Memory and ARCHITECTURE

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chapter seven

Housing the Symbolic Universe in Early Republican Turkey

Architecture, Memory, and "the Felt Real"

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From the work of Aristotle to contemporary semiologists, or even through self-reflection, we understand that the world is comprehensible not through its things or its places, or even because of the people who inhabit or have inhabited it, but by the meanings we have assigned to them. This is especially true for our understanding of the world of the past, which is only accessible through the meanings that have come down to us through memory. It is memory that transports the symbolic importance of objects, places, art, or language. But memory is a malleable carrier, one that allows objects to be remembered differently according to the needs of specific groups in specific situations or times; thus it is memory that allows places or objects to take on emblematic value or to become the centerpiece of a group's collective identity.

The "Turkish house" is just such a memory-symbol, an image that has operated in the Turkish symbolic universe in order to make the past meaningful to the present. The memory of the "Turkish house" has become a carrier of group meaning, in fact, the carrier of specific emotions that needed a place to reside during a tumultuous period of Turkish history.

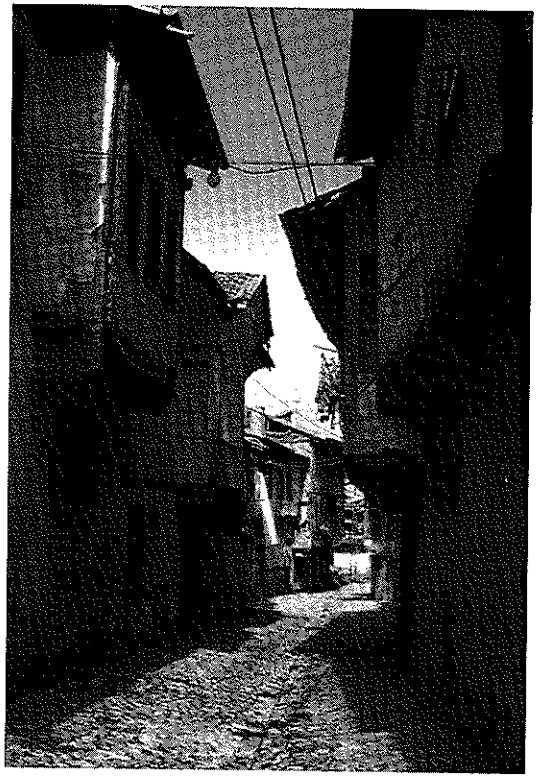

FIG. 7.1.
A street of "Turkish" houses," Tokat, Turkey. Photo by Carel Bertram, 1993.

The period of time when Turkey was becoming Turkey, that is, the early years of the Turkish Republic, during the 1920s and early 1930s, was a time of severe changes, when the Ottoman Empire, with its religious associations, was being dissolved and a new, secular ideal was being forged under the leadership of Kemal Atatürk. In the early Republican period, an image of "the Turkish House," both in text and in the way that it was depicted visually, emerged as a sign that encoded what was felt to be at risk in this changing universe, and thus it became a memory-image charged with carrying old, outdated, or even forbidden ideas into the present, and even into the future.

Although the "Turkish house" became a central image in the symbolic universe of the Turkish Republic, it is actually a house type of the Ottoman era that was no longer being built by the time of the establishment of the Republic of Turkey in 1923.[1] Therefore, the "Turkish house" is really an Ottoman house that was brought into the Turkish period from the

FIG. 7.2.
A "Turkish house," Yorük, Turkey. Photo by Carel Bertram, 1993.

past. Thus, one could argue that there is no such thing as "the Turkish House," only an Ottoman house that was renamed. This renaming is, of course, important, but also important is the fact that this "Turkish House" had a very real visual form, and thus was easily imaged.

Before the nineteenth century, Ottoman towns in Anatolia and the Balkans were characterized by a variety of local styles and materials, but the late eighteenth century saw the beginning of a homogenization in housing types for most of the empire. At this time, mud-brick housing in most of Anatolia and the Balkans was replaced by timber-framed houses of four basic categories: the *konak,* or mansion; the *kiosk,* or suburban garden mansion; the *yali,* or waterfront house; and the *ev* or *hane,* the small family house. Most were made of wood and shared several common architectural characteristics, including living quarters above the ground floor with street-facing rooms cantilevered over the street, and with windows arranged in

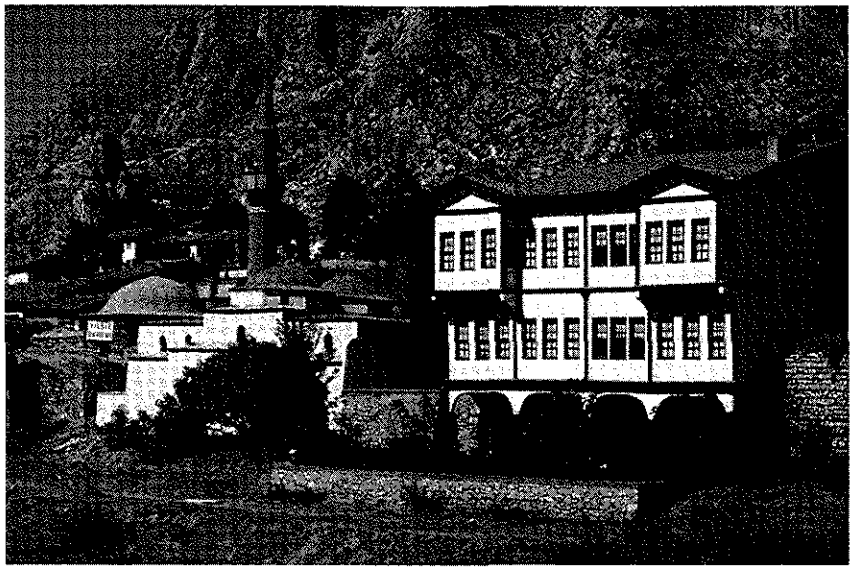

FIG. 7.3. *The Hazeranlar Konak, now a museum, Amasya, Turkey. Photo by Carel Bertram, 1993.*

:ows along the façade, protected by wide eaves. By the nineteenth century, :ven the interiors shared a common spatial organization, especially that of :he Ottoman room, the *oda*. The oda was the central module of the house, as it was the living space of a nuclear family within the extended family of :he household. Its rows of sash windows facing the street were lined on the nside with built-in bench seating; this and its decorative wooden ceilings, wooden cabinets, and tile fireplaces were a form exported from the capital :o become the standard of the provinces. Wherever the Ottomans went, rom Sarajevo to Damascus, these very similar houses appeared.

