. The hotel may be considered to be significant for a variety of reasons, the most noteworthy is that it may have marked a shift in the representation of nationalist ideology through space and architecture. The successful purges against and expulsions of non-Muslim communities, as well as the growing confidence of Turkish nationalism were exemplified by a shift in the national approach towards architecture, Bozdoğan and Akcan argue. Architecture was no longer the showcase for Kemalist modernity that it had been in the 1930s and early 1940s. Instead a more internationalist modernism was considered more befitting for private and public projects in Turkey. Bozdoğan and Akcan present the Hilton Hotel, designed by Gordon Bunshaft as the principal architect and the renowned Turkish architect Sedad Hakki Eldem as the local cooperator, as a first step in a process of reorientation. Significantly, they also present it as a successful example of American Cold War cultural foreign policy. The United States invested considerably in the project through the Bank of America and the Economic Cooperation Administration, flowing to the Turkish Emekli Sandığı (Pension Fund) as the local public investor. The authors argue that buildings like this were strong visual representations of the United States’ influence in their partner countries as well
as providing the DP with a symbol of American modernity and capitalism, to which it had so heavily subscribed. As Sara Fregonese and Adam Ramadan point out that Conrad Hilton’s hotel chain may well be considered to be an example of US soft power ‘designed to reproduce American values at the furthermost boundaries of the Western sphere of influence such as Cairo, Athens and Istanbul’.117

İpek Türeli indicates that the urban reforms had a devastating impact on the old residential architecture, which was, considering the fashionable ideas on urban planning, praised in Europe and the United States as a successful example of modernization. To such an extent even that the Council of Europe awarded Istanbul with the ‘Europe’s Prize’ in 1959 for its achievements in the urban reform of Istanbul. The reforms had made the city ‘more European’ and the President of the Council of Europe remarked to the occasion: ‘We all know the courage and determination of Istanbul, the guard of the Straits, in the spectacular rebuilding effort it has undertaken without damaging any of its historical treasures that are the living witness to its bright past.’ The quote signifies the rather limited understanding of architectural heritage in Turkey and some European institutions alike, equating historical or monumental value with size and historical canons rather than the integrity of a historical urban landscape. One reason may have been that, as pointed out by Sven Grabow, the framework for European heritigization had only recently started to develop, since the Council of Europe’s European Cultural Convention in 1954.

Beyoğlu, however, still presented the new government with a complicated situation. The district was a living and physical testimony to the history of ethnic and cultural diversity during the Ottoman Empire. It had been one of the primary objectives of the Kemalists to found an ethnocentric nation state around a Muslim-Turkish population and the DP replicated the racist and xenophobic elements from Kemalist national discourse. During the years of the one-party regime nationalist sentiments had maintained the awkward attitude towards the district’s cosmopolitan image and built on the discursive alienation of its ‘foreignness’ similar to their Ottoman predecessors of the CUP. In that sense the attitude of nationalists during the years of the DP may well be considered as a continuation, albeit possibly even more aggressively. What Pera or Beyoğlu was or not had been an ongoing discussion in history. What featured particularly strongly since the foundation of the
Turkish Republic was as an example of its alleged darkness, its deviative nature from Turkish values. Yumul provides two noteworthy examples. Writer and public official Yahya Kemal Beyatlı (1884–1958) wrote on how the Turkish children raised in Pera ‘alafranga’ became estranged from Islam because they were not used to hearing the call to prayer, framing the district as alienated from Islam. The second example dates from 1948, when an author in the journal Haftalık Çınaraltı claimed that students on opposing sides of the Galata Bridge, connecting Beyoğlu with the historic peninsula, had mentalities so vastly different that it seemed as if the distance between Beyoğlu and Paris or Hollywood was closer then the distance between Beyoğlu and Beyazıt, Aksaray or Kocamustafapaşa, all quarters on the historic peninsula.121 Ali Çoruk points out that such districts in the historical peninsula, notably Aksaray and Fatih, were often portrayed as the opposite of Beyoğlu, being the authentic, Turkish Istanbul. Beyoğlu is portrayed as a paradoxical mix of (unlawfully appropriated) wealth, luxury and moral decay. The brothels of Beyoğlu were also a popular theme for novelists. Çoruk indicates that Beyoğlu is represented as a place that housed a ‘whirlwind of lust’, for instance in Ethem İzzet Benice’s Beş Hasta Var (There are Five Patients, 1931).122 Frequently in these novels, the brothels are associated with the minorities. In several books the protagonist will end up in a brothel or lodging (often used as a euphemism) with an Armenian or Greek woman, while the female brothel-keepers are often portrayed as Armenians or Greeks as well. Mustafa Hakkı Akansel also subscribed to this perspective and stated that Beyoğlu was considered as the symbol of alcohol, prostitution and debauchery.123 In fact, prostitution was certainly not limited to this district and Mark Wyers explains that non-Muslim prostitutes dominated the brothels on the European side, while Muslim prostitutes dominated those on the Anatolian side. The CUP government appeared to have no interest in forbidding the existence of brothels, but made efforts to segregate Muslim and non-Muslim prostitutes. Health checks on the two groups were for instance to be performed in different hospitals.124 Hospital records, however, show that a significant group of Muslim women resisted the segregation and worked clandestinely – without registration – on the European side. When the Turkish Republic was founded, moreover foreign prostitutes were no longer allowed to work in the city and many were deported.

