

FROM THE “AUTHOR” TO THE “READER”:  
VISITING LITERARY HOUSE-MUSEUMS IN İSTANBUL

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO  
THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
OF  
MIDDLE EAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR  
THE MASTER OF ARTS  
IN  
ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY

SEPTEMBER 2009

Approval of the Graduate School of Social Sciences

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## ABSTRACT

### FROM THE “AUTHOR” TO THE “READER”: VISITING LITERARY HOUSE-MUSEUMS IN İSTANBUL

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September 2009, 260 pages

This study is an attempt to examine the literary house-museums located in İstanbul. In the chronological order of their transformations from houses into museums, these are Tevfik Fikret house-museum in Aşiyân, Rumelihisarı (1945), Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum in Burgazada (1964), and Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum in Heybeliada (2000). By pointing out their ambiguous position between privacy and publicity, this research seeks to juxtapose the uses of these museums as houses in the past with the uses of these houses as museums in the present. While doing that, it aims to read their spatial stories/histories by focusing not only on the writers/inhabitants of the houses and the owners/organizers of the museums, but also on the guests/visitors of these house-museums.

Keywords: author, reader, biography, literary house-museums, spatial narrative



## ÖZ

### “YAZAR” DAN “OKUYUCU” YA: İSTANBUL’DAKİ YAZAR MÜZE EVLERİNİ ZİYARET ETMEK

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Tez Yöneticisi: Yrd.Doç. Dr. Sevil Enginsoy EKİNCİ

Eylül 2009, 260 sayfa

Bu çalışma edebiyat figürlerine ait, İstanbul’da bulunan, müze evleri incelemeyi amaçlar. Müzeye dönüştürülme tarihlerine göre kronolojik olarak sıralandığında, bu müze evler, Aşiyân, Rumelihisarı’nda Tevfik Fikret müze evi (1945), Burgaz Ada’da Sait Faik Abasıyanık müze evi (1964) ve Heybeli Ada’da Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar müze evidir (2000). Kamusal ve özel alanlar arasındaki muğlak konumlarına işaret ederek, bu araştırma bu müzelerin geçmişte ev olarak kullanımları ile şu anda müze olarak kullanımlarını yan yana koyup karşılaştırmayı dener. Bun, yaparken de bu evlerin mekansal hikaye/tarihlerini sadece\_yazarlarına/ikamet edenlerine ve sahiplenelerine/düzenleyenlerine değil, bu müze evlerin misafirlerine/ziyaretçilerine de odaklanarak okumayı amaçlar.

Anahtar Kelimeler: yazar, okuyucu, biyografi, edebi figürlere ait müze evler, mekansal anlatı

To the words for making the world livable

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my appreciation to my supervisor, Assist. Prof. Dr. Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci, for her patient guidance and invaluable suggestions.

I express my gratitude to jury members, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Ali Cengizkan and Inst. Dr. M. Haluk Zelef, for their precious recommendations and comments.

I also thank to Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hande Kkten, Ata Yers, Hatice Farsakođlu, Levent Karakse, mit Ayaz, Őadiye Yıldırım, İlhan Yıldırım, and Nevin Sergl for their collaboration.

I am very grateful to Y.YeŐim Uysal for her sincere friendship, endless patience and support throughout the study.

I am really indebtedful to Tongu AkıŐ for everything.

I would like to thank to Selda Tuncer, Yeliz Yorulmaz, Volkan Uysal, Ezgi Dođru, Selda Bancı, Selin avdar, zlem Mutlu, Can Eyp eki, zlem Sarıyıldız, and many others that I cannot list here for their accompany.

And special thanks to the beloved cats, ay and Fıstık, for their existence in life.

Last but not least, thanks to my parents, Glin Karlık and A. Fazıl Karlık, and my sister, Esra Karlık, for their trust in me.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 AIM AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is an attempt to examine the literary house-museums, located in İstanbul. In the chronological order of their transformations from houses into museums, these are Tevfik Fikret house-museum in Aşşıyan, Rumelihisarı (1945), Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum in Burgazada (1964), and Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum in Heybeliada (2000). By pointing out their ambiguous position between privacy and publicity, this research seeks to juxtapose the uses of these museums as houses in the past with the uses of these houses as museums in the present. While doing that, it aims to read their spatial stories/histories by focusing not only on the writers/inhabitants of the houses and the owners/organizers of the museums, but also on the guests/visitors of these house-museums.

#### 1.2 HOUSE-MUSEUMS

To be able to provide a proper definition and classification of house-museums, it would be helpful to refer to the book, *Historic House Museums*, written by Sherry Butcher-Youngmans, and published in 1993<sup>1</sup> and also to the conference, organized in Genoa, in 1997 by a forum of ICOM (International Council of Museums), directed

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<sup>1</sup> Butcher-Youngmans, Sherry (1993), *Historic House Museums*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.



towards the conservation and management of historic house-museums,<sup>2</sup> and known as the DEMHIST (the abbreviation of the French term “demeures historiques,”<sup>3</sup> “historical residences”).

In the related literature, Butcher-Youngmans’s classification is known as the first attempt.<sup>4</sup> According to this classification, there are three types of house-museums: “documentary”, which corresponds to recounting “the life of a personage or place of historical or cultural interest in which the environments must contain the original, and if possible in their original layout; “representative”, which means documenting “a style, an epoch or a way of life” whose environment and setting may “be reconstructed using items that are not originals and may be either copies of the originals or pieces which did not belong to the house but were acquired on the market”; and lastly “aesthetic”, which houses the private collections and “have nothing to do with the house itself, its history or its occupants.”<sup>5</sup> However, this classification does not include literary house-museums as a special category; rather, it deals with a museological method, executed in the house-museums in general.

The conference, organized by DEMHIST under the title of “Inhabiting History: Historical House-museums,” is the second attempt to define and classify house-museums. According to this definition, “historic house-museums” are “[t]he historic buildings, formerly inhabited, now open to the public, showing their original furniture and their collections of historic, cultural, national artefacts, preserving the spirit of their illustrious owners and strictly linked with the historic memory of a community,” and therefore, they signify “a special category of museums.”<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> DEMHIST (2009), About Demhist , <http://icom.museum/international/demhist.html>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Pinna, Giovanni (2001), “Introduction to Historic House Museums”, *Museum International*, No.210, 53 (2), pp. 4-9.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> DEMHIST (2009), The First Definition , <http://demhist.icom.museum/forum.htm>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

On the basis of this definition, the conference intends to reformulate the list, formerly done by Butcher-Youngmans, by labelling several sub-categories, such as “royal palaces, houses dedicated to illustrious men, houses created by artists, houses dedicated to a style or an epoch, houses of collectors, historic houses as a setting for contents, family houses, houses with a specific socio-cultural identity.”<sup>7</sup> However, this classification is limited to the museological categories,<sup>8</sup> and furthermore, it does not present any specific definition of the houses of literary figures transformed into museums.

### 1.3 LITERARY HOUSE-MUSEUMS

Related to this lack of a specific definition and classification of the houses of literary figures, transformed into museums, there is not a strict term used for these house-museums. One of the terms is “literary museum” used to define home in which an author has lived, worked or is dedicated to him/her and is now open to the public.”<sup>9</sup> Another term is “authorial house-museum” used to denote “a late form of the house as fetish”<sup>10</sup> and/or “a secularised temple meant to stabilize, contain, and preserve the subject who inhabits it.”<sup>11</sup> There is also the term, “literary house,”<sup>12</sup> used to signify the “houses that sheltered and shaped the imagination of writers.”<sup>13</sup> With the aim of interrelating these terms and definitions, in this study, the term “literary house-museum” will be used while referring to the house-museums of literary figures.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Pavoni, Rosanna (2001), “Towards a Definition and Typology of Historic House-museums”, *Museum International*, No.210, 53(2), 16-21, p. 16.

<sup>9</sup> The Museum Register (2009) “Literary Museums in the World”, <http://www.museumregister.com/maincategories/Literary.html>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>10</sup> Bernstein, Susan (2008), *Housing Problems: Writing and Architecture in Goethe, Walpole, Freud, and Heidegger*, Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>12</sup> Fuss, Diana (2004), *The Sense of Interior: Four Writers and The Four Rooms That Shaped Them*, Britain: Routledge, p.1.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

So, conforming to this term, there are many museums in the world, which were once the houses of some well-known writers. Among them we can cite: Jane Austen house-museum in Hampshire, Honore de Balzac house-museum in Paris, (Patrick and Maria) Bronte Sisters house-museum in West Yorkshire, Anton Chekhov house-museum in Moscow, Dante Alighieri house-museum in Florence, Charles Dickens house-museum in London, Emily Dickinson house-museum in Amherst, Massachusetts, Fyodor Dostoyevsky house-museum in St. Petersburg, William Faulkner house-museum in Oxford, Mississippi, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe house-museums in Weimar and Frankfurt, Ernst Hemingway house-museum in Key West, Florida, James Joyce house-museum in Dublin, Franz Kafka house-museum in Prague, Pierre Loti house-museum in Rochefort, Herman Melville house-museum in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, Vladimir Nabokov house-museum in St. Petersburg, Sylvia Plath house-museum in Boston, Massachusetts, Edgar Allan Poe house-museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Shakespeare house-museum in Warwickshire, John Steinbeck house-museum in Salinas, California, Robert Louis Stevenson house-museum in Saranac Lake, New York, Mark Twain house-museum in Hartford, Connecticut, Jules Verne house-museum in Nantes, Oscar Wilde house-museum in Dublin, Tennessee Williams house-museum in Columbus, Mississippi, and Stefan Zweig house-museum in Petropolis (Brazil).<sup>14</sup>

In Turkey, we have Necati Cumalı house-museum in İzmir, Cahit Sıtkı Tarancı house-museum and Ziya Gökalp house-museum in Diyarbakır, Aşık Veysel house-museum in Sivas, Cahit Külebi house-museum and Mehmet Akif Ersoy house-museum in Tacettin Dergâhı in Ankara, Rıfat Ilgaz house in Cide, Can Yücel house-museum in Datça, and finally, Tevfik Fikret, Sait Faik Abasıyanık and Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museums in İstanbul.

What will be added to this list in the near future is the house of Fazıl Hüsnu Dağlarca in Kadıköy, İstanbul, which will be transformed into a museum upon his bequest. Before he died in 2008, Dağlarca had left his house to Kadıköy Municipality and his

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<sup>14</sup> This list is not restricted to these examples; there may be others.

name had already given to the street of his house by the municipality. Dağlarca explained his motivation to have a house-museum as:

I desire that my house where I have lived and written my poems continues to live. I have requested from our municipality manager to own my house and organize it as a museum, yet I would like to have it as a living museum. In a section of it, let my books and belongings are exhibited and have a coffee house in the other section. I hope young people will come here, sit down and drink something.<sup>15</sup>

Dağlarca also intended to name his museum as “Sky by Dağlarca” (“Dağlarca’dan Gökyüzü”) by explaining that “I would like young people look at my sky.”<sup>16</sup>

Furthermore, the house of Reşat Nuri Güntekin in İzmir and the birth house of Hasan Hüseyin Korkmazgil in Sivas<sup>17</sup> are under restoration currently and the latter will be transformed into a museum.

In this regard, an exceptional example is the office of Kemal Tahir Foundation. As will be discussed later in this study,<sup>18</sup> it does not function as a museum today, but still retains its characteristics of the house, where Kemal Tahir spent the last five years of his life, by displaying the objects once belonged to him and his wife, Semiha Tahir.

In addition to all these examples, there are also some writers’ houses in Turkey, such as Samiha Ayverdi’s house on Fevzipaşa Street in Fatih, Sevim Burak’s house in Kuzguncuk, Reşat Nuri Güntekin’s house in Büyükkada, all in İstanbul, Oğuz Atay’s house in İnebolu, and Necdet Evliyagil’s house in Ankara. These houses are not transformed into museums but recognized, with the help of plaques attached by local municipalities or associations on their facades, as the places where these writers once

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<sup>15</sup> Anonymous Writer (2008), “Türkiye’nin Ses Bayrağı Dağlarca Artık Yok”, *NTVMSNBC*, <http://arsiv.ntvmsnbc.com/news/462566.asp>, October 17, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Anonymous Writer (2009), “Şair Hasan Hüseyin’in Evi Müze Olacak,” *Hürriyet*, September 7.

<sup>18</sup> For detailed information, see chapter 5, section “5.1 Kemal Tahir Foundation” in this thesis.

lived. The apartment building where Nazım Hikmet and Piraye Hanım had lived was also acknowledged with a plaque by *Şehr-i İstanbul Association*, yet the inhabitants of the building and the association had a discussion over the issue and the plaque was removed later.<sup>19</sup>

In addition to this list, there are other writers' houses, neither transformed into museums nor recognized with the help plaques, yet, known by their former inhabitants, such as the houses of Behçet Necatigil in Beşiktaş, Asaf Halet Çelebi in Beylerbeyi, both in İstanbul, and Mina Urgan in Bodrum, which are used by their present residents. Besides, there are some other examples which do not exist anymore, such as the houses of Ahmet Haşim and Ziya Osman Saba in Kadıköy, Şeyh Galip in Söğütözü, and Necip Fazıl Kısakürek in Erenköy, İstanbul.<sup>20</sup>

There are also some other houses, which were not actually the houses of writers previously, and which do not function as house-museums presently, in the strict sense of the term, yet still “house” part of the belongings and objects of writers. In addition to Orhan Kemal museum which will be discussed later in this study,<sup>21</sup> we can cite here the forthcoming library of Atilla İlhan, under the name of “Atilla İlhan Science, Art and Culture Association,” which will be established not in his house in Maçka but in a different place. Regarding the reasons for this decision, Çolpan İlhan, his sister, explains that Atilla İlhan's house was a rented apartment and also that the family intend to initiate the library in a district, such as Beyoğlu or Cihangir, which has the potential of drawing the interest of young people more. Presently, they search for a two storey building. On the ground floor, they want to organize a foundation and on the first floor, they plan to exhibit his personal belongings, including his typewriter and hats.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Özarlan, Sevinç (2007), “Yazar Evlerini Ne Yapsak da Korusak?”, *Zaman Cumartesi*, July 28, p.8.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> For detailed information, see chapter 5, section “5.2 Orhan Kemal Museum” in this thesis.

<sup>22</sup> Özarlan (2007), p. 8.

#### 1.4 LITERATURE ON LITERARY HOUSE-MUSEUMS

It seems that house-museums have been a relatively new topic of academic interest, developing especially since the 1990s, though they have existed for a long time. It is probably for this reason that the literature on house-museums, in general, and on literary house-museums, in particular, is rather scanty in comparison to the considerably developed museum studies over the past several decades. Therefore, there is lack of information not only on the definition of literary house-museums but also on their history. So, what we have basically is general information that these museums appeared first in the United States and Europe in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and that Goethe's house in Weimar was one of the early examples, transformed into a museum in the 1860s.<sup>23</sup> Furthermore, regarding the fields of architectural theory and history, there is almost nothing on the topic of literary house-museums. So, basically, the existing literature on house-museums is related to the disciplines of museology, restoration/conservation and literary theory.

What we have as the main sources related to museology and historical restoration/conservation are three books.<sup>24</sup> One of them is Jessica Foy Donnelly's *Interpreting Historic House Museums* (2003).<sup>25</sup> Including the papers presented at the conferences of "Historic House Museums: Issues and Operations I-II" in 1995 and 1998, it is a general museological study on historic house-museums. The other two books are guides of technical preservation methods: one of them Donna Ann Harris's *New Solutions for House Museums: Ensuring the Long-Term Preservation of*

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<sup>23</sup> Bernstein (2008), p.14

<sup>24</sup> In addition to these books there are also some articles devoted to some specific examples: Burdick, Melissa Harmon (1999), "A Portrait of the Artist's Home: James Joyce's Dublin," *Biography*, January 1999, 3(1), pp. 90-97; Huntley, Dana (2009), "Jane Austen At Home," *British Heritage*, March, pp.24-27; Nicholson, Robert (2001), "'Signatures of All Things I Am Here to Read': The James Joyce Museum at Sandycove", *James Joyce Quarterly*, Spring/Summer 2001 (3/4), pp.293-298; Scaon, Gaby (2002), "Pierre Loti's House: The Balancing Act Between Exhibition and Conservation", *Museum International*, No.210, 53(2), pp. 49-55; Wheeler, Jennifer (1999) "The Hemingway Birthplace: Its Restoration and Interpretation" *The Hemingway Review*, Spring 1999, 18 (2), pp.29-39.