But to the extent that these were wooden houses, they were continu-ally ravaged by fires, and were continually replaced by new wooden build-ngs. This was only true until the end of the nineteenth century, however, when they were no longer rebuilt, for they were no longer suited to the new demographics, economics, and lifestyle needs of a growing and Westernizing nation. Instead, the old wooden houses were left to decay or were subdivid-:d for immigrant families, or replaced with concrete apartments. Eventually,

FIG. 7.4. *An old man dreams that his past can still be found in an old "Turkish house." From Ismail Gülgeç, "Hikâye-i Istanbul [An Istanbul Romance],"* Istanbul *17 (1996): 119.*

only a few old houses represented the urban past, clustered in small enclaves or bravely isolated and restored as museums, hotels, or restaurants. Clearly, then, as a mental image in the twentieth century, the "Turkish house" owes its survival not to architectural practice but to *memory.*[2]

This memory is very much alive in modern Turkey, but in a specifically symbolic way. For example, in the Turkish imagination of the late twentieth century, the "Turkish house" seems to appear whenever the words *Turkish, history, national*—or even *old*—find themselves together. The Turkish History Foundation's Publishing House has used the house as its logo, and it is the subject of a recent cartoon in which an old man dreams that his lost past can still be found in a Turkish house. It is also the subject of the drawing of a middle-school girl, who used it to depict a perfect future. The "Turkish house" has thus become a site in the Turkish imagination, endowed with symbolic resonance not only in autobiographical memory and in shared memory, but most particularly in collective memory.

These terms, *autobiographical, shared,* and *collective memory,* must

FIG. 7.5. *"My Ideal Future," award-winning drawing by a middle-school girl in Istanbul. From UNICEF,* The Environment and Youth: Youth Painting and Literature Competition [Çevre ve Biz Gençler: Gençlerarasi Resim ve Yazin Yarasmasi] *(Ankara: ISKI, 1992), 16.*

ɔe differentiated when discussing how images become part of a symbolic ınıverse: autobiographical memory is what real people remember from :heir own lived experience. Shared memory refers to events that are auto-ɔiographical in nature but are also experienced communally, such as great ires, earthquakes, or even "going to the movies in the 1950s." Collective nemory, however, is something altogether different, at least as it has been :heorized by Maurice Halbwachs, for collective memory has no autobio-ɡraphical component at all.[3] In collective memory, people do not remem-ɔer events or places directly. Their memory is stimulated by inherited :tories, narratives, or depictions that lead to a type of "second-generation" nemory effect, such as those of the young cartoonist above, who could ıever have lived in a "Turkish house," or the young girl who drew a land-cape of houses of a type she probably had never lived in either.

I have been careful to distinguish among these types of memory because I am interested in how a group, rather than an individual, "remembers" the built world of a past that it considers its own. Furthermore, I am interested in how historical groups, who are no longer here to be interviewed, imagined a group past. But as we have no way of returning to the past for anthropological information, I rely on contemporary discourses as they appeared in novels and stories. Literature, of course, has its own biases and reference groups, and the literature that I examine here involves an elite metropolitan population, both in terms of authors and audience. Nonetheless, I would argue that novels provide a unique opportunity to enter the "Turkish house," a place that has been culturally and historically closed to scrutiny. Furthermore, by staging dramas of personal life, novels may be the major arena in which places can take on a symbolic resonance for a large group; this is especially true of historical novels, which choose their settings carefully. Thus, I argue that, when set in the "old Turkish house," historical novels reflect how the writer and his or her milieu thought about the houses of the past.[4] Novels, then, are makers and carriers of memory and of memory images.

I propose that the image of the "Turkish house" began to emerge as a player in memory in the first decades of the new Turkish Republic, in fact, just at the time that it was disappearing on the ground. Novels from this period suggest that at this time, when the spiritual values of the past were openly challenged by the new Republican values of secularism, Westernization, and modernism,[5] the "Turkish house" became aligned with the contested spiritual values of the past—and with an Islam that the past represented. We will see that in contemporary novels and stories the "Turkish house" took on an iconic power that was grounded in the *emotional charge* of these spiritual values, representing a spiritual universe that had no space in the present.