In any case, Beyoğlu and the brothel sector were represented as a venture that was alien to the Turkish nation, further playing into the existing dichotomies that involved Beyoğlu as a place of bad, foreign habits that did not belong in Turkey.125 In the novel Zâniyeler (Adulteresses, 1924) by Selahattin Enis, the dichotomy between the place and people of Beyoğlu as a place of perversion is further extrapolated vis-à-vis the people of Fatih and Aksaray, where one finds the good moral of the Turkish nation. The latter are portrayed as forced to eat dry bread after the First World War while the ‘debauchery’ in fact increased in districts like Beyoğlu and Şişli where there was no a shortage of anything.126 Çoruk also points to a later quote from Samiha Ayverdi, a prominent nationalist author, who wrote in her İstanbul Geceleri (Istanbul Nights – 1952) about the otherness of Beyoğlu, which can be considered to be a symptomatic example of the antipathy towards the ‘otherness’ of Beyoğlu.127 She considers the area essentially as a void in Turkey, a place that should not be, as it embodies everything foreign, repeating a trope from Turkish nationalism that everything foreign should be considered with suspicion:

‘It wasn’t ours in the past and it isn’t ours now. It has viewed this land, whose air it breathes and water it drinks, with contempt in the past and it does so now. It didn’t resemble us in the past with its customs, appearances, and views [...] and it doesn’t now. Leaning on its capitulations, bankers, Masons, Levantines, various languages, bars, taverns, public houses, in a word – on all sorts of Western mimicry, it looked at us from above with contempt in the past, as it does so now.’128

In part it were sentiments like these that can be considered symptomatic of the hate campaigns and animosity that were stimulated by the state, satellite organizations and the media. Dilek Güven considers the 1955 pogroms as an organic outcome of the national politics that had dominated the 1930s and 1940s, in which ethnic homogenization played a crucial role.129 More significantly, however, she points out that the events should be considered as a performance organized by the state. Menderes’ DP was confronted with growing domestic tensions as an effect of the Cyprus crisis and sought for means to control the public opinion. The September pogroms then provided the government with an opportunity to declare the state of emergency which enabled them to
exert greater control over public life, politics and the media. The event revolved around a newsflash on 6 September 1955, which reported that the birth house of Atatürk at Thessaloniki had been bombed by Greek nationalists. The event received further attention in an Istanbul-based newspaper in the afternoon and soon after student organizations as well as the * Kıbrıs Türkürt Cemiyeti* (Cyprus is Turkish Association) called for a protest on the Taksim Square. This would provoke a number of groups to proceed down towards Tünel over the İstiklal Caddesi and throw stones at the properties of non-Muslim shopowners. The second wave, however, had an even more devastating effect, with large masses swarming through the district and vandalizing shops, apartments, schools, churches and cemeteries with materials and tools they brought along. They would proceed into the adjacent districts like Kurtuluş, Nişantaşı and Şişli, but Güven points out that the violence even spread to the Asian side and Princes’ Islands as well as other cities in Turkey. Police forces at the Taksim Square did not act upon the violence and even expressed their sympathy: a police inspector who refused to help his Albanian neighbour stated that on that day he was not a police officer, but a Turk. Güven describes how the event facilitated directed targeting to particular communities: the Hilton hotel was protected by the police, as well as the premises of the Orthodox Patriarchate and the Greek Consulate. Particularly insightful is also the account regarding a French shop in Tünel which was guarded by a police officer who told off the mob that vandalized stores of the local non-Muslim communities. He warned them that they were not allowed to damage the shop since it was owned by a Frenchman. Güven goes on to explain that a lack of police force was also certainly not a reason for the lack of intervention, since in the wake of the events policemen from the provinces close to Istanbul had been called to the city. A police officer explained the passivity by indicating that they had explicit orders on that day not to act, except for cases of theft or arson. Although all groups were affected in the district, the Greeks were hit hardest in relative and absolute numbers. The violence ended when the army was deployed in the late evening of 6 September, but Güven indicates that unrest would smoulder for the days and weeks after the events. Damages amounted to 150 Million Turkish Lira (54 Million in US Dollar value at the time). Alexandris indicates that the Greek communal properties were hit particularly hard with damage and destruction to 73 churches, 26 schools, 5
athletics clubs and two cemeteries. Menderes refused to acknowledge responsibility and hinted at a communist conspiracy instead. Any form of transparent or objective reporting on the events and its aftermath were banned by the government, going as far as to seize telegrams of foreign correspondents reporting on the event.136 Alexandris points out that the Turkish press framed the events as a conflict of class rather than of ethnicity or nationality. Most of the rioters came from the villages in Thrace and Anatolia that were close to Istanbul. They allegedly revolted against the wealth accumulation of the Istanbulite bourgeoisie, not discriminating between Turks and Armenians, Greeks or Jews. The resentment, however, particularly targeted the properties of non-Muslims, damages to Turkish businesses or private property were limited (due to involvement of the Turkish police or not), further pointing to an orchestrated hate campaign. He argues that at the time inflation was increasing with 30 percent annually and it was hard for the many young, single men in the city to establish a livelihood. Those who had some capital – and by 1955 there still seems to be a relatively high degree of capital accumulation among non-Muslims – were able to get by, despite of economic difficulties. The non-Muslim well-to-do were the target for a mob which was, according to Alexandris, the instrument of a group of racist fanatics.137