<sup>25</sup> Donnelly, Jessica Foy (2003), *Interpreting Historic House Museums*, ed. by Jessica Foy Donnelly, Oxford: Alta Mira Press.

*America's Historic Houses* (2007),<sup>26</sup> and the other is Sherry Butcher-Youngmans's *Historic House Museums: A Practical Handbook for Their Care, Preservation, and Management* (1993).<sup>27</sup>

To these sources, we may add another book, Patricia West's *Domesticating History: The Political Origins of America's House Museum* (1997), which examines the historical/political backgrounds of house-museums in the United States.<sup>28</sup> Apart from these, there is the 53<sup>rd</sup> volume of *Museum International* (2001)<sup>29</sup> and the 5<sup>th</sup> volume of *Open Museum Journal* (2002),<sup>30</sup> devoted exclusively to the topic of house-museums. Here, it should be noted that although DEMHIST has organized seven conferences in seven different cities since the 1997 Genoa conference (Barcelona (2001), Amsterdam (2002), Lenzburg (2003), Berlin (2004), Lisbon (2005), Valetta (2006), and Vienna (2007), Bogota (2008)), in none of these conferences we see a single paper, presented on the topic of literary house-museums.<sup>31</sup>

On literary house-museums, a master's thesis by Han A. Salzmman, *Reading Historic Sites: Interpretive Strategies in Literary House-Museums* (2004), gives information about the interpretive and educational strategies of three literary house-museums; Emily Dickinson Museum in Amherst, Massachusetts, Edgar Allan Poe National Historic Site and Rosenbach Museum and Library, both in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Harris, Donna Ann (2007), *New Solutions for House Museums: Ensuring the Long-Term Preservation of America's Historic Houses*, Plymouth: Alta Mira Press.

<sup>27</sup> Youngmans, Sherry Butcher (1993), *Historic House Museums: A Practical Handbook for Their Care, Preservation, and Management*, New York: Oxford University Press.

<sup>28</sup> West, Patricia (1997), *Domesticating History: The Political Origins of America's House Museum*, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

<sup>29</sup> *Museum International*, 2001, 53(2), Blackwell Publishing.

<sup>30</sup> *Open Museum Journal*, 2002, vol.5: Interpreting House-museums, July 2002, <http://hosting.collectionsaustralia.net/omj/vol5/index.html>, accessed: 06.09.2009

<sup>31</sup> DEMHIST (2009), Abstracts, <http://demhist.icom.museum/abstracts.htm>, accessed: 06.09.2009

<sup>32</sup> Salzmman, Han A. (2004), "Reading Historic Sites: Interpretive Strategies at Literary House Museums", M. A. Thesis in Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania

Regarding literary theory, there are two recently published books; Diana Fuss's *The Sense of Interior: Four Writers and the Four Rooms that Shaped them* (2004)<sup>33</sup> and Susan Bernstein's *Housing Problems: Writing and Architecture in Goethe, Walpole, Freud, and Heidegger* (2008).<sup>34</sup> While the former book examines the literary productions of Emily Dickinson, Sigmund Freud, Helen Keller, and Marcel Proust in relation to their rooms/houses, the latter analyzes the houses of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Horace Walpole, Sigmund Freud, and Martin Heidegger as an issue of literary history and criticism.

Regarding the literature related to the topic of this study, or in other words, the literary house-museums in İstanbul, we see that on particular examples, there are some studies in the form of articles and books, though they are few. Besides, there is not any study which covers these examples comparatively.<sup>35</sup>

It seems that Tevfik Fikret house-museum is the most researched example in the literature. Ebubekir Pamukçu's *Aşiyân: Tevfik Fikret'in Evi* (1980) presents a brief history and description of the museum, and also Pamukçu's own observations of the museum.<sup>36</sup> Additionally, Faruk Cumbul's *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda* (1994) gives clues about Tevfik Fikret's house before it was transformed into a museum.<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, Sait Faik Abasıyanık's article on Aşiyân, written immediately after the house was transformed into a museum, in 1946, provides important descriptive information.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, Serol Teber's *Aşiyân'daki Kâhin: Tevfik Fikret'in Melankolik Dünyası* (2002) examines Tevfik Fikret's life in Aşiyân from a

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<sup>33</sup> Fuss, (2004)

<sup>34</sup> Bernstein, (2008)

<sup>35</sup> It is known that there is an ongoing master's thesis on Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum by Seden Uz in Yıldız Technical University, Department of Museology.

<sup>36</sup> Pamukçu, Ebubekir (1980) *Aşiyân / Tevfik Fikret'in Evi*, İstanbul: Piya.

<sup>37</sup> Cumbul, Faruk (1994), *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda*, ed. By Faruk Cumbul, İstanbul: Kardeşler Basımevi

<sup>38</sup> Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1970), "Aşiyân Müzesi" in *Bütün Eserleri 7: Alemdağda Var Bir Yılan, Az Şekerli, Şimdi Sevişme Vakti*, İstanbul: Bilgi, 193-200



psychoanalytical point of view.<sup>39</sup> In addition to these books, Fadime Geleş's article, published in *Arkitekt*, in 2003, gives some details on how Tevfik Fikret lived in his house and how the use of the house changed after Tevfik Fikret's death in relation to some architectural descriptions of the house.<sup>40</sup> Besides, there is another issue of *Arkitekt*, published in 1992, which covers Aşiyân Museum through a brief architectural analysis<sup>41</sup> and İlhan Berk's own observations of the museum.<sup>42</sup> As another architectural analysis of the house, Uğur Tanyeli, in the related part in his book, *Mimarlığın Aktörleri: Türkiye 1900-2000* (2007), examines Aşiyân in a relatively more detailed way.<sup>43</sup> We have also a newspaper article giving information about the restoration of Aşiyân in 1991.<sup>44</sup>

On Sait Faik Abasıyanık's house-museum, it seems that the most extensive research is Sevgül Sönmez's *A'dan Z'ye Sait Faik* (2007), which focuses on Sait Faik's biography, by covering its spatial dimension as well.<sup>45</sup> Besides, there is another book, Ayten Çetiner's *Komşum Sait Faik* (2001), which also includes some details about Sait Faik's life in Burgaz Island, and also, about Sait Faik Abasıyanık Museum in the mid 1990s.<sup>46</sup>

On Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum, the basic source is the book prepared by the Prince Islands Association<sup>47</sup> which includes general historical information on the house and the museum as well as Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's biography. Besides, there two articles by Sabri Esat Siyavuşgil and Niyazi Ahmet Banoğlu, written

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<sup>39</sup> Teber, Serol (2002) *Aşiyân'daki Kâhin: Tevfik Fikret'in Melankolik Dünyası*, İstanbul: Okuyan Us.

<sup>40</sup> Geleş, Fadime (2003) "Bir Sanatçının İstanbul'a İzdüşümü: Aşiyân", *Arkitekt*, 2003/3, 70-77.

<sup>41</sup> Anonymous Writer (1992), "Granit: Aşiyân'ın Mimarisi", *Arkitekt*, no. 4, 63-66.

<sup>42</sup> Berk, İlhan (1992), "İlhan Berk'le Aşiyân'da", *Arkitekt*, no. 4, 34-40.

<sup>43</sup> Tanyeli, Uğur (2007), "Tevfik Fikret: 1867-1915" in *Mimarlığın Aktörleri: Türkiye 1900-2000*, İstanbul: Garanti Galerisi, pp. 214-217.

<sup>44</sup> Kayabal, Aslı (1991), "Aşiyân'a 250 Milyonluk Makyaj", *Cumhuriyet*, April 25

<sup>45</sup> Sönmez, Sevgül (2007) *A'dan Z'ye Sait Faik*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi

<sup>46</sup> Çetiner, Ayten (2001), *Komşum Sait Faik*, İstanbul: Ulusal

<sup>47</sup> Farsakoğlu, Mustafa et al., unknown date, *Kuyruklu Yıldız Altında Bir Ev: Dört Devrin Yazarı Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar'ın Mirasının ve Evinin Akıllara Durgunluk Veren Serüveni*, İstanbul: Adalar Vakfı

immediately after the house was decided to be transformed into a museum in 1964, reflecting the discussions of its time on the opening of the museum.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, there is another source in the form of an article by Ümit Bayazoğlu, which provides a general description of and historical information on Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's house.<sup>49</sup> Apart from these, there are also some other newspaper articles, mentioning the opening of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar Museum.<sup>50</sup>

In addition to this literature on these specific examples, we also have some articles which give information on literary museums<sup>51</sup> and discuss the insufficient motive in Turkey for the conservation of writers' houses.<sup>52</sup> These articles emphasize that even though literary house-museums in Turkey have been founded since 1945, starting with the example of Aşiyân Museum, public interest in these museums in Turkey has increased quite recently, since the 2000s.

## 1.5 THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The basic theoretical framework of this study has two interrelated components. The first is the theory of spatial biography. As Brian Roberts claims, “the cultural and linguistic turn,” experienced in social sciences since the 1960s, coincides with “a

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<sup>48</sup> Banoğlu, Niyazi Ahmet (1964), “Hüseyin Rahmi Müzesi Münasebetiyle”, *Yeni İstanbul*, 24.02.1964 and Siyavuşgil, Sabri Esat (1964), “Hüseyin Rahmi Müzesi”, *Yeni Sabah*, 24.02.1964

<sup>49</sup> Ümit Bayazoğlu (1997), “Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar'ın Evi”, *Varlık*, sayı 1080

<sup>50</sup> Bölge, Neslihan (2000), Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar'ı Ziyarete Gidebileceğiz”, *Hürriyet*, April 3, Hızlan, Doğan (2000), “Nihayet Hüseyin Rahmi'ye Müze,” *Hürriyet*, March 20, Dirlikyapan, Devrim (2001), “Haritada İki Noktaya Bir Gezi,” *Kanat*, Autumn, vol:7, <http://www.bilkent.edu.tr/~kanat/k070802.html>, accessed: 06.09.2009, and Tanış, Tolga (2000), “Büyük Yazarın Evini Öğretmenler Kurtardı,” *Hürriyet*, August 21.

<sup>51</sup> Kaymak, Öznur (2004), “Edebiyatın Kalbine Yolculuk”, *Hürriyet*, March 26,

<sup>52</sup> Özarlan, Sevinç (2007), Hızlan, Doğan (2004), “Yüzüklerin Efendisi yazarının evi tarihi bina kapsamına alındı,” *Hürriyet*, November 25. and Yardım, Mehmet Nuri (2007). “Edebiyatçılarımızın Evleri Bugün ne Haldedir?,” <http://yenihaberici.blogspot.com/2007/11/edebiyatlarımzn-evleri-bugn-ne-haldedir.html>, accessed: 06.09.2009

biographical turn” as well.<sup>53</sup> In literary theory/criticism, there has also been a rising interest in biography which reveals itself in the discussions on the alternative ways of writing and reading biographies.<sup>54</sup> Parallel to this development, space has also been conceptualized as a biographical entity, and accordingly, biography has recently been re-introduced in architectural history,<sup>55</sup> and regarded as an essential narrative to explain “sets of social, cultural, and spatial relationships.”<sup>56</sup>

The second component of this study is the theory of the reader. The ongoing discussion in literary theory/criticism since the 1960s, has developed basically around two articles, Roland Barthes’s “The Death of the Author”<sup>57</sup> and Michel Foucault’s “What is the Author?”<sup>58</sup> which opened the way of elaborating on the theory of the reader by questioning the preconceived authority and the idealized/romanticized/coherent image of “the (A)uthor.” Accordingly, this theory draws attention to the active role played by the reader in producing textual meaning.<sup>59</sup>

On the basis of these two theories, this study attempts to read literary house-museums as spatial biographies of writers by intersecting the biographies of houses,<sup>60</sup> including their “afterlives”<sup>61</sup> as museums, with the biographies of writers.

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<sup>53</sup> Roberts, Brian (2002), “Introduction: Biographical Research” in *Biographical Research*, Buckingham, Philadelphia: Open University Press, p. 3-4.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid*, p. 55.

<sup>55</sup> See especially Arnold, Dana & Sofaer, Joanna (2008), *Biographies and Space: Placing the Subject in Art and Architecture*, ed. by Dana Arnold & Joanna Sofaer, London; New York: Routledge.

<sup>56</sup> Arnold, Dana & Sofaer, Joanna (2008), “Introduction”, in *Biographies and Space: Placing the Subject in Art and Architecture*, ed. by Dana Arnold & Joanna Sofaer, London; New York: Routledge, p. 1.

<sup>57</sup> Barthes, Roland (1978) “The Death of the Author” in *Image, Music, Text*, New York: Hill & Wang, 142-148.

<sup>58</sup> Foucault, Michel (1998) “What is an Author?” in *The Art of Art History: a Critical Anthology*, Preziosi, Donald (ed.), Oxford, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 299-314.

<sup>59</sup> Bennett, Andrew (2005), “The Romantic Author” in *The Author*, Abingdon, Oxfordshire & New York: Routledge, p. 60 and Littau, Karin (2006) “Introduction: Anatomy of Reading” in *Theories of Reading: Books, Bodies and Bibliomania*, Cambridge. Polity Press, p. 10.

<sup>60</sup> On the topic of “house biographies,” see Blunt, Alison & Robyn Dowling (2006), “Representing Home,” in *Home*, ed. by Alison Blunt & Robyn Dowling, New York: Routledge, p. 37.

Accordingly, it looks for the traces of the everyday lives of the writers as the inhabitants of these houses by searching through biographies, interviews, diaries, letters, and also the literary works of the writers themselves. It juxtaposes these textual traces with the material ones as displayed in the “afterlives” of the houses. Furthermore, it observes these “afterlives” through the practices of the agents and users of these museums, corresponding to the owners/organizers/managers, the directors/officers/caretakers, and visitors, by conducting interviews and searching through museum registers. Then, in the final analysis, it reviews these literary house-museums through the eyes of a reader/visitor, and hopefully, of an architectural historian performing a spatial/biographical analysis.

Accordingly, in this study, these house-museums are explored in individual chapters, following a chronological order: the second chapter focuses on Tefvik Fikret house-museum (Aşiyen Museum), the third chapter on Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum, and the fourth chapter on Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum, respectively.<sup>62</sup> In addition, the fifth chapter, under the title of “Other Literary Spaces: Museums, Exhibitions and Installations,” examines some other spaces displaying biographical narratives, similar to those of the house-museums of the previous three chapters, and they are: “Kemal Tahir Foundation,” “Orhan Kemal Museum,” “Yahya Kemal Museum,” “Exhibition Hall of Yapı Kredi Culture & Arts Corporation,” “Safiye Behar House,” and “*Masumiyet Müzesi/Museum of Innocence*.” The sixth

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<sup>61</sup> On the topic of “afterlives of buildings” see, Morton, Patricia (2006), “The Afterlife of Buildings: Architecture and Walter Benjamin’s Theory of History” in *Rethinking Architectural Historiography*, Arnold, D., Özkaya, B. T. & Ergut, E. A. (Eds), New York: Routledge, 215–228.

<sup>62</sup> In this study, I interviewed with Ata Yersü as the director and also a user of Tefvik Fikret house-museum/Aşiyen museum in December 2008 and Hatice Farsakoğlu as a member of administrative board of the Prince Island Foundation who is in charge of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum in August 2009. Regarding Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum, however, I could not reach anyone in Darüşşafaka Association, despite my several attempts, who has sufficient knowledge on the museum. In addition to these figures, I also talked to Şadiye and İlhan Yıldırım, the caretakers and also users of Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum, in August and December 2007, and in April 2009 and Nevin Sergül, the caretaker and a user of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum in December 2007 and in June, July and August 2009. Lastly, I interviewed with Assoc. Prof. Dr. Hande Kökten, a conservator, a member of ICOM Turkish National Committee and the director of Ankara University, Başkent Vocational High School, in July 2009, in order to be informed on the conservation issues in the museums in general and house-museums in particular.

chapter, under the title of “Reading Spatial/Literary Narratives: Themes of Literary Spaces” presents an overview of this study by focusing on certain themes, such as: “‘A Room with a View’,” “Seclusion,” “‘The Death of the Author’,” “The Study/The Writing Desk/The Typewriter,” “A Museum of His Own,” “Faithful Representation vs. Conservation,” and “To Touch or Not to Touch.” Lastly, the seventh chapter as the conclusion evaluates the results of this study by comparing them with the international examples.

