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## Reading Architectural Modernization through Novel Characters: Kiralık Konak by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu

*Roman Karakterleri üzerinden Mimari  
Modernleşmeyi Okumak:  
Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu'nun Kiralık Konak'ı*

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**Abstract**

Architecture benefits from different disciplines and the interdisciplinary impact of architecture is a field that gets stronger over time. It intertwines with a wide range of disciplines, such as engineering, sociology, philosophy, and literature, that expand architecture's own meaning. Language is a resource for disciplines to establish a relationship. Literary texts, which provide information about human-space relations, daily life, social themes, and problems, can be analysed through language to improve the scope and content of architecture. This study reads the constructed literary spaces that reflect social issues and changes through one kind of literary text, the novel, to interpret the changing effects of space with social issues on different characters. Specifically, it considers 19th-century social issues, such as social conflict and alienation due to modernism, on space and characters in Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu's first novel, *Kiralık Konak* (Mansion for Rent), 1922. This paper presents the different physical and sensory experiences of the novel's characters through the concept of space by making an architectural reading of literary text writing. This analysis makes it possible to deduce that architecture and literature inspire and influence each other. In addition, it is possible to discuss constructed literary space from a different perspective through this study, supposing the necessity of benefiting from the literature in architectural research. Thus, the relationship between architecture and literature is examined through the concept of spatiality in the novel to reveal perceptions as well as experiences of different characters.

**Keywords:** Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Kiralık Konak, interdisciplinarity, architectural modernization, spatiality

**Öz**

*Mimarlık, farklı disiplinlerden yararlanır ve mimarinin disiplinlerarası etkisi zamanla güçlenmiştir. Mühendislik, sosyoloji, felsefe, edebiyat vb. gibi çok çeşitli disiplinlerle iç içedir ve bu mimarinin kendi anlamını genişletir. Dil, tüm disiplinlerin ilişki kurması için bir kaynaktır. İnsan-mekân ilişkileri, günlük yaşam, sosyal temalar ve problemler hakkında bilgi sahibi olmamızı sağlayan edebi metinler, mimarinin kapsamını ve içeriğini geliştirmek için dil yoluyla analiz edilebilir. Bu çalışma, mekânın toplumsal konulardaki değişen etkilerini farklı karakterler üzerinde yorumlamak için, bir tür edebi metin olan roman aracılığıyla toplumsal meseleleri ve değişiklikleri yansıtan inşa edilmiş yazınsal mekânı okumaktadır. Özellikle, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu'nun ilk romanı olan Kiralık Konak, 1922 eserinde modernizmin etkisiyle toplumsal çatışma ve yabancılaşma gibi 19. yüzyıl sosyal meselelerini mekân ve karakterler üzerinden ortaya koymaktadır. Bu makale, edebi metin yazımında mimari okumalar yaparak roman karakterlerinin mekân kavramıyla farklı fiziksel ve duyuşal deneyimlerini sunmaktadır. Bu analiz, mimarlık ve edebiyat disiplinlerinin birbirine ilham verdiği ve etkilediği sonucuna varmayı mümkün kılar. Ayrıca mimari araştırmalarda edebiyattan yararlanmanın gerekliliğini ele alan bu çalışma ile inşa edilmiş yazınsal mekânı farklı bir perspektiften tartışmak mümkündür. Böylece romanda mimarlık ve edebiyat arasındaki ilişki mekânsallık kavramı üzerinden incelenerek farklı karakterlerin alguları ve deneyimleri ortaya çıkarılmaktadır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, Kiralık Konak, disiplinlerarasılık, mimari modernleşme, mekânsallık

## Introduction

Architecture is intertwined with literature as it does with many other fields such as art, sociology, psychology, etc. When architecture establishes relationships with these fields, it feeds from them. Language, through which a literary text can be read and analyzed, is a source for all disciplines to establish this relationship, and thus becomes a key factor in literary analysis. Literature, which is closely related to architecture, provides information about space. By studying the language in the literary text, spatial meanings, relationships, characters, social events, and themes can be revealed. Thus, literary texts provide information about human-space relations, daily life, social themes, and problems. According to Tümer (1981), reading a literary work from an architectural perspective and awareness provides an opportunity to get an impression of the architectural features of the space.