Güven concludes that the major consequence of the events was a growing estrangement of non-Muslims with the Turkish state and their gradual exodus from Turkey or from the quarters where their communities had resided historically to different parts of the city. This had surprised them because the relations between the minorities and the DP government had at first been positive and relatively beneficial for them, with the lifting of restrictions for minority schools for instance.138 Economic and political problems that the DP was faced with, however, called for measures to overshadow and suppress these issues with a different agenda of violence. Güven argues that next to this, the events were a continuation of the expulsion of non-Muslim Turks from Anatolia during the Kemalist regime. Finally, the connection between the events and the Cyprus conflict became even more direct due to British involvement. The British wanted the Greeks to continue their appeasement of British control over the island, by pointing out that the alternative would be Turkish claims to the sovereignty over the island. A diplomat noted that violence against the Greek minority in Turkey could be beneficial for Britain, as it would help them to make their argument towards the Greeks. They reasoned that the Greeks might well risk losing all claims to the island if they would not continue to support British rulership over Cyprus.139

The escalation of the crisis over the political future of Cyprus ensued, led to a continuation of popular grievance and contempt towards the Greek, and arguably, other non-Muslim communities. Alexandris notes that the ’Citizen, speak Turkish!’-signs began to reappear on the windows of Armenian and Greek shops in Beyoğlu in the second half of the 1950s.140 By 1960, the number of Greeks with Greek nationality had dropped to nearly a third of the population in 1927, from 26,431 to 10,488. This comprised less than a third of the total Greek community in Turkey. Alexandris explains that the difference between the Greeks of Greek nationality and those of Turkish nationality were negligible and that they de facto constituted a single community, their nationality merely based on the origins of their ancestors. İlay Örs has shown that the diversity among the community was substantial and that many members of the group considered themselves neither as Turkish or Greek. In her research she has shed light on the paradoxical nature of the nationalist framework that was not able to accommodate the Greek community of Istanbul. She explains that within the community there was and is a strong sense of relating to locality or geography, rather than nationality, feeling attached to Istanbul and its past environment marked by diversity and cultural hybridity.141