The Emergence of the "Turkish House" as a Spiritually Symbolic Space of Collective Memory

In the late-Ottoman period, a spiritual universe that integrated religion and government needed no specific symbolic space. The symbolic universe of Islam was large and flexible, with room for ongoing interpretations and

einterpretations of one's religious vision and core values. Every space held nat potential: not only the mosque, but also the house, neighborhood, alace, and the Sufi lodge. Language, literature, script, dress, codes of ehavior, and almost every other area of cultural production similarly eflected the symbolic and spiritual universe of Islam. But by the mid-nine-enth century, Westernization had begun to erode many of these symbolic paces, and with the formation of the new Turkish Republic, they became olitically charged representatives of the old order, an order said to be in eed of reform, or even one that should be totally discarded. Mustafa emal's new, Western ideals insistently repressed public forms of older slamic life styles and replaced them with idealized versions of Westernized fe. Religious schools were closed, Sufi lodges outlawed, and dress codes nat had identified religious practices, revised. The Arabic alphabet, which ad tied the reader to the larger Islamic world, was replaced by the Roman ne, which was both secular and Western. Clearly, the older frames of ref-ence had no *public* place of expression. But I suggest that these publicly ontested values did not disappear, in part because they were given a new, ut *private,* representational space, and that was the memory-image of the Turkish house." The *image* of the house was readily available, as it had lready become an image in the rhetoric of nationalists who appropriated ne Ottoman house as a symbol of "Turkish" history. In this way, a build-ng that was intrinsically Ottoman was being nationalized, and was begun o be called the "Turkish" house. But the appropriation of the Ottoman ouse as a symbol of a modern national identity (as a vernacular example nat anticipated the "Western" architectural ideals of light, ventilation, armth, and hygiene)[6] did not take root. Rather, what made the image of is now "Turkish house" survive in the Turkish imagination was just the pposite: its association with the spiritual world that a nationalist rhetoric as working to erase, that is, a spiritual world that still "felt real." I will se only one of several literary examples to suggest how the "Turkish ouse" came to represent these "felt real" spiritual values of the past.

atih-Harbiye

n 1931, Peyami Safa wrote the novel *Fatih-Harbiye* at the height of the stitutional changes that characterized the first decade of the Turkish epublic.[7] The novel itself takes place about six years earlier. Fatih is a

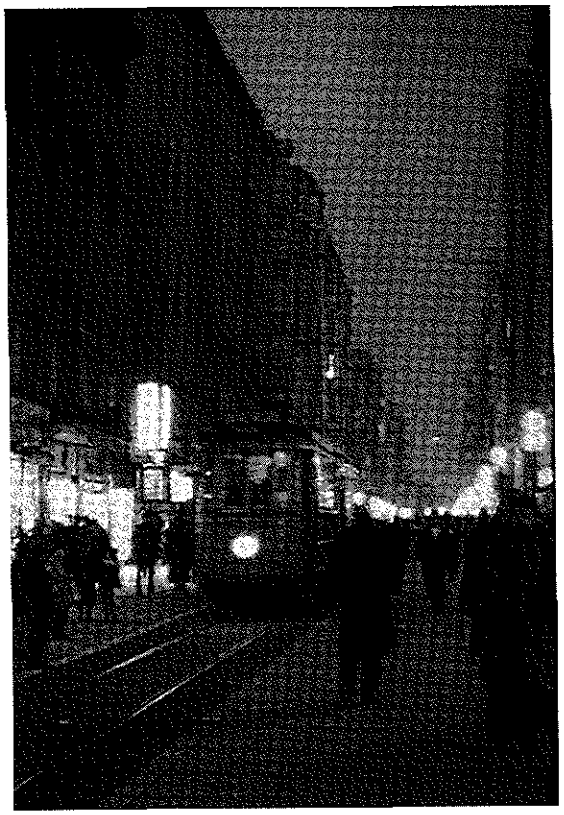

FIG. 7.6.
Beyoğlu, with buildings from the early twentieth century. From the cover of Arkitekt/Yaşama Sanatı, *issue 403 6/93. Photo by Enis Özbank.*

neighborhood in the heart of Istanbul's historic peninsula that was (and remains to this day) a symbol of the religious and social heritage of the Ottoman East.[8] Harbiye is the farthest extreme of the area called Beyoğlu, an area on the north side of the Golden Horn, an area that has long been the site of a Westernized, or European, lifestyle.

In the novel *Fatih-Harbiye,* the heroine, Neriman, lives with her father, Faiz Bey, their trusty servant, Gülter, and their cat, Sarman, in an old wooden house in Fatih, clearly described with all its visual attributes. It has an upper floor (a *cumba*) that protrudes over the street, a central room upstairs (a *sofa*), and a stone-floored entry area below (a *taşlık*). When the front door closed, "the old wooden house shook and the window-panes rattled."[9] Everything about this house resonated with a warmth from the past:

> In this *mahalle* (neighborhood), in this house, with this gas lamp, this old man, and this worn out plaster, with this crooked cornice and these frayed satin curtains, surrounded by the aroma of this newly polished moldy wood, Neriman saw that a person could be happy, and she remembered the cheery days that had been spent in this house.[10]

Neriman's father, Faiz Bey, is a retired government official who used to work in the ministry of education. Although not a musician, Faiz Bey plays the *ney*[11] for his own enjoyment, and he spends his evenings reading *rubaiyats* and *gazels* (Ottoman, Persian, and Arabic poetic forms, often with religious themes); his favorite topic of conversation is Sufi literature. Faiz Bey, a lover of "alaturka," or Eastern music, has a developed intellect and a religious sensibility.

His daughter, Neriman, is a girl who wears black dresses and covers her head with a black scarf.[12] She is also grounded in the high culture of "the East," for she studies the *oud*[13] in the Department of Classical Turkish Music at the National Music Conservatory, the *Darü'l-Elhan*, in Shehzade-bashi, a neighborhood near Fatih.[14] Neriman is thus a conservative girl, but one who leads a modern life, symbolized by her education in a modern conservatory. Her sweetheart of several years, Shinasi, studies *kemane*[15] at the Music Conservatory. Shinasi is a young man from Neriman's own mahalle and milieu; he is also a talented musician whom Neriman's father loves as if he were his own son. In fact, the father and prospective son-in-law are very much alike. When Faiz Bey described Shinasi to others he would say:

> He is silent and virtuous, with extraordinarily good manners and honorable by nature, and he has a compassionate heart. He has great emotional intensity, he plays the kemanje, and not only that, his name will be famous among the famous. When I listen to him I weep. I am enchanted by this boy.[16]

Thus, although their world is the mid-1920s, that is, during the very first years of the new Turkish Republic, Faiz Bey and Shinasi are depicted as men who are grounded in pre-Turkish, *Ottoman* Oriental culture.