Although the novel, which is one of the prominent types of literary texts, is seen as a temporal art form by its nature, it is of great importance for spatial arts such as architecture, painting, and sculpture (Kestner, 1981). The concept of space in novels is important to understand the interaction between literature and architecture. In addition, information conveyed through the language in novels have the potential to improve the scope and content of architecture. The method of reading a literary text offers a variety of information about space in architectural research. Accordingly, this paper examines the spatial contexts in the selected novel through language. This study, which will attempt to understand the potentials of the limitless resource offered by literature, argues that reading literary texts is an effective method of understanding space. In addition, the concept of space, at the point where literature and architecture come together, can be experienced physically and emotionally by different characters. This paper uses character and space analysis to show that space has different meanings for each character. It aims to read how social issues and changes in novels may be reflected in space and characters. More specifically, *Kiralık Konak* (Mansion for Rent), the first novel of the Turkish writer Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, was selected as a case study to examine the effects of social problems under the influence of modernization on space and characters. In brief, it aims to reveal literature as a fruitful resource for architectural studies to analyze aspects of modernization in social life through space and characters by reading the literary text with an architectural perspective.

The novel represents a process that started with the Tanzimat<sup>1</sup> era in Ottoman Empire and extended to the Battle of Çanakkale (Gallipoli). It reflects the social realities that occurred with the westernization brought about by the Tanzimat period

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Turkish Language Association, the Tanzimat was the period in which planned to improve the administration, which was announced with an edict called Gülhane Hattühümayunu in 1839. As a dictionary meaning, it means all of the regulations and changes that are taken to correct administrative affairs.

together with 19th-century modernism. Due to social developments in the 19th century, visible effects of modernism on space and characters can be observed. By including social issues, such as social conflict and alienation, the novel shows the effects of the perception of space on the characters. The space analysis will be based on the experiences and perceptions of four main characters, Naim Efendi, Servet Bey, Sekine Hanım, and Seniha, who represent three different generations.

To provide background and support the novel's content, a qualitative study was conducted in several stages, including a literature review on the concept of space in a literary text, spatiality in a novel, and space and character relationships as well as analysis of the novel. The study will also present the examination of modernization in the 19th-century in terms of the space-character relationship. This is followed by a thorough analysis of the case study, *Kiralık Konak*.

The different physical and sensory experiences of the characters during this period are revealed by reading of literary texts through an architectural perspective. The study, by underlining that architecture and literature can inspire and influence each other aims to emphasize that literature as a fruitful resource sheds a broad light on architectural research.

### **Spatial Meanings of Literary Texts**

The interdisciplinary study of language and literature involves analyzing literary texts using linguistic indicators and highlighting the indicators rather than associations (Akata, 2017). At the intersection of language and literature, spatiality in a literary text is conveyed by linguistic elements. The relationship between architecture and literature is between material and immaterial (Thomson, 2004). Additionally, spatiality emerges through socio-cultural structures, behaviors and practices, language, and discourses. It is a result of the historical and natural forces while being also affected by physical perceptions, emotions, and imagination (Moslund, 2010). In other words, space is the construction of a multidimensional element through linguistic indicators (Akata, 2017).

Literature, which is a body of writings belonging to a certain language or a textual activity, is open to various interpretations in the semiotic space (Ṫkulj, 2004). The spatial meaning of a literary text has uncertain boundaries, which provides different opportunities for both writers and readers. Writers can formulate spatial experience, both individual and universal, to read the spaces in which they move at different levels (Havik, 2006). In literary cartography, literary texts shape the world to offer a sense of reality while allowing readers to revive this world as an allegorical structure in their minds to produce meanings. Research into spatial meanings and historical spaces allows the content of literary texts to be analyzed while allowing readers to shape their own worlds (Tally, 2013). According to Lefebvre (1974), space exists in literary texts as enclosed, described, projected, dreamt of, and speculated about. In other words, the

limits of space in a literary text are determined by the writer and the reader. They both create the meaning of spatiality through their perceptions, imaginations, and interpretations. In fact, literature serves as an important source of inspiration for finding ways to see, understand and describe space (Grillner & Hughes, 2006).

Both people and objects need a real or fictional space to exist. The parallelism between space and human life is reflected in the novel (Şengül, 2010). Novels, one of the literary genres, can be considered as rich resources in physical, psychological, sociological, and cultural aspects. The visual image created in the imagination of the reader constitutes the narrative space of the novel including geographies, cityscapes, landscapes, houses, interior spaces, and spatially positioned objects (Bolak Hisarlıgil, 2011). According to Narlı (2002), it is not possible for a novel to be independent of its context -event, time, and space-. Spatiality is the most basic element in which events take place and characters accommodate.