During the 1960s the numbers of Greek Istanbulites would be even further reduced as a result of geopolitical strife. When violence flared up on Cyprus in the winter of 1963, the Turkish government decided to pressurise Greece by unilaterally ending the 1930 Convention of Establishment, Commerce and Navigation on 16 March 1964, in which the rights of the Greek nationals in Turkey were secured. Ending the treaty directly affected these nationals and a deportation campaign was started, leading to a registered amount of 1073 deportations by August 1964. Greece turned to the UN Security Council, which effectively did nothing but denounce the Turkish actions, which Turkey stated was only directed at people involved in criminal activities.142 A year later, however, more than 6000 Greek nationals had been deported and by the late 1960s a mere few hundreds were left in Istanbul.143 The Turkish state effectively confiscated their properties and obstructed liquidation
of businesses or real estate. It would also have a severe effect on Greeks with Turkish nationality, whose were closely tied to the Greeks with Greek nationality. The effects on other communities were detrimental as well and Kasbarian notes that the non-Turkish nationals were forced to leave the country with nothing but some cash. In the increasingly Turkified environment differences were sometimes abruptly rendered visible and Kasbarian cites the story of an Armenian girl who one day could no longer play with her Turkish friend as the Turkish grandmother forbade it due to the Armenian girl’s ethnicity. She went home in tears and asked ‘what does being Armenian mean’?144 Alexandris notes that 30,000 Greeks with Turkish nationality had left the country by the fall of 1964.145 Restrictive legislation regarding the Greek schools in Turkey, also caused the collapse of the schools’ educational standing and its student numbers. The numbers dropped from 15,000 in 1923 to 5000 in 1964 and 816 in 1980.146 Estimates from 1978 indicated that some 7822 dent numbers. The numbers dropped from 15,000 in 1923 to 5000 in 1964 and 816 in 1980. Estimates from 1978 indicated that some 7822 Greeks were left in Istanbul, following a further drop in the aftermath of the Cyprus division in 1974. Çağlar Keyder remarks that the numbers in Istanbul by the 1980s had further dropped to less than 2000, while the Istanbulite Armenian community was around fifty thousand and the Jewish community at 25 thousand.147

Whereas Beyoğlu and the city at large were gradually left by the minorities entirely, Bensiyon Pinto, former president of the Turkish-Jewish community, recounts how many of the Jews of Istanbul from the Kuledibi neighbourhood in Galata moved to Şişli, to the north of Beyoğlu. At the same time many working migrants from Anatolia were attracted by the prospects of jobs in Istanbul from the 1950s onwards. Keyder and Öncü point out that the housing of these labour migrants concentrated on the outskirts of the city in slums (gecekondus) on the one hand and in the city centre, which had considerable capacity – not in the last part due to the gradual exodus of minorities and foreigners. The rapid and uncontrolled growth of Istanbul would lead to the deterioration of its infrastructure and real estate, insufficiently addressed by the governments at the local and national levels.148 Zürcher adds that 80 percent of the Anatolian population consisted of small farmers by the mid-1940s, with vastly different standards of living between the city and countryside. When the DP came to power in 1950 they started investing heavily in the position of small farmers, providing them with cheap credit, subsidizing equipment and upholding the prices of crops artificially through the Toprak Mahsulleri Ofisi (Agricultural Product Office). Despite of this, more than one million people had left the countryside for the city by the end of the 1950s in search of jobs. Zürcher indicates that the major cities were growing by no less than 10 percent a year by the end of the decade. Keyder and Öncü indicate that growth rates from 1950 escalated from a growth of around 100,000 per five years between 1935 and 1950 to around 400,000 per five years until 1965, after which the rates further increased to 1,000,000 every five years until 1985.149 State tariffs and quotas protected new enterprises from the global market, which centered around Istanbul. Zürcher argues that the workers who came to Istanbul could not find enough vacancies in the growing industry and were often forced towards more informal modes of labour, as street vendors or casual labourers.150