Neriman is the perfect soul mate for Shinasi, partly because of the affinity between Shinasi and Faiz Bey, partly because she "grew up in a pure Turkish environment,"[17] and partly because she is studying the oud, which is not only an Oriental, or local, instrument, but the perfect partner to the kemanje. Because of their connection at the Conservatory, we understand that Shinasi and Neriman play classical Turkish music together, a music that is tied to a non-Western tradition and that has many affinities with religious history and religious feeling (although it has a strongly secular audience as well). Shinasi and Neriman are thus the perfect couple, alike in their interests and in their upbringing. Because "they both looked like sister and brother and husband and wife,"[18] the reader is primed to believe that they are destined to bring the best of the culture of their past into their shared future.

But the future that is imagined for this young couple is disrupted when Neriman becomes interested in the fancy shops and Westernized life of Beyoğlu, which is not merely at the other end of a tram ride, but also a place that makes her look at her own life differently:

FIG. 7.7. *Young women* oud *students at the Darülelhan, Istanbul, 1926.* Istanbul Ansiklopedisi, *557 (out of print; publisher no longer exists).*

> Neriman got off at Beyoğlu. Just like most people who live in a genuinely Turkish neighborhood, she felt as if she had made a big trip. Fatih was off in the distance—it was far away. The distance wasn't even an hour by tram, but it appeared to Neriman as long as the way to Afghanistan, and she considered the difference between these two quarters as great as that between Kabul and New York."[19]

Not only is Neriman mesmerized by the Western life of Beyoğlu, but when she comes home to Fatih, she begins to look at it disparagingly.

> Darkness falls on these *mahalles* early. Neriman couldn't bear being at home at this hour of night. Even the little things she had never noticed before were now becoming important to her. She stretched out on the *minder* [cushion on the floor]. She was looking at the darkness that thickened in the small openings of those window grills [*kafes*] that brought night early to the room. The small rectangular holes were losing their sharp contours and becoming circular. The white tulle curtains darkened. . . .
>
> At this time, everything darkens and fades, and every living thing cowers. . . . Thin smoke from the kitchens spreads through the entire street; [there is] a light odor of coal and oil [and then] the call to prayer from the minarets of Fatih.[20]

Neriman's sense of oppressiveness is part of her imagination, a misreading under the influence of Beyoğlu, which had for so long been associated with lights, nightlife, vitality, and entertainment. In her memoirs, written in the years that this story takes place, the famous Turkish author Halide Edib (Adivar) recalled a Beyoğlu that inspired what were called "hat and ball longings," that is, the desire to go out with a hat rather than a head scarf, and to attend dances.[21]

Neriman's interest in Beyoğlu, and the West that it represents, is sparked when she meets Majit, a young man who is studying violin in the Western, or "alafranga," music section of the Conservatory. Enthralled by Majit's Western worldliness, Neriman begins to take secret trips to Beyoğlu, to sit with Majit in the Beyoğlu salon of Maxim's, to wear makeup, and to drink cocktails. Majit soon loses interest in the violin,[22] and under his

influence, Neriman decides to stop her oud lessons because they are so "alaturka." She does not lose her interest in music, but considers entering the alafranga section of the Conservatory.

Her trips to Beyoğlu and her new affection for Majit challenge and confuse her feelings for Shinasi. She is not merely attracted to another man, but to a man who represents the antithesis of everything Shinasi stands for and everything that the two of them have in common. Because of her attraction to the things of the West and her love of her father and Shinasi, Neriman is undergoing a deep crisis, "a secret interior, spiritual struggle," which she desperately tries to sort out in her mind.

> In Neriman's eyes Shinasi was the family, the *mahalle*, the old and the eastern, while Majit was the new, the west, and along with this he represented mysterious and attractive adventures.[23]

Neriman, in fact, is undergoing the deep, spiritual crisis of her contemporary Turkey. Lost in a reverie in which she tries to define the two cultures that are tugging at her soul, she has an epiphany:

> Neriman thought and suddenly understood why Easterners loved cats so much and Westerners loved dogs. In Christian houses there were lots of dogs, in Muslim houses lots of cats,—because Easterners resembled cats and Westerners resembled dogs! Cats eat, drink, lie down, sleep, give birth. Their life is spent on a cushion and passes in a dream; even if their eyes are open, it's as if they are dreaming; they are languid, lazy and day-dreaming creatures who can't stand work. Dogs are vigorous, swift, and bold. They do useful work—a lot of useful work. Even when they are sleeping they are wakeful. If they hear even the slightest sound, they jump up and bark.[24]

When Neriman's father comes home, she bursts at him with her new intelligence:

> "Look!" she said. "Gülter is sleeping and so is Sarman . . . [and] they're not the only ones who are sleeping! *All of Fatih is asleep!*"[25] (emphasis mine)

This is a turning point in the story, for her wise and kind father understands her spiritual dilemma and gently offers another interpretation to what his daughter sees as a great East-West divide.

> There are some men who sit and think from morning to evening. They have a *hazine-i efkar*, a treasury of ideas, I mean they are rich on the side of thought. Then there are some men who work on their feet from morning till night, for example peasants . . . but the work that they do consists of laying four bricks on top of each other. At first people may appear lazy, but really, velakin! they are hard-working. Other people appear hard-working, but really, *velakin*! the work they do is weak. This is because one's work involves mental endeavors using the spirit, while the other's work is physical and uses the body. The spirit is always great, the body destitute. The difference between what they do is because of this.[26]

Faiz Bey seems to have summarized the East-West divide, but in fact it is his daughter who has made this false dichotomy. Faiz Bey recognizes only a division between the spiritual and the material, placing what appears to be the hard work of material progress in an inferior position to the intellect and the soul. He has resorted to this dichotomy in order to show his daughter that one must be careful not to be seduced by appearances and lose sight of the emotional, the spiritual, or the intellectual; it is these that comprise the symbolic universe that makes up his emotional identity and his religious vision.