The concept of space represents the frame of reference for literature. In other words, space in literature conveys a historical record of reality in a certain time as the oral practices of art through their forms of expression (Tıkulj, 2004). As a historical reference of the novels, the concept of space can reflect the social/economic/political structure, physical environment, lifestyles, cultural codes, and spatial practices of the period in which it happened. It is an important resource for interpreting the social problems and relations of the period, historical turning points and changes. It is possible to interpret the spatiality of the period in which novels were written. Novels have the potential in various ways to illuminate the invisible workings of architecture (Shonfield, 2000).

On the other hand, the social/economic/political aspects in the period reflected in the space have different physical and sensory effects on the novel characters. The novel characters, with which the concept of space is directly associated, are tools to analyze the architectural space and making spatial analysis through each character can lead to different interpretations. Thus, the effect of space on the different characters will provide a more comprehensive perspective on the spatial meaning of the literary text. Considering that literary texts are inspired by the social themes of the periods in which they were written, the concept of space in literature and different character perceptions and experiences through space is important in this context.

### **Case Study: *Kiralık Konak* by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu**

The social structure, spatial practices, and lifestyles of the period play a significant role in a literary analysis. In this context, the novel *Kiralık Konak*, which covers the process starting from the reforms of Tanzimat and extending to the Battle of Çanakkale (Gallipoli), is discussed in this study to interpret and analyze the period. This novel, which emphasizes the physical and social effects of modern movements brought about by the westernization movement of the 19th-century, allows us to

criticize social transformations through modern experience in the Ottoman Empire/Anatolia. In this direction, it enables the changes under the influence of modernism to be interpreted through space and characters.

*Kiralık Konak*, written by Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu, was first published in 1922. ‘Konak’ has been translated as a ‘mansion’ in many works. It also covers a social system of a large family including all family members. A mansion is a large-scale wooden house and displays all the features and architectural glossary of Ottoman Turkish wooden houses (Bertram, 2008). After the Tanzimat Charter in 1839, modernization began with some radical and progressive reform practices. The modernization of the Ottoman Empire brought some changes in the spatial organizations and the lifestyle of the city dwellers (Aksoylu, 2016). This charter, which was to regulate the physical environment and social rights of society, rapidly changed the urban view in the 19th-century physically and socially (Şenel, 2010). Beginning with the Tanzimat reforms and extending to the Battle of Çanakkale (Gallipoli), the novel deals with family life in a mansion where three generations live together within the framework of old-new conflict emerging with modernism. According to Bertram (2008: 106), the conflict in *Kiralık Konak* represents the wealth and poignancy of the mansion.

According to Şenel (2010), the main purpose of the writers in the westernization period is to guide the society in the regulation between “east and west” and “traditional and modern”. İleri (1975: 111, 112) argues that Karaosmanoğlu uses the space of the mansion as a kind of an observatory to convey society, social problems, historical turning points, or changes, and transfer his fiction realistically to the reader. He chose the mansion as the setting because he believed that mansion life witnesses more events or problems than other places. The concept of the family is also important in his novels in to represent social relations (İleri, 1975).

Given that literary works are influenced by the social events of the period they are written in, this novel also reflects the problems and changes with the modernization of its time. In *Kiralık Konak*, where the effects of these transformations are reflected in daily life and especially in spaces, these are explained through the life of a mansion and a family living in there: “Recently, there have been some changes that will catch the eye of even a stranger in Naim Efendi Mansion” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 30).<sup>2</sup>

Several characters from different generations living in the mansion emerge from the Tanzimat period, including Naim Efendi, Servet Bey, Sekine Hanım, Seniha, and Cemil (Başegmez Çetin, 2018). Each character represents a personality type that symbolizes the rupture of the period (Bertram, 2008). Naim Efendi is the oldest person in the mansion who is the representative of the Ottoman Empire and tries to maintain

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<sup>2</sup> All the quotations in this study have been translated by the authors.

its traditions, represents the first generation. His daughter Sekine Hanım, one of the second-generation representatives; is a shy and passive character. The other representative of the second generation, Sekine Hanım's husband, Servet Bey, is far from traditional values and finds everything in the mansion old. The children of Sekine Hanım and Servet Bey, Seniha and Cemil, are the third generation representing the conflict between generations and moral collapse.