In the 1950s and 1960s Beyoğlu had still been the city’s heart in terms of business and culture although that position would change in the coming decade. As substantial parts of the non-Muslim communities were forced to leave the country, many properties were abandoned as had been the case for the past decades. Several of these properties were squatted, claimed or ‘guarded’ by newcomers to the city. Vedia Dökmeci explains that in 1960 Beyoğlu was the core business district, with the largest concentration of businesses and banks, but as an effect of industrialization, urban development following the DP’s urban restructuring and investments in infrastructure, particularly motorways, new centres started to develop to the north of Beyoğlu. This gradually dwarfed the significance of the old city centre. Between 1960 and 1990 the number of firms in Beyoğlu was reduced from 30,4 percent to 15,5 percent of the total in Istanbul.151 The district had become a conservation area, following the installment of the Supreme Council for the Preservation of Monumental Buildings and Monuments (Gayrimenkul Eski Eserler ve Anıtlar Yüksek Kurulu) in 1951, although much of the real estate rapidly dilapidated in the following years.152 İpek Türeli points out that the efforts of the council primarily focused on registering monumental buildings and possibly restoring them, with little regard for the environment. This led to a policy in which buildings could be restored, while paying little attention to the environment of these buildings. In 1973, new legislation was introduced which would also consider the spatial context of the preserved architectural object. Türeli argues that during the 1940s and 1950s considerable parts
of Istanbul’s landscape had been destroyed to make way for urban development, which triggered a strong debate on heritigization, eventually leading to efforts to restoration, which Türeli – following Svetlana Boym – describes as notably different than reflection.\(^\text{153}\) As previously mentioned, old businesses had in part left the Beyoğlu district, due to the nationalist policies towards the minorities, while new businesses refrained from opening offices due to the limited available space in the district and the restrictions on the height of buildings.\(^\text{154}\) Nevertheless, this did not hinder the construction of probably the first example that drastically affected the urban landscape of the İstiklal Caddesi, the Odakule building of the Turkish Chamber of Industry. In the 1960s and 1970s, moreover, several large upscale hotels and the Atatürk Cultural Centre were constructed in Beyoğlu. In combination with the many significant schools, social institutions, consulates, and foreign research and cultural institutions that were based in Beyoğlu which could or would not move from the district, it would be an exaggeration to argue that Beyoğlu lost its significance. In the tourist guides of Hachette, the Guides Bleus, on Turkey and Istanbul, the district is still marked as the ‘quartier moderne d’Istanbul’ and ‘le quartier résidentiel par excellence’ – although Harbiye, Maçka and Şişli are conveniently summed up as the suburbs of the area, which in the case of Şişli might already be somewhat of a stretch by 1969 due to the increasing impact of the Şişli district in Istanbul’s economy.\(^\text{155}\) The guide moreover recommends this area as the place with the most comfortable hotels which are frequented most commonly by foreign tourists:

‘Beyoğlu, l’ancienne Péra, quartier moderne d’Istanbul est, avec ses nouveaux faubourgs de Harbiye, de Şişli, de Maçka, etc., le quartier résidentiel par excellence. C’est là que se trouvent les hôtels les plus confortables, ceux qui, en général, sont fréquentés par les touristes étrangers. Ce sera donc le centre de rayonnement à partir duquel partiront les divers itinéraires qui permettront de visiter Istanbul et ses environs.’\(^\text{156}\)

As has been indicated previously, however, the demographics of the district had changed dramatically, with direct effects on its socio-cultural profile. This phenomenon has often been associated with the alleged ruralization of the district, due to the inflow of Anatolian migrants.

Image 16: Ataköy, one of the new districts seen from the Marmara Sea.

Image 17: The modernist Atatürk Cultural Centre at Taksim with its architect Hayati Tabanlioğlu.
Quoting Reşat Ekrem Koçu, author of the *İstanbul Ensiklopedisi* (1961) and Özdemir Arkan’s *Beyoğlu* (1988) Çoruk and Ayfer Bartu both refer to how various writers describe the change as perceptible through the change of smells, from lavender and sesame to *lahmacun* and *ciğ köfte*, while ‘decent’ patisseries were replaced by bars and nightclubs. Interestingly, the perceived ‘change’ of Beyoğlu is, like in the 1930s, associated with a rise in the number of places of late night entertainment. Çoruk states that this increase was also a consequence of the growing numbers of Anatolian migrants who thought of the entertainment industry in Beyoğlu as a business opportunity. On the other hand, the quote signifies a rise of ‘low culture’ to the detriment of different cultural lexicons, which are often framed as ‘high culture’ versus ‘low culture’, observable through the smells of the bourgeoisie versus the smells of rural villagers. Ayşe Öncü argues that what is instrumental in this context is the concept of ‘arabesk culture’. With the arrival of migrants from Anatolia alternative modes of entertainment also entered the city. An entire scene of artists and aspiring artists flooded the nightclubs and bars of Beyoğlu with a style of music that was inspired by popular Western, Arabic and Turkish music. The topics of the lyrics often referred to the situation of the migrant from Anatolia who left his hometown for the big city and faced hardship and a tough life over there. The music was banned from state radio and was considered to be a corruption of the ‘authentic’ character of Turkish folk and classical music. The music, however, had great appeal to the newcomers and soon would expand to an entire genre that included film as well. The genre was, in a derogative fashion, referred to as *arabesk*. Öncü explains that these representations were the outcome of a novel dimension in local identity politics, based on a class dichotomy. Öncü argues that the adherents of this ‘arabesk culture’ were framed to be neither really urban or peasant. The way in which the newcomers were regarded reveals contempt and their consideration as a nuisance that was in no position to make claims to place-making. The newcomers would, however, prove to have a lasting presence in Istanbul and a considerable impact on the imagining of Istanbul during the 1960s and 1970s as will be shown in chapter 4.