It is this deep, spiritual universe, given weight by Faiz Bey's paternal authority, that becomes the legacy of the past, a past that is harbored in these old houses. The family father—in this Turkish novel, at least—is the force that holds domestic life together, but always from love, and always with a firm footing in the transcendent values that stand for a life-world of a Turkish-Islamic religious tradition inherited from the recent Ottoman past. Faiz Bey and the house that supports his worldview are exemplars of an Eastern spiritual-intellectual universe that holds the key to putting the West and Westernization into a meaningful perspective. The kind father, in his old house, is clearly associated with the finest aspects of the past that are in danger of being sacrificed to the uncritically accepted modern. Faiz Bey may avoid a polemic of Islam and religion because this polemic could only be

FIG. 7.8. *A house near Fatih, Istanbul. Photo by Walter Denny, 1989.*

expressed in code words, such as *East,* due to the nationalist-Kemalist insistence on the rational and the secular;[27] but Faiz Bey's *house* can become a space for a positive association with the spiritual by couching his spiritual universe in terms of the private, the domestic, and the remembered.

In fact, in *Fatih-Harbiye,* the details of this spiritual past are fleshed out with stories that take place inside the remembered konaks and houses of the past. In another moment of internal despair, Neriman asks the family retainer, Gülter, to tell her stories about her (Neriman's) childhood. These stories show that the life of the mind and the spirit, which was to be the antidote to an uncritical acceptance of Westernization, was becoming attached to the houses of the past; that is, these stories show how the memory of the spiritual life of the past was beginning (in 1931) to be associated in the present with the old "Turkish house."

> Your grandmother always had a book in her hand. Now, what history book was it? . . . You can be sure it was one of the great ones. . . . Wait, it's on the tip of my tongue; Hah! It was Naima's

> *History*. [Your grandmother] knew Arabic, and Persian too. . . . She would read to us and explain it. That konak [emphasis mine] was really a school.[28]

The role of the family father, the old house, and the values of "the east" come together when they are reiterated later in the novel, when Neriman confronts a "friendly ghost of the past" who inhabits an old wooden konak in her neighborhood. Neriman and Shinasi used to pass this konak every day as they walked home from the Music Conservatory.

> Every part was run down, the windows had lost their rectangularity, the eaves had lost some of their planks, the zinc cladding had fallen in; . . . this *konak* was in such ruins that even a three year old child could push it down. . . . [But] there were still curtains on the windows;—yet was any one inside? And if there was, who?[29]

Over the years Neriman and Shinasi would imagine that there was an old man inside who was watching them, and each time they walked by, they would add to their story about him, until he felt entirely real.

> He had a long white beard, the cap [*takke*] that he put on his bald head was plain and simple; he sat to the right of the *shahnish*,[30] by the right-hand window, and fiddled with his prayer-beads, his lips always mumbling a prayer. He would think, but he wasn't thinking about people or work; he had large ideas about the world, about humanity, about God and death. When he heard a footstep on the street, his trembling head would look out the window behind the grills, and when he would see Neriman and Shinasi walking by, he would shut his eyes and pray that they were happy.[31]

But when Shinasi and Neriman walked by this old konak during the tense period of Neriman's "inner struggle," when she was struggling with her "hat and ball longings," Neriman was

> caught up with a strange feeling, as if she had heard a footstep in the house; then she thought the door opened and she thought she saw the image of the old man on the threshold. He still had his prayer-beads in his hands, [but] this time his face was as white as his beard and his night cap; and he asked with eyes that tried to conceal a deep, sad, astonishment: What has happened, children? What happened to you?[32]

This ghost of the konak wants Shinasi and Neriman to be together as before, when there were no threats to the continuation of traditional life's promise of spiritual peace. This vision is so disturbing to Neriman that she faints in Shinasi's arms.

Eventually, Neriman resolves her spiritual dilemma, boards the tram back from Harbiye, and returns home to Fatih, making a spiritual return. She even returns to playing the oud. In the last few pages of *Fatih-Harbiye,* Shinasi, Neriman, and Faiz Bey go back to their own houses among the other sleeping houses of Fatih, and fall into a sleep of relief. Because Neriman's decisions have been made correctly, in favor of "Eastern," or Islamic, values, in favor of the right music and the right spouse, and because the men have done their job of telling her what is right, everyone falls asleep easily, and with a good conscience.

I have already shown how Faiz Bey had reinterpreted the sleep of the cat, changing the association of sleep from one of laziness to one of spiritual depth. The sleep of the cat had allowed Neriman to voice the new Turkish Republican stigmatization of the East, a stigma that Neriman had connected to Fatih in particular, when she bemoaned that "All of Fatih is asleep." But her father's reinterpretation of the sleep of the cat as the sleep of the spiritually attuned tells us the real meaning of the ending, in which all of Fatih falls asleep *in their old Turkish wooden houses*. The final scene that is framed by the sleeping houses of Fatih and the falling into sleep of the protagonists suggests that the rupture with the past and its spiritual offering has been healed, at least for tonight *and at least at home*. Falling into sleep within these welcoming, sleeping houses means that the rupture with the past can be healed at a spiritual level because the old houses offer a place to experience mentally the wholeness and safety associated with the pre-Republican life.