## CHAPTER 2

### TEVFİK FİKRET HOUSE-MUSEUM

#### 2.1 DESIGNING A “BURROW”

*With a diligence of love, with a pleasure of poetry/I had made a home of serenity<sup>1</sup>*

The story Tevfik Fikret’s (1867-1915) house began during the period when he was continuing his lectures in Robert College. As Ebubekir Pamukçu explains, he spent almost all of his time around Rumelihisarı since it was practical to live there to reach to the college easily by walking.<sup>2</sup> In addition to this reason, Fikret did not like his family house in Ağa Konağı at the end of Ağayokuşu, Aksaray and therefore he preferred to reside in the waterside manor of his father-in-law in Rumelihisarı. According to Pamukçu, the very reason why Tevfik Fikret dwelt in the house in Rumelihisarı was his passionate love of nature, which is not satisfied by his house in Aksaray.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These verses were written by Tevfik Fikret (İlhan Berk, 1992, “İlhan Berk’le Aşiyân’da,” *Arkitekt*, p. 4). In the verses, İlhan Berk quoted and translated from Ottoman to Turkish in his article, Fikret says “With a diligence of love, with a pleasure of poetry/ I had made a home of poetry.” (Ibid) However, the last phrase “home of poetry” was translated by Berk inaccurately; actually, it ends with the phrase of “home of serenity.”

<sup>2</sup> Pamukçu, Ebubekir (1980), *Aşiyân*, İstanbul: Piya, p. 8.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

When Tevfik Fikret and Nazime Fikret inhabited in Nazime Fikret's family house, they walked around the area of Kayalar cemetery occasionally, which was later called as "Aşiyân cemetery" because of the existence of the house, and they climbed to the hillside, wherein today, the house is located (figure 2.1). As Faruk Cumbul proposes, once Tevfik Fikret was painting there, he spoke of his desire to possess this land to Nazime Fikret.<sup>4</sup> Thus, at the bottom of the Robert College, close to the coast of Rumelihisarı, he bought the land from Semihe Hanım, the mother of Nurettin Sevim Bey (1900-1975), a writer, an educator and interpreter of English and reviewer of theatre who graduated from Robert College, and began the construction process.<sup>5</sup>



**Figure 2.1: Tevfik Fikret's house,  
unknown photographer/date  
source: (Aşiyân Museum)**

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<sup>4</sup> Cumbul, Faruk (1994), *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda*, ed. By Faruk Cumbul, İstanbul: Kardeşler Basımevi, p. 156.

<sup>5</sup> Pamukçu,(1980), p. 9.

For Pamukçu, Tevfik Fikret sold his father's mansion on Ağayokuşu Street<sup>6</sup> in Aksaray for 2000 liras in 1905 to provide a part of the necessitated amount of money in order to build a house he desired.<sup>7</sup> Further course of construction of the house can be traced in a letter, written to Tevfik Fikret by one of his disciples, Ahmed Nihad. Although the letter is without any definite date, the content is supposedly related to the house's construction process and about the woman who probably undertook the interior design of the house. Her name is not known, yet, it is understood from the letter that Tevfik Fikret collaborated with her in construction process:

Madame came this morning. It costs, only for the ceilings of the dining room, twenty seven liras, then thirty liras was added for wainscoting, twenty two for the room next to the dining room, twenty five for the bedroom, seven liras for the living room, and seventy nine in total. We cannot afford it yet Madame insists to do this. If necessary she will make a discount for four or five liras. She says that the chosen paintings will suit very well... The idea of Madame is that she intends to show her ability through our work. If you ask for my opinion, I want do four or five liras carton-pierre for the ceilings of the two small rooms as in the case of the living room and to apply more sophisticated thing to the dining room.<sup>8</sup>

During the construction process, Fikret's budget could not afford the costs. As a solution for this problem, it is proposed that a friend of Tevfik Fikret's took the copies of his famous book, *Rübab-ı Şikeste*, along with him and sold them in Black Sea Region in order to meet the rest of the construction expenses.<sup>9</sup> As his son, Haluk Fikret, mentions, in the course of construction, his father laboured with the workmen<sup>10</sup> and the building was completed in 1906.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar states that the mansion was located on Koska street (Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar, 1941, *Tevfik Fikret Hakkında*, İstanbul: Eyüp Halkevi, p. 33).

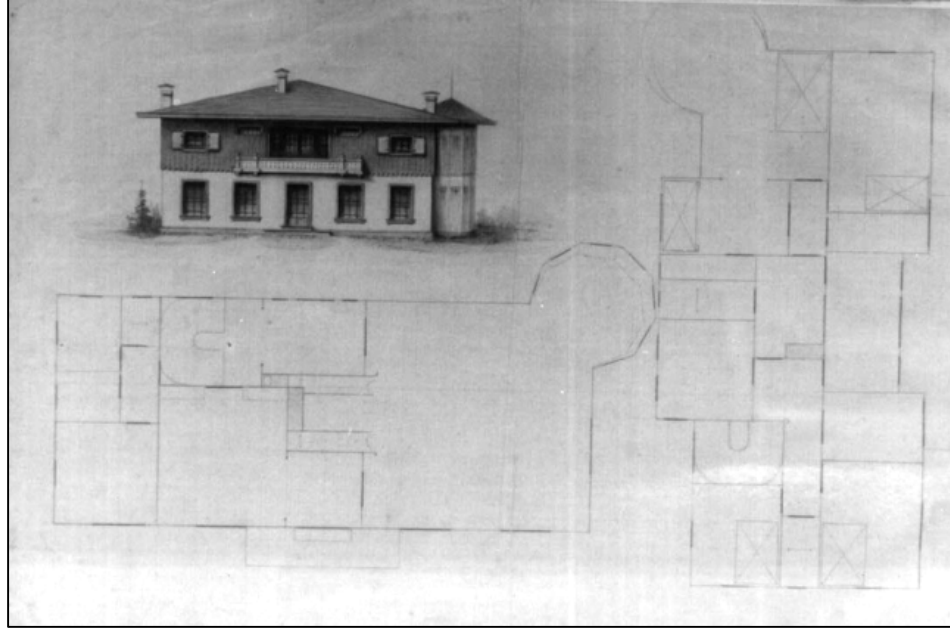
<sup>7</sup> Pamukçu,(1980), p. 9.

<sup>8</sup> Nihad, Ahmed (1999), *Mektuplarla Tevfik Fikret ve Çevresi*, İstanbul: İBB Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, p. 103.

<sup>9</sup> Olcayto (1959), "Ne Yazdılar, Ne Söylediler?" in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret: Hayatı, Hatıraları, Şiirleri*, İstanbul: Ahmet Halit Yaşaroğlu Kitapçılık, p. 81.

<sup>10</sup> Karaveli, Orhan (2007), *Tevfik Fikret ve Haluk Gerçeği: Atatürk'e Işık Tutan Şair*, Doğan Kitap: İstanbul, p.110.





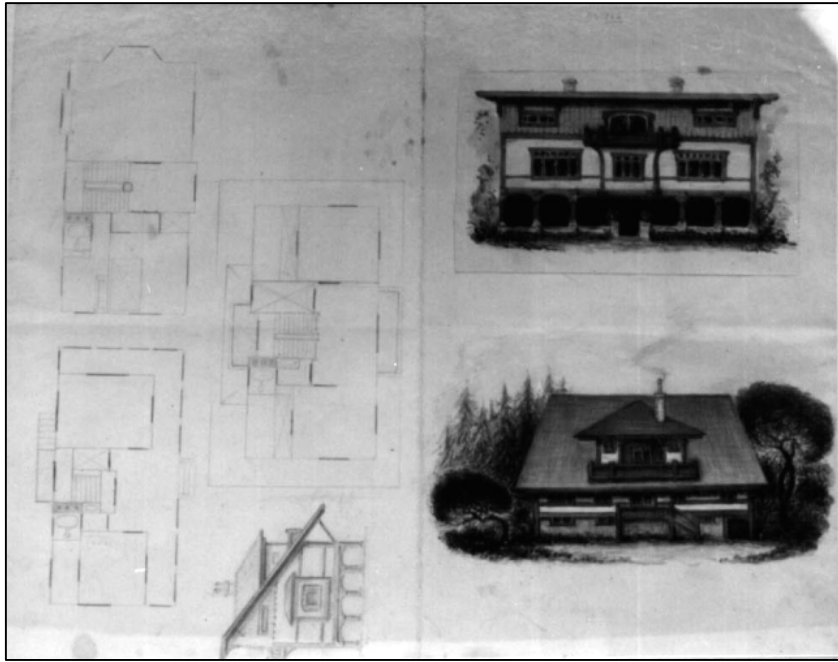
**Figure 2.2: sketches of Aşiyan-1, drawing by Tevfik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Aşiyan Museum)**

This house is an exceptional case since Tevfik Fikret designed it comprehensively, even the landscape around the house. And it is known that he spent a lot of time especially on the details, such as decorative organization of furnishing, paintings and even flowers.<sup>12</sup> Fikret worked with the plans and sketches of his dream house and created three plans and five different facades (figures 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5), which were painted in watercolours and crayon.

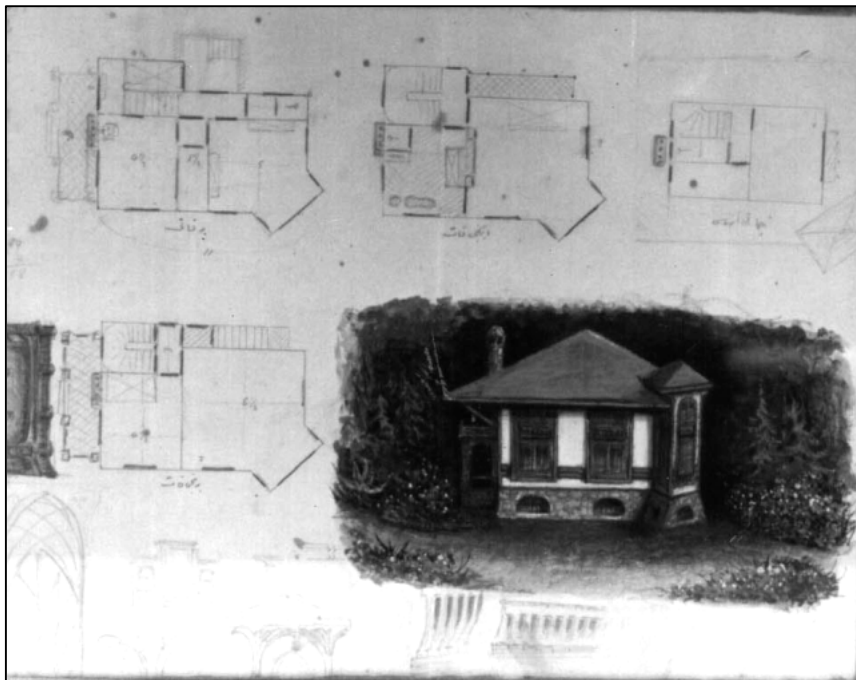
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<sup>11</sup> Pamukçu (1980), p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Geleş, Fadime (2003), “Bir Sanatçının İstanbul’a İzdüşümü: Aşiyan”, *Arkitekt*, Mayıs-Haziran 2003, Sayı: 70, p. 73.



**Figure 2.3: sketches of Aşyan-2, drawing by Tefvik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Aşyan Museum)**



**Figure 2.4: sketches of Aşyan-3, drawing by Tefvik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Aşyan Museum)**



**Figure 2.5: sketches of Aşiyân-4, drawing by Tevfik Fikret, unknown date source: (Aşiyân Museum)**

Although none of them is a one-to-one copy of Aşiyân, they have some similarities with the existing building structure (figure 2.6). For instance, it seems that Fikret highly credited the bay window element in his design. In figure 2.2, a tower-like, rounded bay window is seen, similar to the one, observed in figure 2.4. In addition to this remarkable detail, in figures 2.4 and 2.5, a type of window is noticed, resembling the one, called “Sokrates’s Window,” located on the basement floor of today’s Aşiyân. Besides, in figure 2.4, there are three of them. Lastly, Fikret’s design ambition of Aşiyân includes the use of masonry structure, as seen in figures 2.4 and 2.5.

As a result of Tevfik Fikret’s study on these plans, Aşiyân emerged. Below is a drawing of today’s Aşiyân, executed by Tevfik Fikret, as it is told. However, this drawing is not found in the museum today but reached in an article, published in 1975. It is probable that the drawing was made of colourful crayon, however, the source, from which this image was taken, printed it in black and white.



**Figure 2.6: Aşiyân, drawing by Tevfik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Doğan, 1975, p. 12)**

For Cevad Rüşdü, Fikret worked in the garden of Aşiyân like a landscape architect to devise a characteristic design, which reflected his own taste. While doing this, he made use of the natural condition of the site.<sup>13</sup> He bedded and arranged the garden, and besides, he organized even the smallest stones of it. As İsmail Hikmet Ertaylan states, he and Tevfik Fikret made and organized together the stone tables, located near the three cypresses in the garden. Ertaylan also proposes that Tevfik Fikret intended to undercut the rock, located in the garden, and construct there a library for him. For this place, Tevfik stated that “they bury me into that place when I die”. He had his verses, written on this rock today.<sup>14</sup> After his grave was transported from Eyüp cemetery to Aşiyân, he was buried there in 1961 (see figure 2.23).

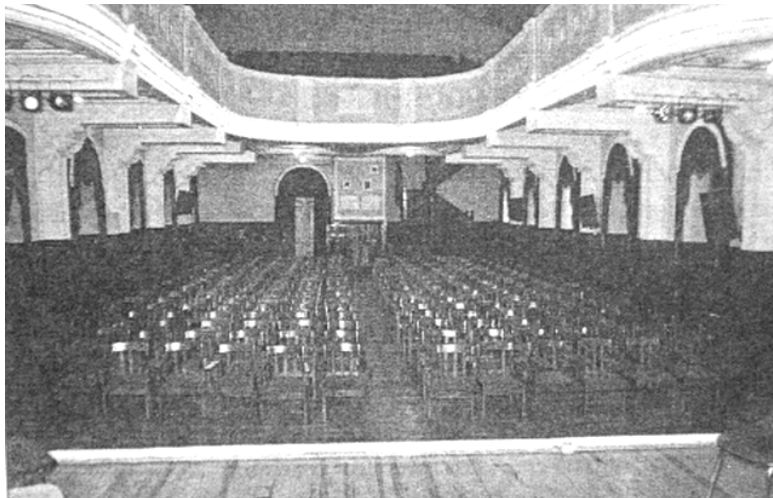
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<sup>13</sup> As Cevad Rüşdü proposes, he created a design which is similar to the one used in Sweden, *Jardin Alpin* (Rüşdü, Cevad , 2005, “Tevfik Fikret, Çiçekleri” in *Düşünce Dergisi-Nüsha-i Mahsusa 1918*, ed. by Seval Şahin, İstanbul: Kitap, p. 102).

<sup>14</sup> Ertaylan, İsmail Hikmet (1994), “Tevfik Fikret” in *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda*, ed. By Faruk Cumbul, İstanbul: Kardeşler Basımevi, p. 99.



**Figure 2.7: Director's office designed by Tevfik Fikret, unknown photographer/date  
source: (Karaveli , 2007, p. 138)**



**Figure 2.8: Conference room designed by Tevfik Fikret, unknown photographer/date  
source: (Karaveli , 2007, p. 138)**

What should be pointed out here is that Aşiyân was not the only design activity of Tevfik Fikret. Although he was not formally educated as an architect, he designed many minor projects. He designed in Galatasaray High School a director's office

(figure 2.7),<sup>15</sup> a conference room (figure 2.8),<sup>16</sup> and a library.<sup>17</sup> Apart from these, he designed Namık Kemal's tomb in Bolayır, Çanakkale.<sup>18</sup> In addition, he prepared the designs of houses and gardens of some of his friends;<sup>19</sup> however, there is not information on whose houses and gardens they were.<sup>20</sup>

Tevfik Fikret's envisioning of Aşiyân actually dates back to his childhood. When he inhabited within his family house located in Aksaray, he prepared for himself a private space, a room, in the *harem* garden. He collected all his belongings, such as books, papers, etc. and spent all of his time there. When he returned from the school, he went directly to this small room. Recalling those days, he said: "there was a window of my room. I sat down there, wrote and painted there. I wrote "Painter Tevfik" on a paper and I hanged it on the wall. When I looked from the outside, I saw its reverse and I got bored."<sup>21</sup> It seems that his dreams about being a painter started at those times. Besides, requiring and searching for a private space was immanent to the idea of this "childhood Aşiyân" as it happened in his own house Aşiyân.