Doğmeci and Berköz point out that the decrease in the significance of Beyoğlu as the central business district was in part an effect of the incompatibility of dominant modes of transportation from the 1960s onwards, i.e. car traffic. The decrease of businesses should, however,
not exclusively be considered as an absolute decrease, but rather as a relative decrease to the newly developing central business district around Şişli and Mecidiyeköy on the one hand and the development of sub-centres on the other. At first the process at hand thus was one of internal expansion instead of displacement. Vedia Dökmeci and Hale Çıraci indicate that processes of suburbanization and the unappealing prospects for transportation and construction meant that major developers started to ignore the district, which had a negative impact on the overall image of the district and the prices of properties. Overall, Istanbul had by the 1970s acquired the position of Turkey’s economic catalyst and centre. The city accounted for 51 percent of total employment in the Turkish private sector by 1973. Keyder indicates that the Turkish government had reluctantly accepted Istanbul’s dominant position in Turkey’s economy, but failed to further invest in its infrastructure. The areas around Istanbul’s old centres were quickly surrounded by shanty towns inhabited by more and more working migrants and their families. Turkey’s politics in the 1970s had become increasingly tumultuous, following two coups (1960 and 1971, the latter technically being a military memorandum), paralyzed coalition governments, which were unable to execute serious social and political reforms. Adding to that was ever-increasing violence between left and right-wing extremists. Zürcher points out that the leftists were particularly vulnerable and found themselves to be at the disadvantage since the fascist party MHP (Milliyetçi Hareket Partisi – Nationalist Action Party) held a strong influence over the police and security forces. The groups fought their battles on the streets and university campuses and were guaranteed new ‘recruits’ due to the disastrous prospects for jobs in the country and the extreme undercapacity of higher education (only 20 percent of 200,000 eligible high school graduates would be admitted to university). An episode that as a consequence has been engrained in Turkish collective memory, particularly in the contexts of Taksim and Beyoğlu as a public space, were the 1976 and 1977 1 May Labour Day celebrations. The Revolutionary Confederation of Labour Unions (Devrimci İşçi Sendikaları Konfederasyonu – DİSK) organized a 1 May Day Celebration in 1976. The event was organized again by DİSK the year after, but managed to mobilize a much larger crowd this time. The plan was to approach the square from the North and Southwest. A highly heterogeneous crowd gathered at the square and allegedly amounted to a few million protesters on Taksim and other places in the city. Ayşegül Baykan and Tali Hatuka indicate that the organizers had, in collaboration with the police, appointed volunteers to maintain order in the crowds. After the speech of DİSK president Kemal Türkler around 6 pm, gunshots were heard around the Tarlabaşı quarter. When more shots followed, police vehicles approached the crowds from two sides and fired sound bombs, which caused mass panic and resulted in 34 casualties, with numerous people being trampled or hit by police vehicles.

The seemingly irresolvable violence and the perceived ‘soft attitude’ of Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit in the end led to the most violent coups Turkey would witness in its entire history. Kerem Öktem describes the situation of Turkey months before the 12 September 1980 coup as a country which was at war with itself. He argues that the social and political impasse that Turkey had reached brought daily life to halt and made the military elite and their henchmen in civil society realize that the decades following the breach with the one-party state had yielded insufficient results. The military ‘saved the day’ onstage, but used the opportunity to push the country in the desired direction backstage. Apart from the military elite and their sympathizers in the judiciary, politics, bureaucracy, business and media securing their position, the years following the coup were marked by a turn towards Islam as a binding element in society, violence against the Kurds, political suppression and a turn towards neoliberal market reforms.