Due to westernization at this time, lifestyles, thoughts, clothes, and places turn to the new rather than the traditional in the novel. This situation is described in the first pages of the novel as follows: "No style of living, thinking or dressing remained; everything went out of tradition [...] there are no traces of the traditionalist Ottomanism" (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 11). The accelerating westernization movement causes cultural differences even within the same family. These changes can be examined through different characters in the novel.

In particular, intergenerational conflicts and the old-new conflict emerging with westernization due to Tanzimat are social problems between the different characters. The novel describes the collapse of a family because of these social changes and problems in a mansion containing three generations. This collapse can be read through spaces and analyzed through the perceptions of the characters. In this way, Karaosmanoğlu sheds light on the social, cultural, economic, and political aspects of late-Ottoman Turkish society (Güngördü, 2019).

### ***An Analysis of Space and Characters***

To analyze a novel's constructed space, the space-human relationship must be interpreted. Real or imaginary space is associated with characters while changes in space directly affect the characters (Narlı, 2002). That is, space both influences the formation of events and guides the characters.

The novel *Kiralık Konak* includes the events of Naim Efendi and his family (his daughter, son-in-law and two grandchildren) living in a mansion. In the novel, briefly, the generation conflict between three generations living in the same mansion with westernization and a family collapsed due to this conflict are mentioned. Except for Naim Efendi, all family members desire different lives by being swept away by the change brought about by westernization. Naim Efendi, who does not interfere with their wishes because of his love for his grandchildren, does not reflect his discomfort to anyone. With the westernization, the differences of thought and opinion between the generations and the concept of social collapse are given around the dispersal of a mansion. At the end of the novel, Naim Efendi's mansion is offered for sale and the individuals living in the mansion are spread to different places due to their alienation from each other. Naim Efendi is left alone in his mansion in the society and he cannot understand the rapid change.



*Kiralık Konak* focuses on conflicts between three generations that do not understand each other despite living in the same place, the mansion. As a result, the three generations are seeking a place of their own (Tüzel, 2007). In the novel, it is possible to observe how different characters have different perceptions of the mansion as the main place of the novel. The characters are realistically presented to represent value judgments that were beginning to change at that time and the resulting generational conflicts (Dervişcemaloğlu, 2015). The two main spaces where events take place are the mansion and the apartment. While the mansion represents old values, the apartment represents a new life and a new culture under the influence of modernization. The meanings and images of these two spaces are carried in different characters in the novel. All three generations have different thoughts and feelings about the places where the events take place. Two images that particularly affect the novel's spatiality are Tanzimat and Paris. Tanzimat is the starting point in the novel. Value confusions and generational conflicts between the characters resulting from the social/cultural differences following Tanzimat are conveyed whereas Paris represents admiration of the west that comes with Tanzimat.

### ***Interpretations of Modernism through Space and Characters***

The main characteristic of 19th-century modernism is the developed, differentiated, and dynamic new landscape in which modern experience takes place (Berman, 1983). *Kiralık Konak* was chosen as a case study to read the transformations under the influence of modernism through space and characters. Throughout the novel, Karaosmanoğlu reflects social problems through constructed space of the novel with the help of the characters. The experience of modernity means a rupture from tradition and is influenced by daily habits and lifestyles. The effects of this rupture can be various (Heynen, 2000). Each space is affected differently by social problems and changes while each character's perception of space is different. Changes, transformations, and problems in society are felt in space. The changes experienced by the society are directly reflected in the mansion. As a result of the conflict of generations, we can analyze the collapse of the mansion during the modernization through the characters.

The representative of the first generation, Naim Efendi, is a man following old traditions, closely attached to his old values. Naim Efendi, who has difficulty adapting to changes, yearns for his old lifestyle throughout the novel: "All memories of Naim Efendi, all tastes, all conversations, everything that made him laugh and cry [...] belongs to forty years ago" (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 11, 12). As noted by Berman (1983), some experienced modernity as a radical threat to all their history and traditions. Thus, Naim Efendi does not want to abandon the "old" and does not want to accept the experience of modernity. According to Naim Efendi, the mansion is a shelter. He is the only person who sees the mansion as his home: "It was a great bliss for him to enter and close the door in his room. This was his only refuge in life [...] beyond that,



he knew, there is no more than that” [...] “I was born here, I lived here, I got old! How do I leave? he said [...] I die the day I get out of here” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 106, 107, 161).

For Naim Efendi, the mansion is an indispensable place. Having spent all his life here, he is firmly committed to his traditions. Although he tries to learn most of the innovations from his grandchildren, Seniha and Cemil, they always seem unfamiliar to him. Because he respects the past and its values, he prefers to remain silent with his grandchildren. He refuses to leave the mansion, which he sees as his home, even if the whole family disintegrates and goes elsewhere.