Tevfik Fikret called his house "Aşiyân," meaning "burrow" in Persian and also corresponds to "house," located (figure 2.9) on the top of the second turn on the left side of Aşiyân road, the slope ascending towards "Aşiyân cemetery", where the graves of many famous literary figures of Turkey are observed today, across Göksu brook, overlooking the Bosphorus, and adjacent to the wall of Robert College, today

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<sup>15</sup> Karaveli, Orhan (2007), p. 62, 138 .

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 138.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 63.

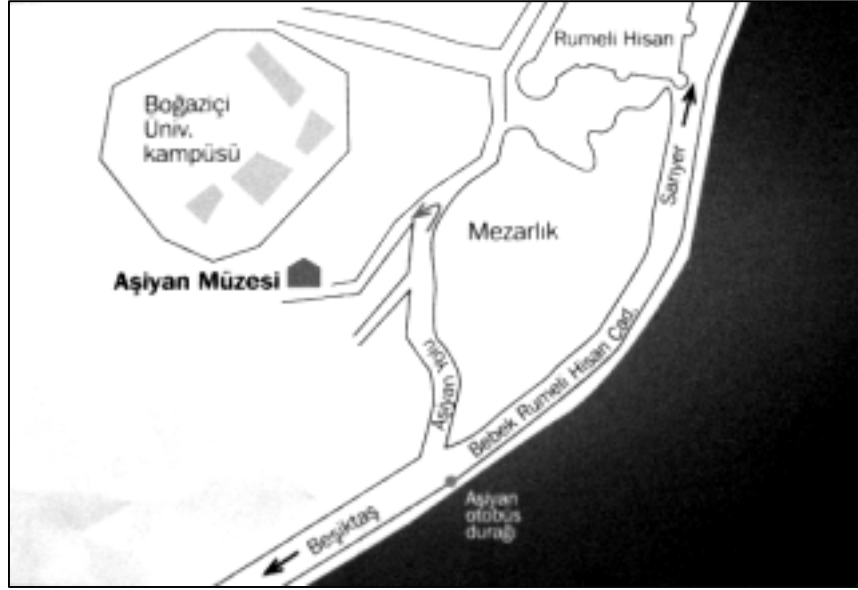
<sup>18</sup> Geleş (2003), p. 77.

<sup>19</sup> Ertaylan, İsmail Hikmet (2005), "Fikret ve Hayatı" in *Düşünce Dergisi-Nüsha-i Mahsusa 1918*, ed. by Şahin, Seval, İstanbul: Kitap, p. 156.

<sup>20</sup> Tevfik Fikret's interest in painting and architecture encouraged him to read on aesthetics. As a matter of fact, he wrote an article named "Beauty" for the first issue of the journal *Malumat* in 1894 (Anonymous writer, 1992, p. 63). Besides, as Uğur Tanyeli states, it can be asserted that he followed the Anglo-saxonian architectural publications since he was able to reach these sources from the library of the Robert College (Uğur Tanyeli, 2007, "Tevfik Fikret: 1867-1915" in *Mimarlığın Aktörleri: Türkiye 1900-2000*, İstanbul: Garanti Galeri, p. 216).

<sup>21</sup> Ertaylan (2005), p. 111.

Bosporus University.<sup>22</sup> Ruşen Eşref Ünaydın states that during his visit to Aşiyân Ünaydın felt like he was entering into the shrine of a prophet, unaware of the material passions of life, retreated for praying, and after he climbed Aşiyân slope, the house seemed to him as constructed on a hill, where the solitude is prevalent.<sup>23</sup>



**Figure 2.9: location of Aşiyân**  
source: (Aşiyân Museum Brochure, unknown date)

It seems that from about 1914 onwards, this area has been called Aşiyân, as can be understood by the addresses on post cards sent to Tevfik Fikret in the 1910s. For example, in the post cards of poet Nigar Hanım, she wrote the address as “Boğaziçi-Rumelihisarı”<sup>24</sup> in 1913, but then she changed it into “Rumelihisarı Kayalar-Aşiyân”<sup>25</sup> in 1914. Mithat Cemal Kuntay states in 1953 that Aşiyân is the only house

<sup>22</sup> Geleş (2003), p. 71.

<sup>23</sup> Berk (1992), p. 38.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 231.

<sup>25</sup> Nigar, Salih Keramet (1999), *Kartpostallarla Tevfik Fikret ve Çevresi*, İstanbul: İBB Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, p. 233.

in İstanbul having a name of its own.<sup>26</sup> Today, down the slope on the coastal road, between Bebek and Rumelihisarı, there is also a bus stop, named “Aşiyân.”

According to Orhan Kolođlu, Aşiyân meant to Fikret “home of serenity.”<sup>27</sup> That is why he moved to Aşiyân when his resentment about the Abdülhamit administration increased and his alliance with the figures of *Servet-i Fünun* ended,<sup>28</sup> and he lived there for 9 years, between 1906 and 1915.<sup>29</sup>

The period Fikret spent in Aşiyân corresponded to the consolidation of censorship of Abdülhamit period<sup>30</sup> and he was very depressed about the government’s politics. According to Serol Teber, since he ideologically disagreed with them, in the days when the Palace organized entertainments, he closed the windows of Aşiyân, even curtains, wrapped himself with blankets, dressed himself with totally black and never went out of his room.<sup>31</sup> Yet, at some other times, for example, on Fridays, his friends came to Aşiyân to get together and to dine. As Ertaylan states, at those times, Fikret seemed happy and joyful. Those nights were both for intellectual and literary sharing and for banqueting.<sup>32</sup> It is understood from these examples and also from what Haluk Fikret mentions that Tevfik Fikret felt happy in Aşiyân more than in any other place.<sup>33</sup> However, before he designed Aşiyân, he and some of his friends dreamed of going elsewhere to get intellectual freedom since all the writers, including those figures of *Servet-i Fünun*, were under the threat of being arrested. They planned long

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<sup>26</sup> Kuntay, Mithat Cemal (1959), “Tevfik Fikret” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret: Hayatı, Hatıraları, Şiirleri*, İstanbul: Ahmet Halit Yaşarođlu Kitapçılık, p. 149.

<sup>27</sup> Kolođlu, Orhan (2006), “Ölümünün 90.Yılında Tevfik Fikret’i Anarken”, in *Biyografya 7: Tevfik Fikret*, ed. By Ayşegül Yaraman, İstanbul: Bağlam, p. 32.

<sup>28</sup> Although the lowdown was unknown, he and the owner of the magazine, *Servet-i Fünun*, had a discussion and then Fikret broke away (Ibid).

<sup>29</sup> As Ertaylan mentions, in summers, he also rented a small house located on Burgaz Island since he liked to stay there. When his illness, diabetes, recurred last time just before his death, he and his family were having rest in this house on the island (Ertaylan, İsmail Hikmet , 1994, p. 99).

<sup>30</sup> Fuat, Memet (1995), *Tevfik Fikret*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi p. 26.

<sup>31</sup> Teber, Serol (2002), *Aşiyân’daki Kahin: Tevfik Fikret’in Melankolik Dünyası*, İstanbul: Okuyan Us p. 115.

<sup>32</sup> Ertaylan, İsmail Hikmet (2005), p. 183.

<sup>33</sup> Karaveli, Orhan (2007), p. 114.



to go for New Zealand, on which they had formerly read a newspaper article stating the existence of an association which accepted migrants to New Zealand. However, they could not afford to go there and then Hüseyin Kazım Kadri offered an alternative as a communal life in his land in Sarıçam village near Manisa. Tevfik Fikret even started to design a house in which they desired to live. Nevertheless, their attempt was not realized.<sup>34</sup>

When the Second Constitution was announced in 1908, as Ertaylan proposes, Tevfik Fikret adorned Aşiyân to celebrate the event in the first three days. He, then, hired Aşiyân out and started to live in the centre of the city again. In other words, he went back to his previous life ongoing around İstanbul. He started to go to *Tanin* regularly and got together with his friends. However, upon realizing that his friends watched their personal benefits before everything, he got upset and went back to Aşiyân.<sup>35</sup>

In Aşiyân, Tevfik Fikret's everyday life began with an early getting up. In summer, he got up as early as four o'clock. He watched the sunrise and then started to work.<sup>36</sup> Sometimes, he went out to the balcony and observed the Bosphorus for hours. After that, he sat at his desk in his study and began writing, as observed by his son, Haluk Fikret.<sup>37</sup> Like his habit of getting up, his time to go to bed was regular.<sup>38</sup> Yet, according to his wife, he did not like and; even got angry with such regularity in his everyday life.<sup>39</sup> He was fond of gardening and he really loved the garden of his house, Aşiyân.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, he liked to go for a walk in the open air since his youth. He used to go for a jaunt at those times. After getting married in 1890, he went out with his wife for a walk.<sup>41</sup> In fact, he made use of those excursions as a chance to

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<sup>34</sup> Teber (2002), p. 99.

<sup>35</sup> Ertaylan (2005), p. 173.

<sup>36</sup> Es, Hikmet Feridun (1934), "Tevfik Fikret'in Aşiyânında Bir Saat", *Yedigün*, no: 75, İstanbul, p. 4

<sup>37</sup> Karaveli (2007), p.111.

<sup>38</sup> Es (1934), p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>41</sup> Ertaylan (2005),p. 185.

paint.<sup>42</sup> Nature was like rehabilitation for him, as Ertaylan suggests, easing his pain. Sometimes, they boated to Göksu and Fikret painted there.<sup>43</sup>

Actually, according to Burcu Pelvanoğlu, his love of nature goes hand in hand with his activity of painting, which covers a considerable part of his life. His interest in painting was not so inexpertedly; he had a good command of the subject in the sense that he was able to criticize a painting professionally and make helpful comments. Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu states that Tevfik Fikret was a very significant painter; nevertheless, this feature remained in the background. Indeed, he perceived painting and poems complementary, yet he did not intend to come to the forefront with his identity as a painter.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, he supported the artists of his time. Once, he provided the appointment of the painter Şevket (Dağ)<sup>45</sup> to *Mekteb-i Sultani* as a painting teacher by delivering him from the occupation of clerkship.<sup>46</sup>

As Teber asserts, Tevfik Fikret liked to exchange his ideas with Mihri Hanım on the issue of painting and more generally on art, especially in his later years.<sup>47</sup> Their friendship was developed in a very short time, especially in his last days. Mihri hanım went to Aşiyân nearly every day and drew Tevfik Fikret's portraits.<sup>48</sup> Eventually, for Pelvanoğlu, Aşiyân was transformed into her atelier.<sup>49</sup> In time, their subject and style of painting started to coincide. So, it is possible that Tevfik Fikret,

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<sup>42</sup> Ertaylan (1994), p. 98.

<sup>43</sup> Ertaylan (2005),p. 185.

<sup>44</sup> Pelvanoğlu, Burcu (2006), "Tevfik Fikret ve Mihri (Müşfik) Hanım: İki Ressamın Kesişme Noktaları Üzerine Notlar" in *Biyografya 7: Tevfik Fikret*, ed. by Ayşegül Yaraman, İstanbul: Bağlam, p. 159.

<sup>45</sup> Şevket Dağ (1876-1944) was a painter, who taught at Galatasaray High School. Vikipedi (2009), "Şevket Dağ," [http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Şevket\\_Dağ](http://tr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Şevket_Dağ), 01. 10.09.

<sup>46</sup> (Dağ) Ressam Şevket (2005), "Azizim Hikmet Beyefendi" in *Düşünce Dergisi-Nüsha-i Mahsusa 1918*, ed. by Şahin, Seval, İstanbul: Kitap, p. 68.

<sup>47</sup> Mihri Hanım was born in 1885/86 as the daughter of Dr. Rasim Paşa, who was a lecturer at İstanbul University Medical Faculty (Teber, 2002, p. 212).<sup>47</sup> She was educated as a painter in France, took private courses from Zonaro, who was one of the painters in the Ottoman Palace, and she was the first woman lecturer in the Academy of Fine Arts (Ibid, p. 214).

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 216.

<sup>49</sup> Pelvanoğlu,(2006), p. 159.

who, indeed, did not see himself as a painter, improved his technique by means of his relationship with painter friends.<sup>50</sup>

Once, Salih Keramet Nigar, the daughter of poet Nigar Hanım, came to visit Tevfik Fikret in Aşıyan. During this visit, Mihri Hanım was there, painting the portraits of Tevfik Fikret. He offered ice syrup to his guest and then said: “Please, let me go inside until you finish your drink. It is better that the lady upstairs does not wait. If she allows me, I will bring the paintings she made. They are wonderful. Do not leave, please.” Then he climbed to upstairs, holding his stick and came back with the pictures, praised them and showed which ones he liked best.<sup>51</sup>

Tevfik Fikret was reserved towards his family. He was not devoted to spend all his time together with them. Though they sometimes got together, Tevfik Fikret was engaged with his personal activities more than his family: with what he wrote, painted or designed.<sup>52</sup> However, it is conversely proposed that Tevfik Fikret was attached to his son, Haluk very deeply. Ertaylan claims that when Haluk was born, his aim of life changed completely and his love of son and his wife became his motive to live even in his last times.<sup>53</sup> However, Tevfik Fikret was not a very affectionate man, and these characteristics prevented him from showing his love even towards his son Haluk. As Haluk Fikret tells:

It is evident in his poems that he was very devoted to me. I wish he would have been less dependent on me and would have sometimes made me sit on his lap and caressed me. Always I waited for this. Maybe you cannot believe in this but I do not remember that he made me sit on his lap even for once.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p. 169.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, ,p. 161-162.

<sup>52</sup> Teber (2002), p. 27.

<sup>53</sup> Ertaylan (2005), p. 158.

<sup>54</sup> Karaveli (2007), p. 111.

Although Haluk Fikret states that his father did make him sit on his lap, in the museum, the photograph below is observed (figure 2.10).

When Tevfik Fikret sent Haluk to Scotland for studying electrical engineering, he wrote *Haluk'un Vedai* and dedicated it to Prince Faruk.<sup>55</sup> After Haluk came back from Scotland, he started to teach at Robert College. This made Tevfik Fikret very pleased and proud of his son. After a while, Haluk went to the USA to continue his education. During this period, when Tevfik Fikret received a photograph or a letter from Haluk, he was in high spirits.<sup>56</sup> Nevertheless, Haluk did not come back to Turkey and this was one of the deepest traumas of Tevfik Fikret's life.<sup>57</sup>



**Figure 2.10: Tevfik and Haluk Fikret, unknown photographer/date source: (Aşiyen Museum)**

For his wife, Nazime Fikret, Tevfik Fikret had many inexplicable sides, incomprehensible fragilities, angers and happiness.<sup>58</sup> As Nazime Fikret states in an interview with Hikmet Feridun Es, he intended to have somebody's skull who was never buried. Thus, they found one from their doctor relative working in the Medical

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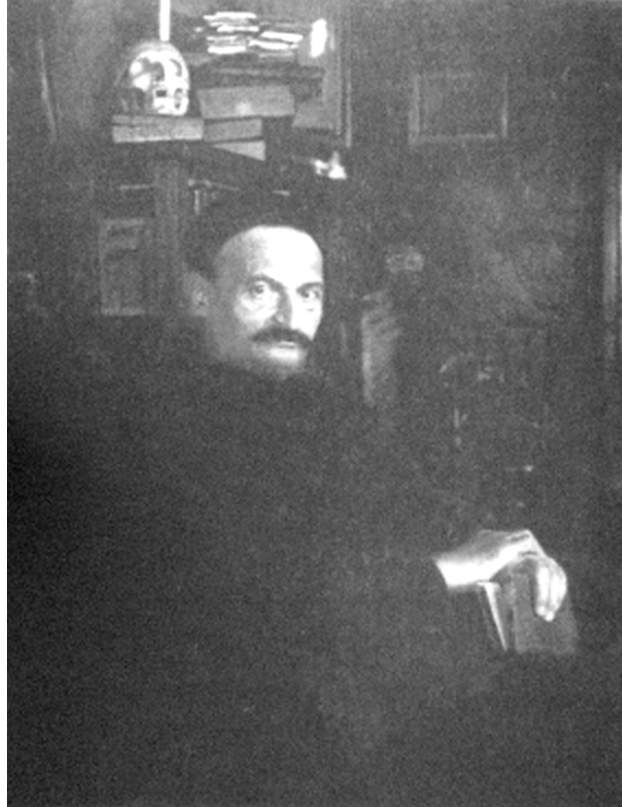
<sup>55</sup> Ertaylan (2005), p. 175.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, p. 185.