The effect of these neoliberal market reforms was felt particularly strong in Istanbul. The electoral success of the Anavatan Partisi (Motherland Party), which came to national power under the leadership of Turgut Özal in 1983 was followed by the party’s success during the first elections for the metropolitan mayorship in Istanbul, which brought Bedrettin Dalan to power. Dalan set himself the goal to transform Istanbul into a ‘world city’ with drastic interventions in the urban landscape. Dalan had little regard for the historical value of the residential architecture in historical districts and had a considerable part of the Tarlabaşı quarter in Beyoğlu destroyed in order to construct a six-way car lane. Many properties were not claimed, giving the metropolitan government a carte blanche for urban destruction. This would create a spatial and social segregation in Beyoğlu which has an effect on the district up to this date. On the side of İstiklal Caddesi, however, local actors started to consider the potential of the historical Beyoğlu
By then Beyoğlu's significance in the rapidly growing business sector was crippled to the benefit of the Şişli, Mecidiyeköy, Levent and Maslak districts. Dökmeci et al. point out that city officials and speculators started to become aware of what Beyoğlu could become in a new aspiring global city. The arrival of hotels and bottom-up gentrification also gradually increased the economic value of the dilapidated district. Interestingly, Dökmeci et al. note that despite the gradual disappearance of the middle and upper middle classes from the residential areas in the district as well as the subordination of its commercial share to the new districts, the area had remained a significant area for local and foreign tourists. This is not surprising considering the relatively large amount of historical and new hotels in the area. The authors consider this as one of the principal catalysts of the district's revival.

One of the most significant actors in the process of Beyoğlu's regeneration was the Beyoğlu Güzelleştirme Derneği (BGD – Beyoğlu Beautification Association), a cooperation of major business owners in the district and the local municipality. As the area gradually started to be claimed by the intelligentsia, architects, journalists and artists, often attracted by a combination of the district's historical appeal and cheap rental options, the BGD would start initiatives to renovate the district's fabric, primarily İstiklal Caddesi and its direct surroundings. Later on, initiatives from civil society, like the Cihangir Beautification Association (Cihangir Güzelleştirme Derneği) in Beyoğlu's Cihangir quarter, were set up in order to upgrade the quality of living. As an effect the quarter's demography changed radically and the area became one of the most upscale places in Istanbul. Edhem Eldem furthermore notes that the 1980s brought an industry of cosmopolitan nostalgia in popular literature, city and tourism branding, which revolved around the claim to multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism in a period between the 1980s and 1990s during which most of the 'celebrated' non-Muslim communities had left the area. As indicated in the introduction, Mercedes Volait and Veronica Della Dora have pointed out that this is in fact a phenomenon that can be observed around the same time in other cities around the Mediterranean. Türeli has noted similar dynamics in Damascus in the 1990s as well. In the case of Istanbul, Eldem points to the popularity of the translations of Said Duhani's 1940s and 1950s nostalgic narrations of Beyoğlu into Turkish in the early 1980s, which had a particularly strong impact on the intelligentsia at the time. Orhan
Pamuk in his debut *Cevdet Bey ve Oğulları* (Cevdet Bey and his Sons, 1982) took a long passage directly from Duhani’s translated work and used it as an introduction. Another contributing element in the way this ‘reinvented cosmopolitanism’ became so pervasive was certainly Turkey’s turn towards neoliberal politics.

The instrumentalization of Pera or Beyoğlu’s past is problematic as it celebrates and romanticizes a selective historical and imagined representation of the district in which the historical social texture – those who were absent at the time of writing – were gone. In the wake of this rise of interest the gentrification of Beyoğlu skyrocketed. Eldem argues that coinciding with this, nostalgia for an imagined multiculturalism and high culture, started to be exploited by the ‘stakeholders in the area’, meaning the municipality, real-estate owners and local businesses. Adjoining this, museums and cultural centers started to be named with references to the district’s ‘former social and topographic nomenclature’. Eldem, as well as Asu Aksoy and Kevin Robins point out that the reinvention of cosmopolitanism was in large part a consequence of the desire to stimulate the urban economy and tourism sector. Gradually, the district would lose its character as a business and residential district, ridding itself also partly of its image as a seedy place at night, also described by Eldem in the context of Galata, and gradually becoming remarked as a place of entertainment and consumption.
ENDNOTES

1 For reasons of convenience I will use primarily Istanbul to refer to the city, although the city was only referred to as such in formal communication from the 1920s onwards. The name Konstantinoupolis (city of Constantine) has been used since the capital of the Roman Empire was moved from Rome to Byzantium under the reign of Constantine I (306–337). The Ottomans formally referred to the city as Kostantiniyye. For reference: Doğan Kuban, Istanbul: An Urban History – Byzantium, Constantinop-olis, Istanbul (2nd ed.: İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları: İstanbul, 2010).