Fatih-Harbiye is one of many literary venues in which a spiritual dimension is called forth in memory and assigned to the "Turkish house" in the first decade of the New Republic. It is in the old "Turkish house" in

Fatih that Faiz Bey has discussions with Shinasi about Sufi literature, and where he reads the classics of Eastern religious literature, the Mesnevis of Celaleddin Rumi, the poetry of Sa'di, the philosophy of Omer Khayyam and Al-Ghazzali,[33] and where he can enjoy "alaturka" music. Faiz Bey's house, like Neriman's grandmother's clean konak, is a "treasury of ideas," a hazine-i efkar. The old house is the repository of the spiritual strength of the East with all its connotations of correct moral behavior. To a great extent it is the treasury of insight and ideas of Islam in its broadest sense. This remembered spirituality does not refer to an individual's private religious beliefs or convictions, but to the higher moral authority of the Islamic system, a symbolic universe of interrelationships and morally defined behavior, supported by a rich intellectual tradition. It is a symbolic universe that connects everything, even one's internal world, to a larger system, where a carefully articulated order, mediated by the great Islamic thinkers and artists, is brought home by the family father.

Memory and Emotion

I would like to return now to the two important concepts of memory and emotion, because it is their linkage that gives the "Turkish house" its iconic value. I have argued that books like *Fatih-Harbiye* invest the memory-image of the "Turkish house" with those spiritual aspects of the past that had no other place to congregate. *Memory* is a player in *Fatih-Harbiye* because, although the novel appears to be taking place in the present (as it deals with the Kemalist rupture of the present),[34] in reality, the intact neighborhood and life-world of the old houses to which Neriman chooses to return do not exist.[35] These are the neighborhoods that were deteriorating as they were abandoned for the new and the modern.

Nonetheless, the reader, whether or not he or she shared a memory of such a house, shared an understanding of that life-world, and thus the "Turkish house" as the symbolic repository of spiritual values that have their origin in the pre-Republican world could easily take on that emotional charge. Whether or not *the house itself* was part of the autobiographical or shared memory of the reader, the spiritual values that it represented in the early Republican years were quite real, and resonated emotionally. At the moment of the most extreme secularization, an image of the wooden "Turkish House," which was coming into the public consciousness in political speeches as an

icon of a "common Turkish ancestry," was also used as a marker of a remembered spirituality, with a positive emotional charge. The *constructed* memory of a shared architectural past became the carrier of a *real* memory of a once-intact world of spiritual values.

In this model, memory, as emotional charge, has an explanatory force that differs from metaphors of memory as "construction." This understanding forces a new evaluation of the boundaries imposed on autobiographical, shared, and collective memory. Constructed memory is collective memory as we discussed above; it is a collective idea that has no autobiographical base. It is founded on social narratives that are handed down by a social group in the process of defining and legitimating its origins. In the case of Republican Turkey, political narratives developed about the "Turkish house" as "the place where our grandfathers lived." This led to a belief that, since they were the dominant domestic form in Istanbul and Anatolia, all Turks had at least one ancestor who had lived in one,[36] and thus all Turks were bound by a common architectural heritage. This belief overlooks both the actual demographic data and the complexity of the Turkish heritage.[37] However, I do not maintain that all Turks came to think that there must have been a wooden Turkish house in their own history. Rather, I am suggesting that the use of the "Turkish house" as an icon of a collective past was successful because the *emotions* that it represented were a part of their history, and thus felt to be real.

Constructed memory has an agenda, as Hobsbawm and Ranger point out in *The Invention of Tradition*.[38] National and collective "traditions" operate like sites of memory, taking on a symbolic meaning and becoming political capital. The "Turkish house" might be considered a constructed site of memory in this way, for it took on national importance as a symbol of a shared identity that did not exist. It might also be seen as a construction of an ideal religious past experienced by no one. In other words, constructed models and invented traditions have an implicit sense of the counterfeit.

But we are talking about a different model of memory. Our discussion of *emotional memory* and the "felt real" is not concerned with finding objective reality or the ways that reality has been misstated or misappropriated. Emotional memory addresses something that is *always genuine,* and it is this genuine emotion, perhaps hidden within *all* memory sites, that accounts for their power and longevity.

Daniel Goleman has shown how the mind has two ways of knowing, one emotional and one contextual (and thus more conscious and aware),

and that each has its own ways of remembering.[39] While the details of this theory go beyond this chapter, the concept of *emotional memory* is worth investigating. Emotional memory explains that certain events take on the weight of memory because they are emotionally charged. For instance, you remember the dress you wore on your first date, but not every dress you wore on every date.

> Lacking emotional weight, encounters lose their hold. One loses recognition of feelings; or feelings about feelings. The amygdala is a storehouse of emotional memory, and thus of significance itself; life without the amygdala is a life stripped of personal meanings.[40]

A concept of the emotional mind introduces an alternate epistemology, for alongside the part of the mind that searches for an "objective reality" is a part that identifies the "*felt* real"; this adds another dimension to perceiving, remembering, and interpreting events, and thus to the investing of images with meaning.

Thus, when we look at the emotional charge that surrounds the image of the "Turkish house," emotions of the "*felt* real" of spiritual life, the role of the family and the patriarch, and the emotions associated with the new,[41] we begin to understand that these memories *are* autobiographical even if memories about a house that holds or frames them are not. Emotions that are triggered by the image of the "Turkish house" are not emotions of nostalgia, desire, or longing for a *lost place,* but emotions that relate to the real, lived, ongoing life of the reader/viewer. The image of the "Turkish house" represents a shared emotional past not because those who imagine/remember it all lived in one, or even had a grandfather who did, but because Faiz Bey and Neriman's spiritual symbolic universe was/is indeed shared with the reader. The image thus becomes a bridge between autobiographical memory and collective memory. It is a conduit that signals that the desires of the past exist in the present, and so it can help us identify these desires and feelings.