<sup>57</sup> Karaveli (2007), p. 120.

<sup>58</sup> Es (1934), p. 4.

Faculty.<sup>59</sup> According to Nazime Fikret, Tevfik Fikret liked this skull so much that he talked to it, appealed to it with its name, which he learned beforehand from his relative who gave this skull, and sometimes, he daydreamed looking towards it (figures 2.11 and 2.12).<sup>60</sup>



**Figure 2.11: Tevfik Fikret and the skull,  
unknown photographer/date  
source: (Yaraman , 2006, p. 48)**

When the biography of Aşyan intersects with the biography of Tevfik Fikret, it is the theme of seclusion that dominates the related literature. Tevfik Fikret's house, Aşyan, is conceptualized as the place of reclusion or withdrawal from the usual and casual and also political rush of life, a space for solitude, in which the author

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<sup>59</sup> Es (1934), p. 4.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p. 4.

thought, dreamed about and also produced his works. Fikret also said to Ruşen Eşref Ünaydın in his lifetime that he was in an “occupied reclusion” in Aşiyân.<sup>61</sup>



**Figure 2.12: Nazime Fikret and Hikmet Feridun Es together with the skull, Yedigün, 1934**  
source: (Es, 1934, p.6)

As we see in his childhood Aşiyân, seclusion was not something novel for Fikret. Hilmi Yücebaş states in his book, *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret* (1959) that Tevfik Fikret locked himself in Aşiyân and adds that there were two reasons for Tevfik Fikret’s reclusion. The first was the governance of Abdülhamit and the second was his intellectual/political disagreements with his friends.<sup>62</sup> For Yücebaş, all these were transformed into fragility and gave rise to his alienation.<sup>63</sup>

Serol Teber’s *Aşiyân’daki Kâhin: Tevfik Fikret’in Melankolik Dünyası* (2002) discusses Tevfik Fikret’s seclusion from a psychological point of view. He proposes that his reclusion in Aşiyân is the result of his melancholic personality and fragile temperament. Accordingly, he observes Tevfik Fikret’s childhood experiences and

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<sup>61</sup> Berk (1992), p. 38.

<sup>62</sup> Yücebaş (1959), p. 3.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p. 7.

family background as the core of his personality, by drawing attention to the personal history of Tevfik Fikret's grandmother, who was of Greek origin and who was enforced to migrate from Chios and to be a Muslim; of his father, who was sent to exile by II. Abdülhamit; and of his sister who was killed by her alcoholic husband. In addition to all these, Tevfik Fikret was arrested and questioned a number of times and put under a permanent custody.<sup>64</sup> All these experiences, for Teber, are the clues to explain this melancholic retreatment.<sup>65</sup>



**Figure 2.13: Tevfik Fikret in front of a window in Aşiyân, unknown photographer/date source: (Aşiyân Museum)**

As Refik Ahmet Sevensil states, after the announcement of the Second Constitution, Tevfik Fikret went out in public with the intention to work again by leaving his “eagle’s nest,” Aşiyân. Nevertheless, he could not adapt himself to the “city” and went back to the hillside of Rumelihisarı, to Aşiyân again.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> Teber (2002), p. 19.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p. 114.

<sup>66</sup> Sevensil, Refik Ahmet (1959), “Eserlerine Göre Tevfik Fikret” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret: Hayatı, Hatıraları, Şiirleri*, İstanbul: Ahmet Halit Yaşaroğlu Kitapçılık, p. 22.

Although he has been seen as he locked himself in Aşiyân to ease his pain, emanated from what he experienced personally, socially, and politically, his retirement in Aşiyân did not mean that he kept his hands off everything since he continued teaching at the college,<sup>67</sup> and furthermore, for Yücebaş, he continued observing wrongdoings in the country with an “eagle’s eye.”<sup>68</sup> According to Sevensil, the job Tevfik Fikret found in the college strengthened his idea to stay in and around his Aşiyân.<sup>69</sup>

Moreover, Ata Yersü, the current director of the museum, proposes that Tevfik Fikret did not intend to retreat; he stayed in Aşiyân because of its convenience to the College. For him, such a politically critical man could not have intended to seclude himself, if he did, he could have gone to somewhere else, such as another city, country, etc. instead of staying in Aşiyân, within the earshot of government.<sup>70</sup> This statement of Yersü, on the one hand, demythifies Tevfik Fikret’s seclusion or retirement, but on the other hand, remythifies him as an almighty political figure who would not have been tired of criticizing.

Contrarily, As Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar states, Fikret always desired to go elsewhere; he and his generation were curious to go away.<sup>71</sup> For him, they planned to go to New Zeland, to a farm around İzmir and eventually they sheltered themselves in the poetry and in the house as Tevfik Fikret did when he did not hold on to the societal life. Enis Batur adds to this by underlining that the house, Aşiyân, indeed, is the “ultimate house” Tevfik Fikret designed as the imitation of his utopia that he never

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<sup>67</sup> Yücebaş (1959), p. 7.

<sup>68</sup> Uçman, Abdullah (2006), “Tevfik Fikret-Rıza Tevfik” in *Biyografya 7: Tevfik Fikret*, ed. By Ayşegül Yaraman, İstanbul: Bağlam, p. 198.

<sup>69</sup> Sevensil (1959), p. 21.

<sup>70</sup> Interview with Ata Yersü, December 2008.

<sup>71</sup> Yaşar Nabi Nayır states, even exaggerating, that Tevfik Fikret was never in financial difficulty throughout his lifetime and spent his elder years in a calmness and comfort. Also, he says Tevfik did not experience any tragedy in his life and there is not any document to prove that his family life had problems. His pessimism can be explained with the zeitgeist of its time as the suffering from the political conditions of the country, for Nayır, as all the patriots (Nayır, Yaşar Nabi, 1952, Tevfik Fikret, İstanbul: Varlık, p. 18). This claim, indeed, contradict with the biography of Tevfik Fikret since he experienced actually the reverse what Nayır says.



realized.<sup>72</sup> Similarly, Uğur Tanyeli proposes that Aşiyân is the architectural result of his very expectations of reclusion.

## 2.2 FROM EDEBİYAT-I CEDİDE TO AŞİYAN MUSEUM



**Figure 2.14: Aşiyân before Tevfik Fikret's death, unknown photographer/date source: (Aşiyân Museum)**

After the death of Tevfik Fikret, Nazime Fikret had financial difficulties and could not afford the expenses of the house and make a living.<sup>73</sup> Between 1915 and 1940, some extension works were made in the west part of the building on the first floor to create space and to increase the number of rooms to accommodate more people in the house (figure 2.14).<sup>74</sup> Therefore, she let some rooms of the house out on hire to six college students.<sup>75</sup> Then, an American professor lived there for one year.<sup>76</sup> As

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<sup>72</sup> Batur, Enis (2009a), "Çünkü Onlardan Biri Değildi," *NTV Tarih*, August, p. 57.

<sup>73</sup> Pamukçu (1980), p. 12.

<sup>74</sup> According to Ata Yersü, current director of the museum, the photograph in figure 2.1 was taken before Tevfik Fikret's death in 1915. As seen in this photograph, the west part of the building on the first floor had not been extended yet.

<sup>75</sup> Es (1934), p. 5.

<sup>76</sup> Geleş (2003), p. 73.

Yersü explains, there is also a rumour that Bülent Ecevit stayed in the house for some time as a college student.<sup>77</sup> However, renting the house was insufficient to bear the expenses. Thus, Nazime Fikret decided to sell the house out<sup>78</sup> and had contact first with Robert College. As Ahmet Hamdi Tanpınar proposes, the college intended to buy the house to transform it into a museum in 1926; nevertheless, the financial depression in the USA prevented the college from purchasing Aşiyân.<sup>79</sup>

The intention of Nazime Fikret to sell the house out to the Robert College created public discussions and she was harshly criticized for this. She felt even obliged to answer the questions, raised publicly by writing a letter to *Akşam* newspaper on October 12, 1939.<sup>80</sup> Since Robert College was of American origin, selling the house to Robert College was perceived as disrespect to Tevfik Fikret and traitorous as well.<sup>81</sup>

As Nazime Fikret explained in her letter, Tevfik Fikret constructed Aşiyân in great economical difficulties: “Fikret never earned so much to build a house” and left nothing except the house. In other words, the one and only inheritance to bear her living expenses was Aşiyân:

“Apparently Fikret was not considered within a class whose family was given a house or put on a salary for his service to the homeland, hence no one, either official or non-official, assisted me and I did not apply to any institution either.”<sup>82</sup>

Furthermore, she mentioned in the letter that she laboured much in ironing, cooking, etc. when she hired the rooms of Aşiyân to the students of Robert College. However, she stated that neither her age nor her health condition was eligible to work like this

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<sup>77</sup> Interview with Ata Yersü, December 2008.

<sup>78</sup> Pamukçu, Ebubekir (1980), p. 12.

<sup>79</sup> Tanpınar, Ahmet Hamdi (1941), pp. 33-34.

<sup>80</sup> Bolayır, Ali Ekrem (1994), “Tevfik Fikret’in Refikası Bayan Nazime Fikret’in Bir Mektubu” in *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda*, ed. By Faruk Cumbul, Istanbul: Kardeşler Basımevi, p. 109.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid*, p. 111.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid*.

and she should have contended herself with the revenue out of the sale. She admitted that if the government had paid for the house, she would have been happy. Yet, she also stated that the rules and regulations of the municipality were not suitable for this.<sup>83</sup>

By the time she found some potential customers, the minister of education, Hasan Ali Yücel and some other literary figures dealt with the issue and prevented the house from being sold. In the end, İstanbul Municipality bought the house in 1940 in order to transform the house into a museum.<sup>84</sup> About this process, Lütfü Kırdar, the mayor, wrote a letter upon the request of Midhat Cemal Kuntay:

When I heard that Aşiyân is being bought by the Robert College, the first idea came to my mind was that it is better for Aşiyân to be bought by the municipality rather than others. I thought that it would be convenient to found a literary museum institution here on behalf of Tevfik Fikret and Edebiyat-ı Cedide after we buy the house.

I requested from Dr. Adnan Adıvar to mediate between the college and the municipality and to persuade them not to buy the house of a Turkish poet on behalf of the Americans since it will be founded as a museum by the İstanbul Municipality. Dear doctor applied to the administration of the Robert College upon my request and succeeded in persuading them. Though the Americans had already given 4000 liras, they stopped the process by showing a great respect and left the right of buying Aşiyân to us. Just then, I received a letter from Hasan Ali Yücel, the minister of education at that time. He notified that it would be proper to purchase for Aşiyân and transform it into Edebiyat-I Cedide museum.<sup>85</sup>

The museum, founded as Edebiyat-ı Cedide Museum, was opened with a ceremony on August 20, 1945, attended by the Minister of National Education, Hasan Ali

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Pamukçu (1980), p. 12.

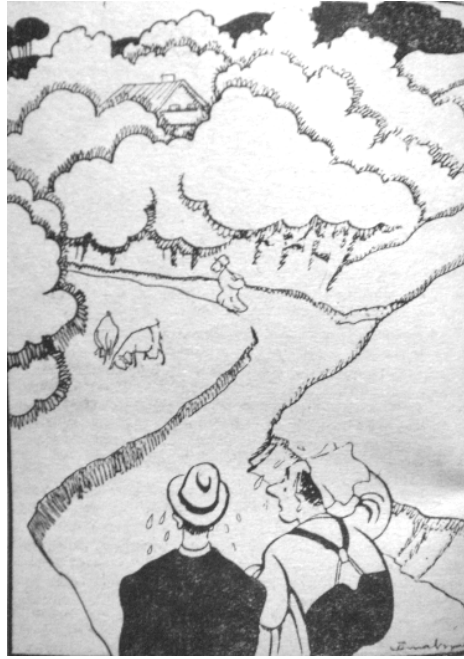
<sup>85</sup> Kırdar, Lütfü (1999), *Kartpostallarla Tevfik Fikret ve Çevresi*, İstanbul: İBB Kültür İşleri Daire Başkanlığı, p. 93.

Yücel, the governor and mayor, Lütfü Kırdar, some members of Edebiyat-ı Cedide genre, other famous literary figures of Turkish literature and the press.<sup>86</sup>

During the course of discussions on establishing the museum, Yücel, a caricaturist, drew a caricature in 1941 which directly attributed to the difficulty of climbing the slope of Aşiyân (figure 2.15). In the cartoon, there is a dialogue between two middle-aged chubby men:

- It is told that Tevfik Fikret was a poet who could see the future.

- I do not suppose he was. If so, he would have known that Aşiyân would be a literary museum and he had not constructed it in such a remote place!..<sup>87</sup>



**Figure 2.15: a cartoon drawn by Yücel, caricature, 1941**  
source: (Olcayto, 1959, p. 80 )

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<sup>86</sup> Cumbul (1994), p. 145.

<sup>87</sup> Yücel (1941), taken from Olcayto (1959), p. 80.

This museum is of crucial importance since it is the first literary house-museum founded in Turkey.<sup>88</sup> Before the Municipality opened the museum, there had been many attempts to collect Tevfik Fikret's memorabilia for five years. For example, his writing desk was found in the cellar of Bosphorus University, however, since his bed could not be found, its replica was reproduced.<sup>89</sup> Other belongings and furniture, which could be found elsewhere, were put on their supposedly right places.<sup>90</sup>

Today, it displays not only Tevfik Fikret's belongings but also Abdülhak Hamit's, the other leading figure of Edebiyat-ı Cedide genre, also known as Servet-i Fünun. In 1959, the books and archive of the poet Nigar Hanım, as the other and the only woman figure of the genre, was added to the museum as well. The reason why the museum was not devised only under Tevfik Fikret's name is that when Aşiyân was being transformed, his belongings were not sufficient to establish a museum and fill in the entire space. The most suitable solution the organizers found was to bring together the belongings of other figures in Servet-i Fünun genre and to name it as "Edebiyat-ı Cedide Museum."<sup>91</sup>

Tevfik Fikret bequeathed to Rıza Tevfik to be buried in the garden of Aşiyân. However, since the family grave was located in Eyüp cemetery, this testament was not executed. Then, 46 years later, in 1961, his grave was brought to the garden of Aşiyân; five verses of Fikret, Rıza Tevfik selected, were written on the epitaph of Tevfik Fikret's grave<sup>92</sup> and the name of the museum was changed into "Aşiyân Museum (figure 2.16)."<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Brochure of Aşiyân Museum, İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality, unknown date.

<sup>89</sup> Geleş (2003), p. 73.

<sup>90</sup> Cumbul (1994), p. 157.

<sup>91</sup> Paradi Stüdyosu (1959), "Aşiyân'da" in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret*, ed. By Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 77.

<sup>92</sup> Cumbul (1994), p. 157.

<sup>93</sup> Geleş (2003), *ibid*, p. 76.



**Figure 2.16: Aşiyân, unknown photographer, 1975  
source: (Doğan, 1975, p. 12)**

Today, after entering into the garden of Aşiyân (figure 2.17) by climbing the slope and the stairs of the house, the visitor comes across the north facade of the house (figure 2.18). On this facade, composed of a masonry structure, a wide window is seen. After walking ahead to the left, there is a view of Bosphorus and Göksu brook (figure 2.19), and to the right side, there are benches, provided by the city municipality and shaped as opened books, on which some poets' verses are written. On the right, the visitor faces with the east facade of the house and observes an entrance, used as the main one at the time of Tevfik Fikret, together with his bust, executed by Hüseyin Anka Özkan<sup>94</sup>(figure 2.20). Then, "Sokrates's Window" (figure 2.21) of the basement floor catches the eye beneath the staircase of the main entrance as well as the word "Aşiyân," written in Persian together with the Muslim calendar date "1322," corresponding to 1906, and indicating when the construction of the

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<sup>94</sup> Pelvanoğlu (2006), p. 160.

building was completed (figure 2.22), on the east end of the northern wall,<sup>95</sup> running along the east-west axis.