5 Eldem, Goffman, and Masters, The Ottoman City between East and West, 214.


7 Claudio Fogu, ‘We have made the Mediterranean; now we must make the Mediterraneans’, in: Yasser Elhairy and Edwige Tamalet Talbayev, Critically Mediterranean: temporalities, aesthetics, and deployments of a sea in crisis (Palgrave MacMillan: Cham, 2018) 181. D’Azequio’s quote was: ‘We have made Italy; now we must make the Italians’ (L’Italia è fatta. Restano da fare gli italiani).

8 Fogu, ‘We have made the Mediterranean’, 181-184.

9 Eldem, Goffman, and Masters, The Ottoman City between East and West, 214.


12 Ibidem.


15 Edhem Eldem, A History of the Ottoman Bank (İstanbul: Ottoman Bank Historical Research Center, 1999) 421-448.


17 Eldem, Goffman, and Masters, The Ottoman City between East and West, 144.

18 Ibidem.


20 Eldem, Goffman, and Masters, The Ottoman City between East and West, 151.

21 Ibidem, 152.


23 Cerasi, ‘The Formation Of Ottoman House Types’, 120.


26 Hamadéh, The city’s pleasures, 12.

27 Ibidem, 220.

28 Ibidem, 236.


30 Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, 40.

31 Ibidem, 51.

32 Ibidem, 50.


36 Çelik, The Remaking of Istanbul, 42.

37 Ibidem, 43.

38 Ibidem.

39 Ibidem.


41 Çelik, The Remaking of Istanbul, 45.

42 Ibidem.


44 Ibidem, 118.

45 Çelik, The Remaking of İstanbul, 126-127.


47 Girardelli, ‘Sheltering Diversity’, 118.

48 Ibidem, 126-127.

50 Edhem Eldem, Istanbul as a Cosmopolitan City, 223.
53 Orhan Koloğlu, Cercle d’Orient’dan Büyük Kulüp’a (Boyut: Istanbul 2005).
54 See chapters 6-8 in this dissertation.
58 Ibidem, 168.
59 Çelik, The Remaking of Istanbul, 64.
61 Çelik, The Remaking of Istanbul, 47-54.
62 Ibidem, 47.
63 Murat Güvenç has been preparing a project that inventorizes the socio-economic function of adresses and the occupation of residents. Edhem Eldem refers to this project, entitled ‘Continuity and Change in the Commercial Geography of Istanbul: Street Profiles in the 1910-1922 Oriental directories’ at the time of his writing, in Eldem, ‘Ottoman Galata and Pera between myth and reality’, 25-26.
65 Çelik, The Remaking of Istanbul, 93.
69 Gırdarelli, ‘Sheltering Diversity’, 127.
70 Bozdoğan, Modernism and Nation Building, 28.
71 Ibidem, 30-32.
74 Ibidem, 45.
Building Beyoğlu

128 Translation by Arus Yumul, “A Prostitute Lodging in the Bosom of Turkishness”, 68; original quote by Çoruk, ‘Cumhuriyet Devri Türk Romanında’, XXI-XXII;
130 Güven, Nationalismus und Minderheiten, 26.
131 Ibidem.
132 Ibidem, 30.
133 Ibidem, 31.
134 Ibidem, 31-32.
135 Ibidem, 37-41.
137 Ibidem, 258-259.
138 Güven, Nationalismus und Minderheiten, 170-171.
139 Ibidem.
140 Alexandris, The Greek minority of Istanbul, 271.
142 Alexandris, The Greek minority of Istanbul, 283.
143 Ibidem, 284.
145 Alexandris, The Greek minority of Istanbul, 286.
146 Ibidem, 287.
150 Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, 226.
152 Türel, ‘Heritagisation of the “Ottoman/Turkish House”’, 5.
153 Ibidem, 5.
156 Hachette, Les Guides Bleus, 171.

158 Çoruk, ‘Cumhuriyet Devri Türk Romanında’, XX.
159 Öncü, ‘İstanbulites and Others’, 104-105.
163 Ibidem.
164 Zürcher, Turkey: A Modern History, 263.
167 Öktem, Turkey Since 1989, 57.
170 Dökmeci, Altunbaş and Yazıcı, ‘Revitalisation of the Main Street’, 157.
173 Edhem Eldem, ‘Istanbul as a Cosmopolitan City’, 225-226. Duhani was a prominent Perote from a Christian Arab family.
175 Türel, ‘Heritagisation of the “Ottoman/Turkish House”’, 6.
176 Ibidem, 228.
177 Ibidem, 225-226.
178 Ibidem.