“Naim Efendi could not decide to sell the mansion [...] The most pleasant memories of his youth were in this mansion; the calmest and most comfortable days of his old age were again in this mansion. He loved the view from the front, the garden at the back, large and bright rooms [...] with many more details with almost a lofty conversation” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 82).

Sekine Hanım, Naim Efendi’s daughter, is a passive character. Although she does not express her own feelings and thoughts much, she represents the second generation and does not want to adhere to her traditions. Sekine Hanım’s husband, Servet Bey, is far from traditional values and finds everything in the mansion outdated. He tries to organize the mansion and change its structure according to his own desires and thoughts, not only the furniture but also as a lifestyle. As Berman said, as an indicator of modernism that reveals the objections of a certain order (Berman, 1983), the desire of the second generation –Sekine Hanım and Servet Bey– of change of lifestyle and the concept of space can be cited as an example:

“After the death of the great lady, she attempted to change the mansion according to her own desires; she put all the old items in the attic and basements, she furnished each room in a different style and different colour according to European furniture catalogues. [...] No matter how we furnish it, no matter what we do. You are always like a parasite all around the house [...] I cannot understand the meaning of living here as a nomad, while those excellent and new apartments are standing in Şişli” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 14, 141).

As a reflection on social life and lifestyle with 19th-century modernism, as stated by Berman (1983), production and consumption are becoming more and more international and cosmopolitan. The scope of human needs, desires, and demands has become more international. Servet Bey and his wife both want to leave the mansion and dream of living in an apartment building in line with new trends and innovations: “Servet Bey [...] was talking about going to a separate house [...] I would like to be free and live according to my own opinion and desire, to be the real owner of my house [...] I could not be comfortable in this house” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 140). Servet Bey is especially uncomfortable in the mansion and feels like a dependent living there. The apartment buildings that represent the west offer an escape from the mansion for him.

Ultimately, he and his wife moved to an apartment building because of Servet Bey's desire for luxury and a European lifestyle in line with innovation. As noted by Heynen (2000), 19th-century modernism reflects the rupture from the values of tradition in the changing living conditions and daily reality. During this period, modern has become visible and perceivable on many levels:

“Şişli's new style, electrical, houses with bathrooms apartments were increasingly attracting Servet Bey [...] Since the day he was born, he could finally find the air he was looking for in this neighbourhood of İstanbul and these new houses” “He moved to one of the Şişli apartments [...] It was a magnificent, newly built apartment building on a street corner; It smelled of fresh paint, plaster, and iron [...] He placed the furniture with the upholsterers himself; he put up the curtains with his own hands, spread the carpets [...] He furnished the dining room in the French style; bought sofas and tables from the English style to the library; the hall became a bit hybrid [...] Two separate bedrooms were ordered for Cemil and Seniha” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 141, 143).

Cemil and Seniha, who are the son and daughter of Servet Bey and Sekine Hanım, and Naim Efendi's grandchildren, represent the third generation. Seniha is a young girl open to new ideas who always follows the west and tries to learn innovations from there: “The books she enjoyed were Gyp's novels, new theatre plays, and humorous newspapers of Paris” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 17). With 19th-century modernism, the internationalization of everyday life -our clothes and household items, our books and music, our ideas and fantasies - and the desire to embrace the limitless possibilities of modern life and experience arose (Berman, 1983). According to Heynen (2000), modernity is in constant conflict with tradition and accepts the change and this conflict can be observed most clearly seen in Seniha. Because she does not want to live with the old values and habits, she hated each point of this mansion, from the nail, the wooden bud to the door, and the roof (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 118). Thus, the meaning of the mansion is different for her:

“In this country and in this mansion, everything seemed narrow, little, and ordinary. The objects were not according to her desire. The order of the house was free from all kinds of magnificence [...] Seniha thought that the heavy roof of the mansion slowly descended over her head [...] A dirty light leaked from the windows of the room onto the furniture. Under this light, there was a mouldy, pouring state of the furniture. Seniha felt that she was mouldering under this dirty light with things” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 28, 117).