**Figure 2.17: Aşiyân**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 2.18: North facade of Aşiyân**  
source: (Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci, July 2009)

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<sup>95</sup> This wall, one meter in width, is considered as one of the most significant elements of the house with its supposedly symbolical meaning and its multifunctionality. It is speculated that the wall symbolizes the ideological position and cultural identity of Tevfik Fikret with its direction, running along east-west axis, where the east has the connotation of “eastern culture” or the Ottoman/Islamic culture; and the west of “western culture,” as embodied in Robert College (Anonymous writer, 1992, p.65).



**Figure 2.19: View from the north part of the garden**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 2.20: Bust of Tevfik Fikret on the east facade**  
source: (author, August 2007)





**Figure 2.21: Sokrates's window**  
**source: (author, December 2008)**

Towards the left, the rest of the garden is seen. In the far end of the garden is the tomb of Tevfik Fikret and the next is the famous rock on which the verses by Tevfik Fikret, Rıza Tevfik selected, was written (figure 2.23). Besides, at the bottom side of the grave on the left is the door, opening into the garden of Bosphorus University. On the right side, we observe today's main entrance of the house-museum.



**Figure 22: "Aşiyân" in Persian**  
**source: (author, December 2008)**

After walking through the south facade of the house, a cliff is observed, drawing a boundary between the house and the university, yet; on the other hand, we see the bridge, which connects the university to the study of Tevfik Fikret. Above the bridge, on the west end of the northern wall, facing Bosphorus University, Aşıyan's construction date, written with the Muslim calendar on the east end, is written according to the Julian calendar here (figures 2.24 and 2.25).



**Figure 2.23: Tevfik Fikret's tomb in Aşıyan**  
source: (author, August 2007)

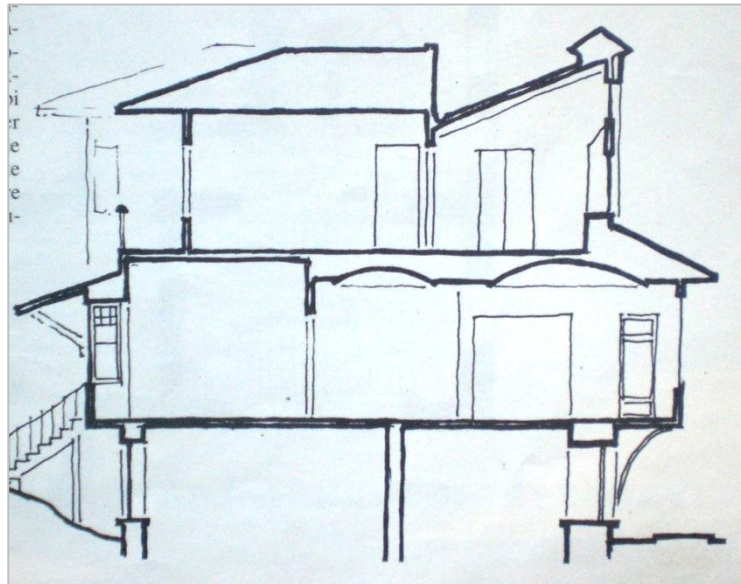


**Figures 2.24: Bridge door of Aşıyan**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 2.25: Bridge door of Aşıyan**  
source: (Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci, July 2009)

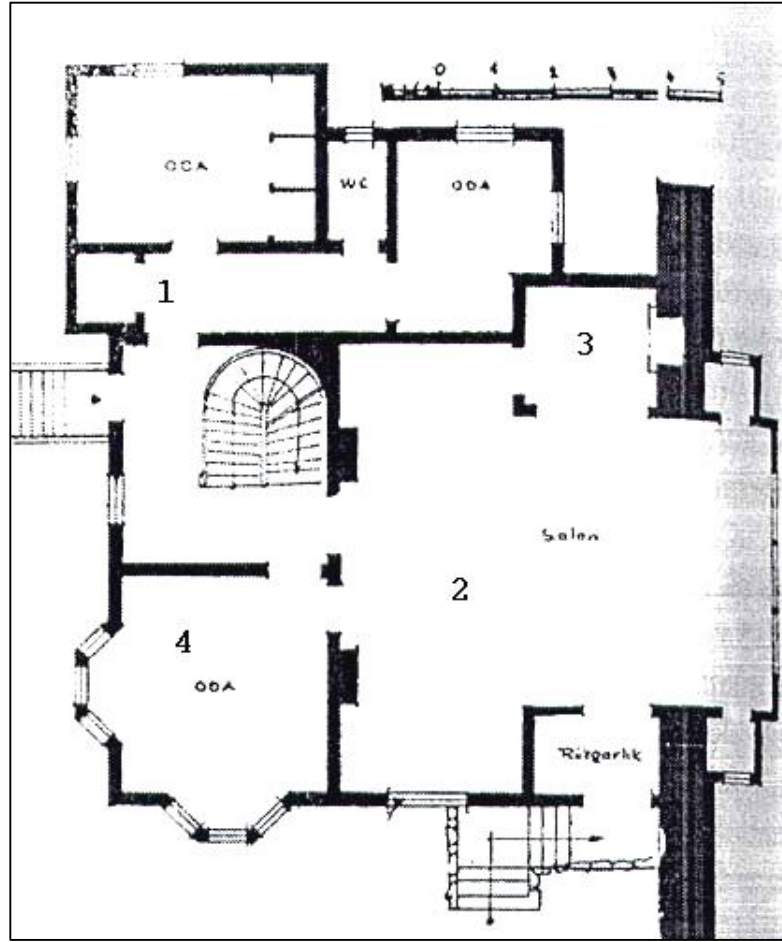
According to Uğur Tanyeli, there is not any comprehensive architectural study on Aşyan focusing on its structure. Dealing with the construction process of the building, which is still not sufficiently known today, Tanyeli puts forward, it is most probable that this process consisted of two phases. In the first phase, which corresponds to the early twentieth century, the building was in the form of a composite structure; the wooden structure of the first floor was constructed on the stone structure of the basement floor and in the second phase, which was emphasized with the date of 1906, the masonry wall of the building, running along the east-west axis, was erected, and the east part of the building was extended (figure 2.26).<sup>96</sup>



**Figure 2.26: Section of the building, drawn anonymously, unknown date  
source: (Anonymous writer, 1992, p. 65)**

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<sup>96</sup> Tanyeli (2007), p. 216.



**Figure 2.27: the ground floor plan, Reşad Sevinçsoy, unknown date  
source: (Geleş, 2003, p. 72)**

Aşiyân consists of three-floors. On the ground floor, there is a large living room, a small room, the former day room and also in the west part of the house, closed to visitors today, are two rooms and a toilet. After entering the house-museum, on the ground floor (figure 2.27), the staircase directly meets the visitor. On the left, there is the door opening to a corridor, where two rooms and a toilet are located, which are used by the administration (figure 2.27, part 1). Before the archive of the poet Nigar Hanım was transported to the former dining room on the basement floor, it was located in the biggest room in this part, shown with number 1 on the plan. Beyond the entrance, on the right is a board, consisting of the plans of the house, Tevfik Fikret's biography and the chronological history of Aşiyân Museum. This board was

arranged in 1991 although it is not known who worked on it and who drew the plans. What is important about this board is that different from the other literary house-museums in İstanbul, it provides visitor with the basic information about the museum as well as general guidelines about visiting it.

The first room, facing directly the visitor, on the ground floor is the former living room of the house (figure 2.27, part 2), which is reserved for Abdülhak Hamid today. The room consists of some pieces of furniture, including his writing desk, and also his military clothes and casual suits, photographs depicting him, his family and his acquaintances, oil-paintings, including his full length portrait, executed by the latest caliph of the Ottoman Empire, Abdülmecid, and some personal belongings, such as cloth brushes, prayer beads, miniature chess boards and pieces, glasses, and his last medicine in a small bottle, as well as the first editions of his books, exhibited in a large cabinet in the middle of the room, including the ones *Ölü* (1885), *Divaneliklerim Yahut Belde* (1886), *Hacle* (1886), *Garam* (1923), *İlhan* (1911), *Eşber* (1922), *Finten* (1916), *Sardanapal* (1917), *Makber* (1886), and *Nesteren* (1878).

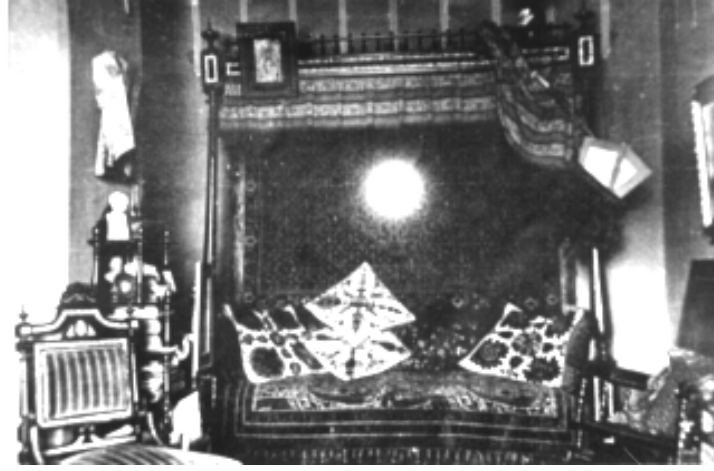
On the right side of the room is the porch, opening to the main entrance of the house, facing the Bosphorus, which is not used today. In his lifetime, Tevfik Fikret often welcomed his guests here by opening the door himself. Midhat Cemal Kuntay recalls his visit of Aşiyân two years before Fikret died and states that “I was surprised when I saw the door of Aşiyân, which looked great with a pair of brass door handles, making the house like a palace, not a house. Yet, the door of the palace was not opened by a servant...but by Fikret himself.”<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Ruşen Eşref Ünaydın also talks about Fikret’s opening the door tardily: “Your hand touches the knocker gently!...You will wait standing in front of the door for a long time.”<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>97</sup> Kuntay, Midhat Cemal (1959), “Aşiyân Şairile Nasıl Görüştüm,” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret*, ed. by Hilmi Yücebaş, İstanbul: Ahmet Halit Yaşaroğlu Kitapçılık, p. 143.

<sup>98</sup> Berk, İlhan (1992), p. 38.

During the time Tevfik Fikret was living in the house, as Celaleddin Ezine states, this room was designed in an oriental style <sup>99</sup> and the ceiling of the room had ornaments and had a special type of “carton-pierre” running all along between ceiling and wall, but today it is covered with white paint due to the restoration process which took place in the 1980s. Besides, when Tevfik Fikret was living there, the brazier, exhibited in the bedroom of Tevfik Fikret today, was located in the middle of the room, instead of the cabinet, in which Abdülhak Hamid’s books are displayed today. Further, the nook (figure 2.27, part 3), where today Hamid’s writing desk is placed, was reserved for the fire place in Tevfik Fikret’s lifetime.<sup>100</sup>



**Figure 2.28: View of the living room before it was transformed into a museum, unknown photographer/date source: (Aşiyân Museum)**

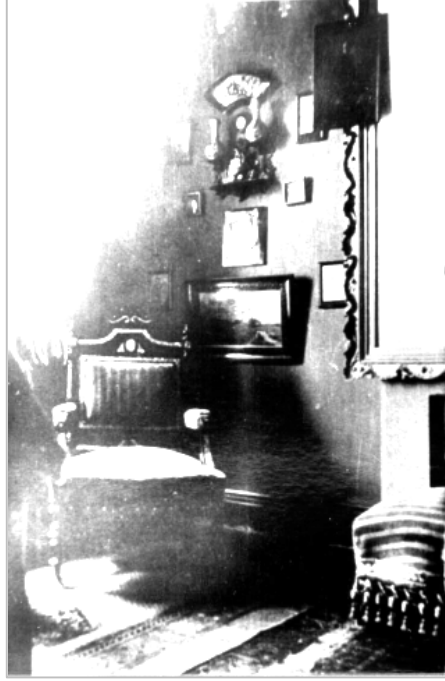
Remembering those days, Ünaydın states that Fikret designed the living room of the house carefully. He recalls remarkable details, such as a coach (figure 2.28), together with embroidered cushions, plaques, on which verses of the Koran are written, an arabesque chandelier suspended from the ceiling, and nacre inlaid smoking chairs

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<sup>99</sup> Ezine, Celaleddin (1994), “Galatasarayda-Aşiyanda” in *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda*, ed. By Faruk Cumbul, Istanbul: Kardeşler Basımevi, p. 56.

<sup>100</sup> The fireplace and the chimney flue were embedded in the northern masonry and by this way, the north wall was warmed up, functioning like a blanket on the north facade and blocking the cold transmission, when the fireplace was burned (Anonymous writer, 1992, p. 65).

(figure 2.29). Ünaydın also adds that everywhere in the house was like the living room, accommodating bookshelves and books in them.<sup>101</sup>



**Figure 2.29: View of the living room, before it was transformed into a museum, unknown photographer/date source: (Aşiyân Museum)**

The second room on the ground floor, reached by passing through the living room, is the former day room of the house (figure 2.27, part 4), where, presently, the biography of Tevfik Fikret, narrating his life from his birth to death, is represented through an exhibition, including some of his belongings, photographs and publications. This exhibition was organized on December 24, 2008, for the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Tevfik Fikret's birthday. Thus, the place of some photographs and paintings were changed, contents of the showcases were shifted and the room was re-arranged by the museum administration under the directorship of Yersü.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>101</sup> Berk, İlhan (1992), p. 38.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

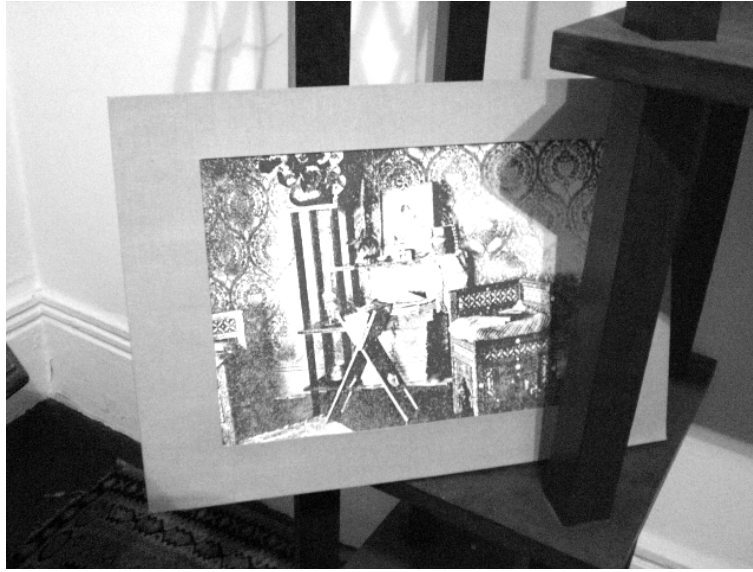
On the lounge spaces of bay windows, overlooking Anadoluhisarı and Beylerbeyi panoramically, covered with shutters, are two horizontal showcases. The first showcase exhibits a copy of the first edition of *Haluk'un Vedai* (1911), a copy of the second edition of *Rubab-ı Şikeste* (1908), published by Tanin, *Şermin* (1914), published by Kanaat, and the family tree of Tevfik Fikret. the second showcase displays the 256<sup>th</sup> issue of the magazine *Servet-i Fünun*, published on February 7, 1896, as the first issue Tevfik Fikret edited, his first poem, published in the 254<sup>th</sup> issue of *Servet-i Fünun*, two of his photographs, and the catalogue of the *Robert College* and *American College for Girls*, belonging to the years when he taught in these institutions.

The right side of the room, facing directly the entrance, is a corner (figure 2.30), conforming to the original layout of the day room (figure 2.31). This corner, constructed as an installation on a rug and separated from the room by means of ropes, is made up of a nacre inlaid coffee table, a *rahle*, a wooden rocking chair, a table including a vase, a photograph, depicting the original layout of this corner, a painting depicting Nazime Fikret, a candleholder, two ashtrays and a bowl which are made of silver.



**Figure 2.30: Corner installation**  
source: (author, August 2009)





**Figure 2.31: Depiction of the original layout of this corner  
source: (author, August 2009)**

Between the bay windows is a vertical showcase, leaned against the wall, reserved for a fez of Tevfik Fikret (figure 2.32) which was formerly placed in the bedroom, located on the first floor, the famous glass, used by Tevfik Fikret to drink brine one day before he died (figure 2.33),<sup>103</sup> a porcelain Turkish coffee cup, an ashtray, a porcelain sugar basin, Tevfik Fikret's painting tools, including a palette and a brush (figure 2.34), as well as a ruler, a paper knife, pens, Tevfik Fikret's rubber stamp of signature seal and a ceramic vase which is gold-plated in patches.