Fatih-Harbiye presents a moment when the "Turkish house" was nvested with emotions that were alive from the past, but were in jeopardy, or at least involved in a crisis of legitimization. The fact that the "Turkish house" persists in the Turkish imagination today, however, speaks perhaps

as much to the longevity of this crisis of legitimacy as to its resolution. But by giving these emotions a site in the imagination, the image provided a place for the "felt real" of the spiritual world of the present to be reexperienced in the heart, and to have a voice in interpreting the present.

I believe that this explanation, although experimental, helps explain the popularity of the image of the "Turkish house" in the recent past, and allows us to investigate the meaning of its emotional charge today. More work must be done, however, in order to show that this persistence is rooted in the early years of the Republic. I suggest that it is, but certainly the connecting chain of events and associations is complex. For example, the emotions associated with the "Turkish house" at a time when identity building was a vital activity of a secularizing state may differ from those forty years later, when the old house became the centerpiece of a conservation and restoration movement, which began among the leftists and leftists-turned-liberals in the 1970s.[42] The rhetorical positions of the different groups who have allied themselves with the image of the "Turkish house" must be explored; certainly this image is now used in a variety of cultural and political contexts, including the fact that, recently, all things "Ottoman" have become a big image industry. Yet I believe that the association of this house with a shared memory of wholeness, begun in the early twentieth century, continues to this day. When we look at the cartoon of the old man entering a dilapidated "Turkish house" and imagining the world of the past, we can understand some of the warmth and safety that the cartoonist has felt in his own family life, and how he connects his spiritual universe to the past, perhaps even to his grandfather. This might also explain why the middle-school child from Istanbul chose the "Turkish house" to represent her ideal future.

Nonetheless, images of "the past" must always be investigated with sensitivity to changing ideologies and to contemporary populations. In the early Republican period, images were used conspicuously in an attempt to forge a common past. The "Turkish house" today remains an icon of that past, but the limits, contents, and ownership of the past are again in flux and subject to manipulation.[43] For example, since 1998, a row of "Turkish house" façades has been used as a centerpiece of Istanbul's celebration of Ramadan. Are these the symbols of a shared life-world with links to the spiritual past that was "felt" by Peyami Safa and his successors? Or are these images an attempt to associate Istanbul with a newly religious view of the Ottoman past? The desire of the municipality may be penetrated, but the

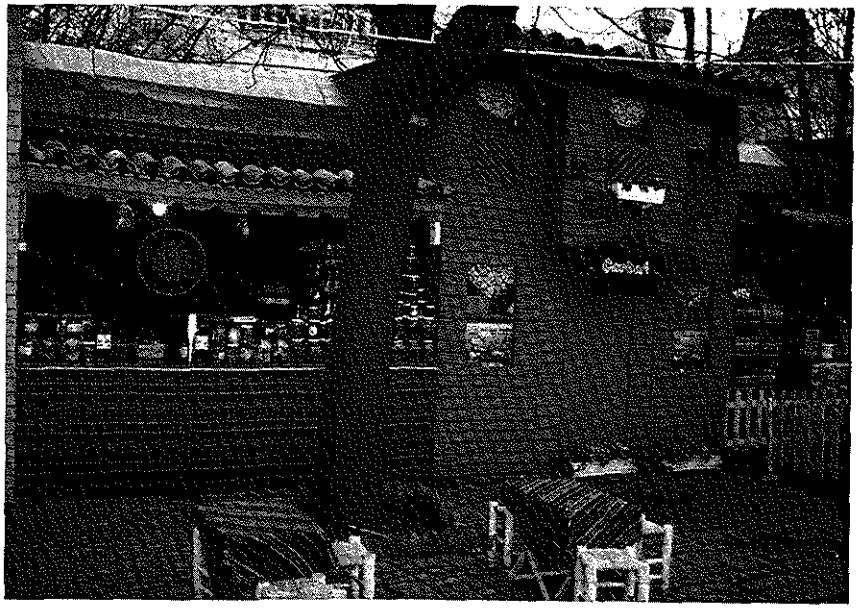

FIG. 7.9. *A street of Turkish house façades: celebration of Ramadan, Sultan Ahmet, Istanbul. Photo by Carel Bertram, 1998.*

way that these houses resonate with a new Istanbul population of villagers remains to be investigated. Their autobiographical and shared memories rarely contained a "Turkish house," but their collective memories, it appears, certainly will.

But what will this image mean? The Turkish-style houses that newly Istanbul-ized Anatolians see today are either the "restored" wooden houses of the fabulously wealthy or the decaying structures housing the very poor. Do these real structures enter the imagination, or does the *image* of the house have a life of its own, built, for example, on images in Turkish novels, films, and children's books? Those images, I believe, are part of the legacy of its positive associations with a felt spiritual wholeness, a legacy that remains a part of a contemporary symbolic universe. For this reason I believe that the image of the "Turkish house" will continue as a powerful memory site, and continue to be welcomed with approval and with familiarity within the larger Turkish landscape of urban apartment houses.