Since childhood, she has always wanted to leave the mansion and escape to Europe, which is the only place in her dreams. Her ambitions regarding Europe are mentioned in relation to her rejection of old values and the past: “She wanted to escape from this home, which she knew and memorized everything and every part of it until the smallest detail, from this homeland, where she had always felt overwhelmed by the same air, to the distant, unobserved, unheard-of things. The festive and bright cities of

Europe attracted her in a magical way” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 43). In contrast, her room in the new apartment building where she moved with her family is described as innovative and reflecting her enthusiasm for the new space. The new concept of space in modernity is determined by the uninterrupted experience of the spatial character (Heynen, 2000). The western lifestyle experience depicted in Seniha’s room was responsive to her luxury consumption:

“In Seniha’s room, the huge magnificent screen separated the bed and toilet; a person sitting on one side could not see what was going on the other side. A soft, velvety red carpet was laid on the floor, the color of the furniture was a bit darker than this carpet, the curtains were silk and the lampshade of the electric lamp hanging from the ceiling was close to the color of red and it had a fabric with paintings on it” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 201).

Due to social changes, Naim Efendi remains alone in the mansion with his old values. Ultimately, the intergenerational conflicts and the characters’ alienation problems mean that the main space in the novel, the mansion, collapses and disappears: “The mansion was large, wrecked, and gloomy; here, only three families could live together according to the present life; for this, it was necessary to separate the mansion into a number of parts (rooms)... Every day, I sell something from the furniture of the house [...] from unnecessary furniture, dessert sets, buffets, tables, sofas [...] beds, quilts. All those beautiful carpets in the hall are gone [...] The mansion was falling apart every day, together with Naim Efendi” (Karaosmanoğlu, 2010: 192, 195).

These excerpts from Karaosmanoğlu’s novel reveal the changing face of the constructed space within the framework of modernism through the characters. By presenting the transition from mansions to apartment life, along with Tanzimat reforms, the novel summarizes westernization. These two spaces have different effects on the characters. According to Elçi (2003), the mansion represents the Ottoman era and its traditions whereas the apartment represents westernization. More specifically, the life of the apartment can be seen as representing modernity and the nuclear family whereas the life of the mansion represents a large, multigenerational family and traditionality (Başğmez Çetin, 2018). As a result, the novel space where architectural modernization is reflected can be read through the characters of *Kıralık Konak*.

## Conclusion

Phenomena concerning humans are limited within space. Space plays an important role to determine how people find their own character and gain their identity. This study has aimed to interpret the changing effects of the space on different characters by establishing a relationship between constructed literary spaces and different characters.

Karaosmanoğlu's novel discussed in this study provides realistic determination about the period, people, lifestyle, and spaces of 19th-century modernism. The radical changes brought about by 19th-century modernism had an impact on the city, social structure, people, and spaces. Social problems that emerged with modernization have affected the use of spaces in different contexts and the perceptions of the characters who experience them. While Karaosmanoğlu emphasized intergenerational conflict through spatiality in *Kiralık Konak*, he shows the social problems and changes of the Tanzimat period in the late Ottoman Empire. In this context, the spaces and characters affected by the changes are shown through this novel. As a result, architectural modernization is read through the physical and emotional experiences of the three generations characters of *Kiralık Konak*, which contains realistic information in the field of architecture.

In the novel, the characters, society, and social life are conveyed through space. This paper deals with social issues –social conflict and alienation– through the spatial reflections and characters of modernism. Architectural modernization is examined throughout the novel with the spatial picture that Karaosmanoğlu presents through space and characters. In this context, modernism is criticized at the intersection of literary text and architecture.

Because literary works convey the writer's spatial interpretations to the reader, literature can be a functional tool to analyze and conceptualize the experience of spaces. Accordingly, in this paper, a spatial reading of a literary product, *Kiralık Konak*, has been made through the interpretation of its characters. In this respect, questioning the novel space, which provides information for architectural discourse, offers a wide field of study and architectural resource potential.

As a result, benefiting from literature in architectural research will provide vast information about the subject, and especially the novel *Kiralık Konak* is a fruitful resource for those who work on the phenomenon of modernization in architecture. At the intersection of architecture and literature, the projection of the modernization phenomenon is read through the concept of space in relation to the characters of the novel. The information obtained through this study sheds light on the history of architecture. The relationship of these two different disciplines -architecture and literature- has enabled us to reveal the consequences of 19th-century modernism on people, lifestyles, and spaces. This study examines the novel *Kiralık Konak* from a spatial point of view and explains the social collapse, alienation, and change through the characters in the novel. It recorded the dramatic results of the collapse of a society under the influence of westernization through the relationship between space and character.

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