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<sup>103</sup> It is told by a source, Paradi Stüdyosu, when he felt very thirsty, he requested brine from his wife, Nazime Fikret. This glass is one of the famous things found in Aşiyân Museum (Paradi Stüdyosu, 1959, p. 75) As Yersü explains, this glass was formerly placed on the bedside in the bedroom. However, its place was changed by the administration since, as one of the myths revolving around the museum, many people intended to use it, so the administration decided to put it in the showcase in the exhibition on the ground floor in order to protect it (Interview with Ata Yersü, December 2008).



**Figure 2.32: Fez of Tevfik Fikret**  
source: (author, July 2009)



**Figure 2.33: Glass Tevfik Fikret used before he died**  
source: (author, July 2009)

On the walls of the room are Tevfik Fikret's own portrait which he drew in his youth, the certificates of achievement, displaying his success at school and the photographs, depicting Tevfik Fikret, members of his family, his friends and acquaintances. These photographs include the ones, showing Tevfik Fikret in his youth and as a student; sitting in his study in the house of his father-in-law located in Rumelihisarı; together with Nazime Fikret, taken at the time of their marriage; with his son, Haluk Fikret; with the students of *Mekteb-i Sultani*, today's Galatasaray High School, where he worked as a director (1909-1910) and with Galatasaray soccer team; his brother and father; and also the ones, depicting Aşyan before Tevfik Fikret's death and the seaside residence in Rumelihisarı.



**Figure 2.34: Painting tools of Tevfik Fikret**  
source: (author, July 2009)

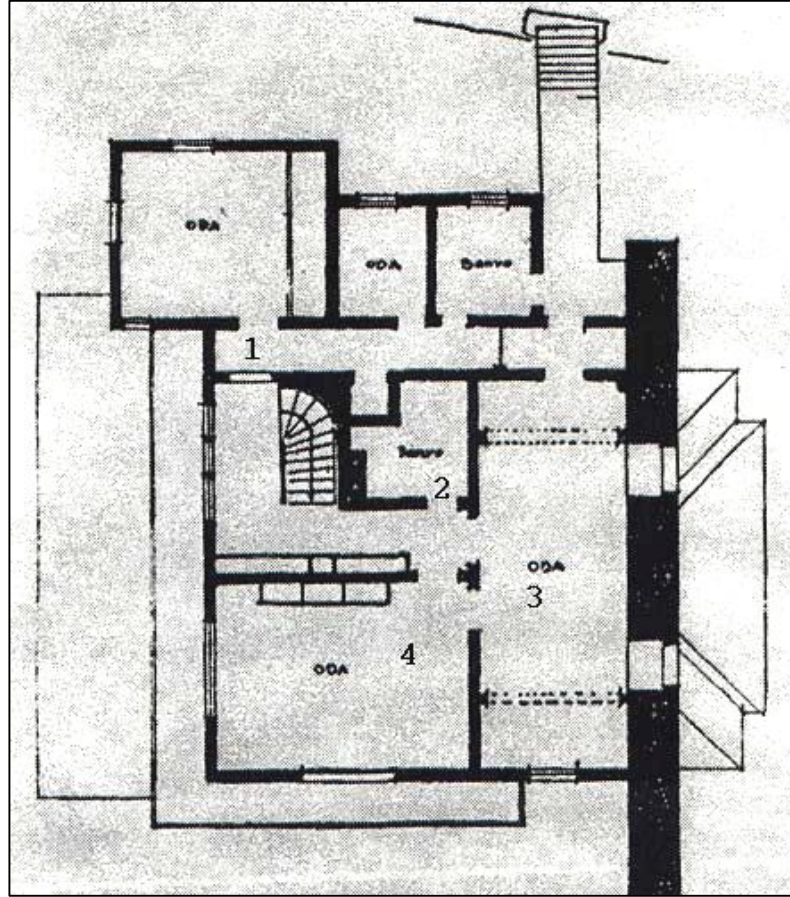
As a criticism of this exhibition, what can be said here is that there is a lack of consistency in object selection. In other words, some objects are taken from places where they were exhibited previously and put into this room eclectically. For instance, while Tevfik Fikret's glass is placed in this room, rest of the tableware is placed in the bedroom of Tevfik Fikret. Similarly, some of Fikret's office equipment and painting tools are displayed here, yet rest of them is exhibited in a showcase, located in the bedroom, and even, surprisingly, not in the study. Furthermore, most remarkably, reserving a room of the museum for "Tevfik Fikret" in Tevfik Fikret house-museum is ridiculous since it implies that the entire museum does not narrate him properly but this room.

This room was formerly designed as a room, representing *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* genre and its figures. Accordingly, on the walls, the photographs of those figures were placed and the copies of those figures' books, such as *Aşk-ı Memnu* by Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil (1945), a book written on Tevfik Fikret, some copies of *Servet-i Fünun* and personal belongings of Ali Ekrem Bey and Recaizade Ekrem were displayed in showcases. Besides, the library, located in the room, reserved for Abdülhak Hamid today, was previously placed in this room.

In Tevfik Fikret's lifetime, this room was decorated with brown, plant figured wall papers and displayed some military equipment, hung on the walls, such as shields, javelins, helmets, and armoured armllets as well as bookshelves, housing manuscripts and books in Persian and Arabic.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Berk, İlhan (1992), p. 38.



**Figure 2.35: First floor plan, Reşad Sevinçsoy, unknown date  
source: (Geleş, 2003, p. 72)**

The first floor (figure 2.35), completely dedicated to Tevfik Fikret, consists of four rooms and two bathrooms. These are Tevfik Fikret's study, his bedroom, and his bathroom, as well as two other rooms and a bathroom, used by the administration and closed to the visitors today, which are located on the west part of the building, extended after Tevfik Fikret's death.<sup>105</sup> After climbing up the staircase, the first thing the visitor sees is a large wooden closet, which was designed by Tevfik Fikret as well when he designed the house (figure 2.36). On the cabinet is a frame, displaying the document about *Servet-i Fünun* genre. After going ahead to the right side of the staircase, the door, opening to the balcony, circumscribing the east, sea front, and south facades of the house, is observed and at the end of this path is the door,

<sup>105</sup> Interview with Ata Yersü, December 2008.

opening to the western part of the house (figure 2.35, part 1), added as an extension to the building after the death of Tevfik Fikret. This part houses the administrative office of the museum today. On the opposite wall of the balcony door, we observe several photographs, depicting a view of Fikret's study and in a single frame five different scenes from the garden taken before his death, including the one depicting three redwoods in the garden, called by Tevfik Fikret as "Les Trois-Graces,"<sup>106</sup> referring to the famous Ancient Greek sculpture, two views from the living room, and two paintings showing him and Mustafa Kemal.



**Figure 2.36: Closet**  
source: (author, August 2007)

Walking to the left side of the staircase, on the corridor, reaching the study of Fikret, on the left wall, are some paintings and drawings, executed by Tevfik Fikret. They are *İstanbul Kabadayısı*, a charcoal portrait which he drew when he was twenty five years old, and a painting, *Rikkat Hanım* (figure 2.37), the portrait of the daughter of Hüseyin Kazım Bey. After passing through these pictures, the bathroom (figure 2.35,

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<sup>106</sup> Berk (1992), p. 38.

part 2) is observed, closed to the visitors today, where the original setting is preserved, though ceramic tiles are renovated (figures 2.38 and 2.39).



**Figure 2.37: “Rikkat Hanım,”**  
painting by Tevfik Fikret,  
unknown date  
source: (Göncü, 1991, p. 277)



**Figure 2.38: Bathroom**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 2.39: Bathroom**  
source: (author, August 2007)

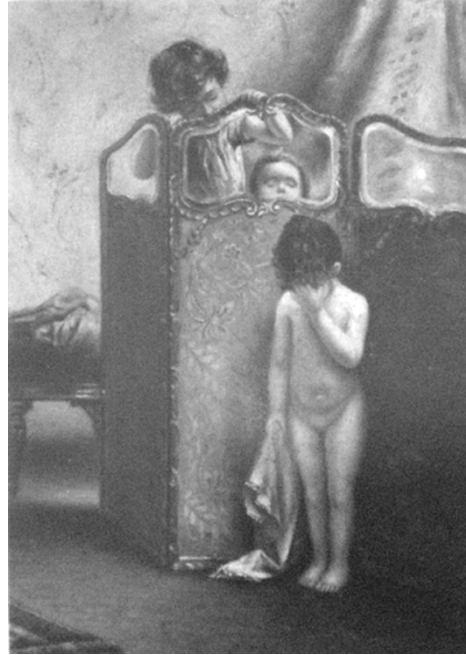


**Figure 2.40: Sitting group in the study**  
source: (author, July 2009)

At the end of this corridor is Tevfik Fikret's study (figure 2.35, part 3), which, actually, involves elements making it resemble a living room and/or a painting gallery more than a study. Accordingly, on the left side of the room, a beige coloured sitting group (figure 2.40) is placed and some paintings are observed on the walls, namely, *Bahçeli Köşk* (figure 2.41), *Çocuklar* (figure 2.42), *Fırtına, Krizantemler* (figure 2.43), *Peyzaj* (executed by Şehzade Nihat), *Nazime Hanım Bebek Sırtlarında* (figure 2.44), *Deniz ve Kayalar*, *Mandalinalar*, and *Güller*. In addition to these, an air conditioner (see figure 2.40) is seen, placed by the administration to balance the ambient temperature.



**Figure 2.41: “Bahçeli Köşk,” painting by Tevfik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Göncü, 1991, p. 269)**

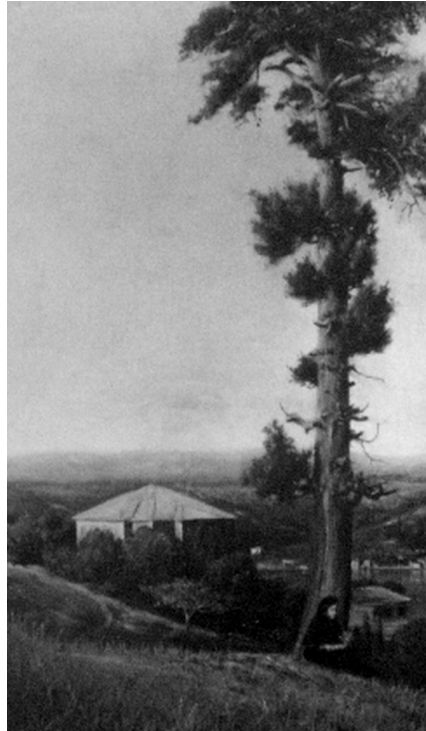


**Figure 2.42: “Çocuklar,” painting by  
Tevfik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Göncü, 1991, p. 273)**



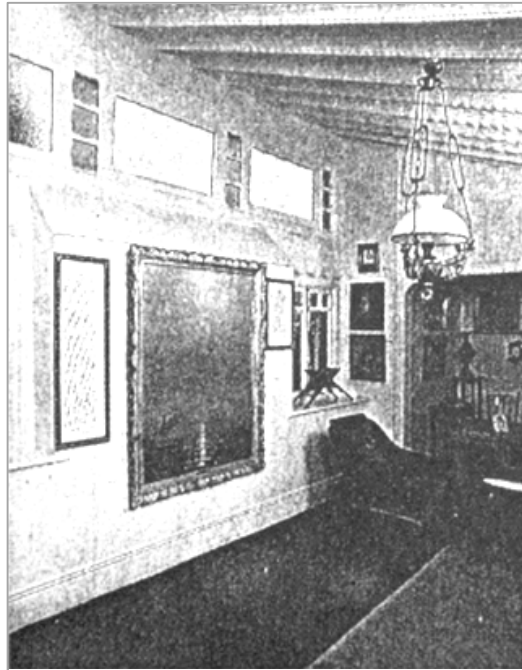


**Figure 2.43: “Krizantemler,”** painting by Tevfik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Göncü, 1991, p. 267)



**Figure 2.44: “Nazime Hanım Bebek Sırtlarında,”** painting by Tevfik Fikret, unknown date  
source: (Göncü, 1991, p. 279)

Across the entrance are some other paintings, named *Göksu*, *Sonbahar*, two portraits of his father, one of which are made of charcoal, and a self-portrait Fikret painted by looking at the mirror, and in the middle, the painting, *Sis* is displayed (figure 2.45). Inspired by two poems of Tevfik Fikret, “Sis” (“Fog”) and “Rücu” (“Abandon”), Abdülmecit made this well-known picture (figure 2.46). In his poem, “Sis”, Tevfik Fikret speaks of his political discomfort and imagines İstanbul as a city under fog. The imagery of fog is used as a metaphor for political impasse of the second Abdülhamit government.<sup>107</sup>



**Figure 2.45: View of Tevfik Fikret’s study, showing “Sis” by Abdülmecit across the entrance, photograph by Cüneyt Baykurt and Cüneyt Budak, 1992 source: (Anonymous writer, 1992, p. 39)**

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<sup>107</sup> Teber, Serol (2002), p. 148. As Yersü explains, sometime ago, a visitor plunged a pencil into the surface of the painting. Today, the trace of this act can be seen when one looks at it carefully.



**Figure 2.46: “Sis,” painting by Abdülmecit, unknown date source: (Göncü, 1991, p. 9)**

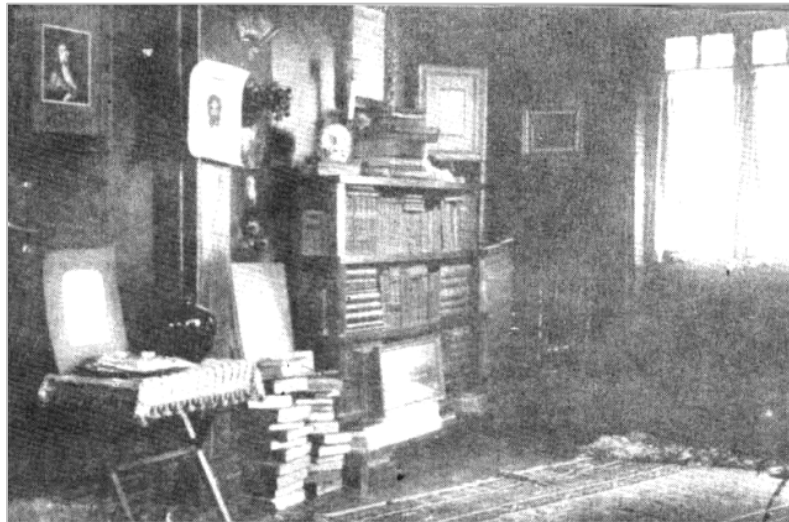
The right side of the room is designed around the writing desk of Tevfik Fikret (figures 2.47, 2.48 and 2.49), by means of a wooden chair at the back of the desk, two single armchairs and a centre table in the front. On the table are a wooden document box, and most importantly, the original sketches of plans and elevations that Tevfik Fikret drew when he worked on the design of Aşiyân on it. At the backside of the desk are side tables in various sizes, accompanied by a bronze bust of Tevfik Fikret, a blue ceramic pot, a blue-white ceramic vase, a chandelier, and a marble bust. This section, devoted to the writing desk, is also decorated with some other paintings of Tevfik Fikret on the walls, namely, the still-life paintings, *Ayvalar*, *Elmalar*, *Mandalinalar*, *Mor Salkım*, two watercolour paintings of his son Haluk, and a charcoal self-portrait, as well as one of his photographs, two frames of calligraphy, executed by Yesarizade Mustafa İzzet,<sup>108</sup> and two small sized mirrors.

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<sup>108</sup> Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1970), “Aşiyân Müzesi” in *Bütün Eserleri 7: Alemdağda Var Bir Yılan, Az Şekerli, Şimdi Sevişme Vakti*, İstanbul: Bilgi, p. 197.



**Figure 2.47: Study of Tevfik Fikret**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 2.48: Study in Tevfik Fikret's lifetime, unknown  
photographer/date**  
source: (Aşiyen Museum)

It seems that in the study of Tevfik Fikret's writing desk keeps its original place as Ünaydın confirms that it was "against the bridge," located on the west part of the house, connecting it to the Robert College. Besides, Ünaydın states that around the room were Fikret's books, as observed in the old depictions of Aşiyân as well (see figure 2.48). Today, however, these books can be seen neither in the study nor in other rooms, since they were donated to Galatasaray High School after his death. Furthermore, the design of this room, like any other room of the museum, has changed from time to time, as can be understood from a photograph (figure 2.49), which depicts the place of the writing desk as well as the objects on it as different than today.