Notes

1. Not all Ottoman-period houses fit this typology, and not all are made of wood, but the Ottoman house in the Turkish imagination does fit this typology, and therefore I am surrounding it with quotation marks, making it the "Turkish house." The definitive work on the structure of Ottoman Turkish houses is Sedat Hakkı Eldem, *Türk Evi Osmanli Dönemi* [Turkish Houses in the Ottoman Period], vols. 1–3 (Istanbul: Türkiye Anit Çevre Turizm Değerlerini Koruma Vakfi, 1984); for the (Ottoman) Turkish room, see Önder Küçükerman, *Turkish House in Search of Spatial Identity* (Istanbul: Türkiye Turing ve Otomobil Kurumu, 1978). For an extensive bibliography, see Perihan Balçı, *Türk Evi ve Biz* (Istanbul: Türkiye Tarihi Evleri Korunma Derneği Yayınları, 1993).
2. I am grateful to Tracy Lord and Engin Akarı for their critical reading of this chapter.
3. Maurice Halbwachs, *On Collective Memory,* ed. and trans. Lewis A. Coser (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992).
4. For a discussion of several novels that carry the collective memory of this house, see Carel Bertram, "The Turkish House: An Effort of Memory," Ph.D. diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 1998.
5. For a discussion of the development of secularism in Turkey, see Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal: McGill University Press, 1964).
6. Bertram, "The Turkish House."
7. Peyami Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye* (1931; Istanbul: Otüken Yayınevi, 1976.
8. Halide Edib wrote in her memoirs that "Fatih, as the center of great theological colleges *(medresses),* was always opposed to Westernization. Great mutinies in Turkish history were led by the eminent Hodjas [religious leaders] and the theological students at Fatih, and these mutinies put forth the religious pretext, their usual war-cry being, 'We want Sheriat,' meaning the holy law." H. Edib (A.), *Memoirs of Halide Edib* (New York: The Century Company, 1926), 276.
9. Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye,* 23.
10. Ibid., 45.
11. The ney is a reed flute played in slightly varying forms from Morocco to Pakistan. In its traditional form it is made from the Arundo Donax plant, the same as used to make oboe reeds.
12. Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye,* 12.
13. The oud is the twelve-stringed (two strings per note) ancestor of the lute.

14. The Darü'l-Elhan was established in 1914 as an arm of the Darü'lbedayi, the Istanbul Municipal Theater. The purpose of the alaturka section was to revive interest in, and to spread, classical Turkish music. Namik Kemal's son, Ali Ekrem (Bolayir) Bey suggested it be given the archaizing name "Darü'l-Elhan" ("the House of Melodies") as opposed to the Westernized name, "*konservatuvar.*" See G. Paçag, "Darü'l-elhân," in *Istanbul Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Kültür Bakanlığı ve Tarih Vakfi'nin Ortak Yayınları, 1993) and N. Özcan, "Darülelhan," in *Islam Ansiklopedisi* (Istanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfi Islam Ansiklopedisi Genel Müdürlüğü, 1986).
15. The Kemence (kemanje) is a three-stringed Middle Eastern lute with a long neck, played with a bow. Because of the long neck, it is held vertically, resting on the player's knee.
16. Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye,* 55–56.
17. Ibid., 57.
18. Ibid., 56.
19. Ibid., 30.
20. Ibid., 40.
21. Edib, *Memoirs of Halide Edib,* 229.
22. Perhaps the author has chosen the violin for Majit because it is the Western counterpart of the Kemence played by Shinasi.
23. Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye,* 58.
24. Ibid., 46.
25. Ibid., 47.
26. Ibid., 295–96.
27. I have discussed the family father *(aile reisi)* as a major code for and memory site of the Ottoman spiritual macrocosm in Bertram, "The Turkish House." See also Nüket Esen, *Türk Romaninda Aile Kuruma* (Istanbul: Boğaziçi Üniversitesi, 1997), who analyzes thematically the Turkish novel in the Republican period.
28. Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye,* 77.
29. Ibid., 66–67.
30. This is the projection of the "sofa," or central room, of the upstairs, making a type of "cumba."
31. Safa, *Fatih-Harbiye,* 67.
32. Ibid., 68.
33. Celaleddin Rumi (d. 1273) was a mystical poet and the eponymous founder of the Mevlevi or "whirling" Dervish order. A Mesnevi is a poetic form that Rumi brought to perfection. Sheik Sa'di of Shiraz (1213?–1292?) was a Persian poet known especially for "The Orchard" (1257), a verse collection illustrating Islamic virtues, and "The Rose Garden" (1258), a collection of stories, anecdotes, poems, and maxims (see Şükran Kurdakul, *Şairler yazarlar sözlügü* [Istanbul: Bilgi Yayınevi, 1971], 31). Omer Khayyam was a Persian poet, mathematician, and astronomer famous for his Rubiyats, a rhyming poetic form. Abu Hamid Muhammad Al-Ghazzali (d. 1111) remains even today among the best known of mystics and scholars who gave a deeper ethical dimension to the fundamentals of Islamic belief.
34. In fact, the Music Conservatory's Eastern Music Department was closed in 1926, about the time that alaturka music disappeared from the radio due to unofficial sanctions.
35. See Peyami Safa, *Cumbadan Rumbaya* (Istanbul: Kanaat Kitabevi, 1936); Halide Edib (Adivar), *The Clown and His Daughter* (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1935); and Edib, *Sinekli Bakkal* (1936; Istanbul: Atlas Kitabevi, 1984) for other examples of a heroine choosing to make a spiritual return to the old house and neighborhood.
36. Ahmet Turan Altıner and Cüneyt Budak, *Konak Kitabı* (Istanbul: Tepe Inşaat Sanayı, 1997).
37. Perhaps it is impossible to have a collective memory that does not have a hidden hegemony to unify it. One wonders how it could be otherwise, when defining a Turkish collective memory assumes that "Turks" exist as a collective. For this reason alone, collective memory is in the service of national unity in a population of "Turks" who may privately consider themselves to be Kurds, Laz, or Georgians, not to mention Armenians, Greeks, or Jews, and each of whom carry around their own separate memories and versions of history and its causes.
38. Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1983).
39. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1997).
40. Ibid., 20–22.
41. See Bertram, "The Turkish House," for a discussion of novels, such as *Fatih-Harbiye,* as a method of imagined socialization and way of dealing with change.
42. I am grateful to Engin Akarlı for this example.
43. I am grateful to Tracy Lord for her assistance with and support of my closing arguments.

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