



Asmalımescit 74: Bohemian Life and the Quest for an Alternative Modernity in 1930s Istanbul

Hulusi Geçgel |  0000-0002-9277-6417 |  hgecgel@comu.edu.tr

Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University, Faculty of Education, Department of Turkish Education,
Çanakkale, Türkiye

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the bohemian life experience that took shape in 1930s Istanbul through *Asmalımescit 74: Bohem Hayatı* (1936), the cult work of Fikret Adil, and to analyze the place of this experience within the social, cultural, and spatial dynamics of the period. The originality of the research stems from its identification of the alternative understanding of modernity developed by the bohemian circle clustered around the Pera axis in response to the official modernization ideals of the Early Republican period. Through art, literature, and free social interactions, this circle created a heterogeneous public sphere in opposition to the homogenizing cultural climate of the era. The study adopts a qualitative research model using the case study approach. The data collection process was carried out through a text-centered reading, and the data obtained were analyzed within a thematic framework using qualitative content analysis. The analyses demonstrate that the sense of spatial belonging that developed around the “boarding house No. 74” in *Asmalımescit* functioned as an intellectual incubator free from hierarchical structures for artists and intellectuals. The findings reveal that this circle institutionalized non-mainstream, critical, and polyphonic lifestyles. In conclusion, *Asmalımescit 74* is not only a memoir but also a fundamental sociological source that deciphers the socio-spatial and aesthetic codes of the period. This study provides an original contribution to the debates on modernity in 1930s Türkiye and to the literature on the sociology of literature.

Keywords

Fikret Adil, *Asmalımescit 74*, Bohemian Life, Early Republican Modernization, Sociology of Space

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