**Figure 2.49 : View of Tevfik Fikret's study,  
unknown photographer/date  
source: (Cumbul, 1994, p. 106)**

In some sources,<sup>109</sup> it is asserted that Tevfik Fikret designed this room as a painting atelier, owing to the architectural organization of the ribbon windows, located beneath the ceiling on the north wall of the house, receiving refracted light of good quality from the north.<sup>110</sup> However, as we see in the old photograph of Fikret's study above (see figure 2.48), he used this space not only for painting, but also for reading, and studying on his writings and/or poems. In his article, İlhan Berk, visiting the house as a poet, tries to relate, by using his imagination, Tevfik Fikret's identity as a poet and a painter to the space he occupied, yet he takes the design of Aşiyân at the time he visited, in 1992, for real, which is misleading. For instance, Berk states that "He put the painting *Sis* against him. He was looking at it every day and whimpering at heart, feeling depressed." This assumption is inaccurate since the painting *Sis* was placed in the living room in Tevfik Fikret's lifetime.



**Figure 2.50: View of the study showing its connection to the bedroom, photograph by Cüneyt Baykurt and Cüneyt Budak, 1992 source: (Berk, 1992, p. 39)**

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<sup>109</sup> İlhan Berk (1992), p. 40, Anonymous writer (1992), p. 65 and Uğur Tanyeli (2007), p. 217.

<sup>110</sup> Anonymous writer (1992), p. 65, and Uğur Tanyeli (2007), p. 217.

Tevfik Fikret's bedroom (figure 2.35, part 4) is reached by passing through the study (figure 2.50). After entering into the room, on the right side, is a walk-in closet, fixed furniture of the house, designed by Tevfik Fikret as a connector between the bedroom and the footpace, is seen. Inside the window pane of the cabinet, two vases, four different types of pots and a ceramic plate, three candleholders and an ashtray as well as some books are observed, written by and for Tevfik Fikret and donated by some benefactors whose names are not known today. Among them, for instance, *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret* (1959) by Hilmi Yücebaş is seen.

The left side of the bedroom is occupied by the bed where Tevfik Fikret died (figure 2.51), though it is a replica of the original, including different details. On the bed is the photograph of his moment of death (figure 2.52) and above the bed is his face-mask (figure 2.53), taken at his death by Mihri Müşfik Hanım, which is known as the first example of its kind in Turkey. It is told that Mihri (Müşfik) Hanım intended to take the moulds of Tevfik Fikret's face and right hand shortly after his death. Although his facemask is displayed in the museum, his right hand mould is lost today.<sup>111</sup>



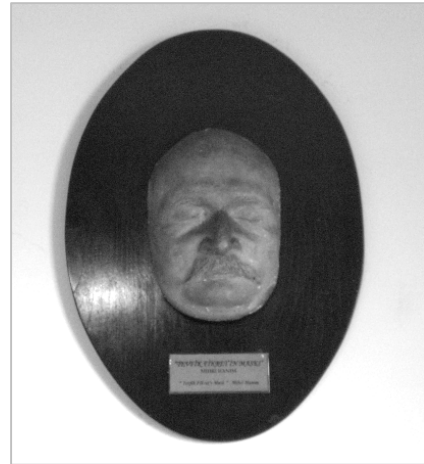
**Figure 2.51: Tevfik Fikret's bed**  
**source: (author, August 2007)**

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<sup>111</sup> Teber, Serol (2002), p. 218.



**Figure 2.52: Photograph showing Tevfik Fikret at the moment of death**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 2.53: Tevfik Fikret's face mask**  
source: (author, August 2007)

This part of the room, designed around his bed, is accompanied by three photographs, displaying him while sitting in various positions, a photograph of his brother, and a painting of Mihri Müşfik Hanım, depicting Tevfik Fikret. On the right of the bed is a side table with a gaslight chandelier and in the corner is a kind of jacket, *jupan*, hung on a coat hanger. Next to the hanger is a brazier, which was used in the living room of the house in Tevfik Fikret's lifetime. Beyond this part is a window opening to an impressive view of Bosphorus (figure 2.54).



**Figure 2.54: View of Bosphorus from the bedroom's window**  
source: (author, August 2007)



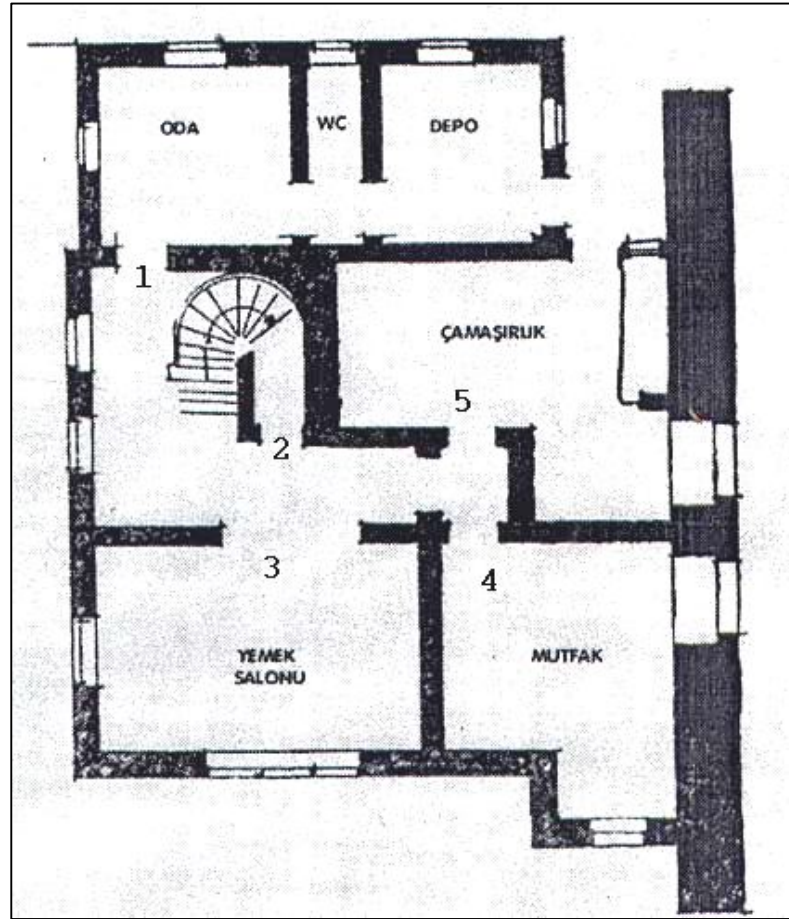
Across the entrance of the bedroom are two horizontal showcases, exhibiting Tevfik Fikret's personal belongings, such as rosaries, cloth brushes, two cups of ink grits, a small silver tea spoon, several paper knives, tools of calligraphy and other office equipment, a box for visiting cards, a wooden ruler, signature prints, and a spoon set in the first one (figures 2.55 and 2.56). In the second showcase, Tevfik Fikret's books, including the first editions of *Rubab-i Şikeste* (1908), *Haluk'un Vedai* (1911), *Rubab'ın Cevabı* (1911-12), *Tarih-i Kadim*, and the second edition of *Şermin* (1946, Koşal printing house) are displayed. In this part is a cabinet as well, containing dining plates, pots, a spoon, a knife, a fork, a mat tray, a bottle of perfume, a souvenir, depicting a bird on a tree branch, an antique, partly gold plated clock, showing the death time of Tevfik Fikret as 07:20 a.m, the famous glass, before moved to the exhibition in the former day room, Tevfik Fikret used just before he died, his fez, a porcelain Turkish coffee cup and a sugar basin. On the wall is photographs depicting Haluk Fikret, Nazime Fikret and the event of the transportation of Tevfik Fikret's grave to the garden in 1961.



**Figures 2.55: Belongings of Tevfik Fikret**  
source: (author, July 2009)



**Figures 2.56: Belongings of Tevfik Fikret**  
source: (author, July 2009)



**Figure 2.57: the plan of the basement floor, Reşad Sevinçsoy, unknown date (source: Geleş, 2003, p. 72)**

Apart from these two floors, there is also the basement floor, closed to visitors today, having a dining room, a kitchen, a laundry room, and a cellar, and also in the west part of the building, are two other rooms, namely, a room, whose function is not known, a storeroom, a toilet. After going down the ladder, on the right side is the door (figure 2. 57, part 1), opening to a corridor, including a room, a storeroom and a toilet, and on the left side is the former cellar (figure 2. 57, part 2), not used presently. The floor of this cellar, as can be seen at the threshold, has its original mosaics (figure 2.58), similar to the skirting boards on this floor (figure 2.59). On the left side of the cellar's door, hung just under the staircase, in proximity to the dining

room and the kitchen, is the bell, used in Tevfik Fikret's lifetime to call him for dining (figure 2.60); making realized that the meal was ready.<sup>112</sup>



**Figure 2.58: Detail of the floor at the threshold of the cellar**  
source: (author, December 2008)

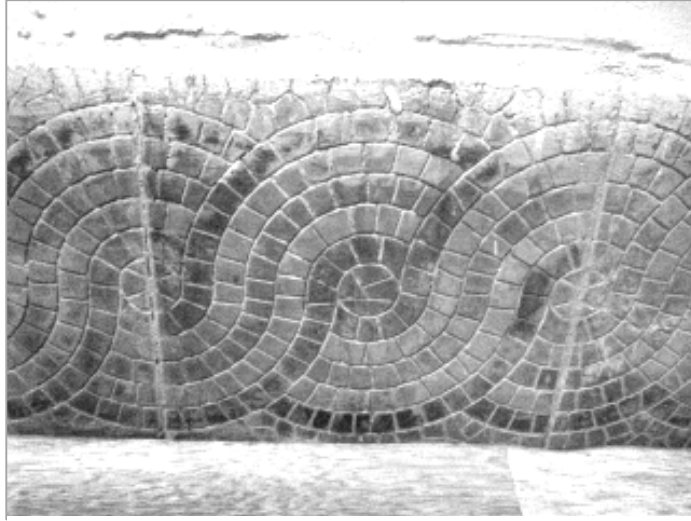
On the opposite of the staircase is the former dining room (figure 2. 57, part 3), whose door has an arch window pane of colourful opal glasses. Today this room is used as the place where the books, photographs, paintings and the archive of the poet Nigar Hanım are stored. It has (figure 2.61) Nigar Hanım's library in a bookcase on the left, a dining table in the middle, imitating the long dining table in Tevfik Fikret's lifetime,<sup>113</sup> and a crystal chandelier, suspended from the ceiling, together with some original fixed pieces of furniture, such as cupboards, in front of the windows, on the opposite (figure 2.62) and on the right side. As Üneydin states, these cupboards were actually of rosewoods,<sup>114</sup> yet, today they are painted in white probably as part of the restoration process of the 1980s. When looking at carefully, former green painting and eventually the original timber surface under the green can be discerned.

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<sup>112</sup> Teber (2002), p. 62. Although he did not care about his health, he was not addicted to cigarette, alcohol or anything harmful to health, either and because of his diabetes, he drank so much water. Even in the winter days, he put a pitcher full of water outside the window and drank the frozen water (Ertaylan, 1994, p. 98).

<sup>113</sup> Berk (1992), p. 38.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.



**Figure 2.59: Skirting boards of the basement floor**  
source: (author, December 2008)

Beyond the dining room, at the end of the corridor, on the right, is the kitchen (figure 2.57, part 4), used today by museum administration for everyday purposes. It is in this room that the window, designed and called by Tevfik Fikret “Sokrates’s Window,” still glimpses the Bosphorus.<sup>115</sup> The other room, at the end of the corridor, on the left is the laundry room (figure 2.57, part 5), used today as a space for storing the objects which are not exhibited in the museum, such as a rotating bookshelf, and a horizontal showcase. It still has the original sink and wash pot on the right side and a wooden shelf on the left.

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<sup>115</sup> It is told by Pamukçu that the window was designed by Fikret as a silence commemoration for the ancient Greek philosopher, Sokrates (Pamukçu (1980), p. 11).



**Figure 2. 60: Bell used to call Fikret to dinner**  
source: (author, December 2008)



**Figure 2.61: Archive of the poet Nigar Hanım**  
source: (author, December 2008)



**Figure 2.62: Cupboard in the former dining room**  
source: (author, December 2008)

Today, the museum is managed by the İstanbul Municipality, the Directorship for Libraries and Museums. It underwent a series of restoration in 1953, 1959, 1975, 1982, 1989, and in 1991.<sup>116</sup> Regarding the restoration realized in the 1980s, Ata Yersü explains that the museum archive, located in the administrative office of the museum, does not have any record as to what was done and how it was done. Therefore, he suggests that a certain amount of house painting, supposedly in green and then in white, was made in this “restoration”/ “renovation” process. However, the renovation was very careless since, as has already been mentioned in the case of cupboards, placed in the former dining room, the paint used on the facade was also used on the walls inside the building, on the ceilings, even on the cupboards in the dining room, in the kitchen and in the laundry room.

In the 1989 restoration, the roof of the house was repaired and the paint of the house was renovated as well. Although some deficiencies in the wooden structure of the building were observed, nothing could be done. As the manager of Aşıyan Museum at that time, Nebi Akgül, stated, during the process, the places of some paintings were changed and some of them were put into the archive. Throughout the process, Yıldız Technical University, Museology program consulted the restoration.<sup>117</sup> In the following restorations that were carried out in 1997 and 1998, under the directorship of Ata Yersü, the facade of the house was only painted and some minor repairs were realized.<sup>118</sup>

After the earthquake of August 17, 1999, cracks on the walls and landslides occurred, so, the building underwent a restoration again in 2000, which took 14 months and executed by İstanbul Metropolitan Municipality and İstanbul Directorship for Libraries and Museums.<sup>119</sup> During that restoration, the garden was reorganized and restored to its original condition and design. For instance, when Tevfik Fikret organized the garden, he planted three cypresses, called by Fikret as

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<sup>116</sup> Information is given at the museum, August 2007.

<sup>117</sup> Kayabal, Aslı (1991), “Aşıyan’a 250 Milyonluk Makyaj”, *Cumhuriyet*, 25.4.1991.

<sup>118</sup> Interview with Ata Yersü, December 2008.

<sup>119</sup> Geleş, Fadime (2003), p. 76.

“Les Trois-Graces,” on the side of the college which were equidistant to each other. Through the reorganization of the garden, this design was brought into light. Yersü emphasizes that the house still needs another restoration in which the original condition of the house can reappear by the help of specialists. However, although they have been waiting for subsidy of restoration for two years, the name of the museum is not still mentioned on the related list of the municipality.<sup>120</sup>

It seems that the pieces of furniture and the objects of everyday life in the museum are included or excluded by the museum administration at certain intervals during not only restorations but also temporary exhibitions. This means that things exhibited in the museum are replaced and reordered in order to create renewed exhibition spaces. Thus, the narrative of the museum changes perpetually. For instance, the former day-room, narrating previously the story of Edebiyat-i Cedide, now concentrates upon the biography of Tevfik Fikret. Similarly, after the restoration in 2000, when the museum was reopened in May 2001, with an exhibition, “Nazime Fikret’ten İzler” / “Traces from Nazime Fikret,” consisting of her photographs, embroideries, bundles and prayer rugs, curtains, laceworks she made and some private possessions. Between May-June 2004, another exhibition, “Tuvale Düşen Mısralar,” was organized with the collaboration of the current administration and the İstanbul Municipality as part of the “Museums Week,” whose aim was to make Tevfik Fikret known by his activity of painting and drawing in addition to his identity of a poet.<sup>121</sup>

### 2.3 AŞIYAN’ S VISITORS

When the biography of Aşiyân as a house and as a museum is read in parallel to the visitor observations in Tevfik Fikret’s biographies and visitor comments in the museum registers, it is possible to capture how spatial narrative changes in relation to how visitors remember, see and write about the house and the museum.

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<sup>120</sup> Interview with Ata Yersü, June 2009.

<sup>121</sup> İstanbul Büyükşehir Belediyesi İsmek web page (2009), <http://ismek.ibb.gov.tr/portal/haberler.asp?HaberReg=1157&p=95>, 21.05.2004.



**Figure 2.63: Chair supposedly used by Mustafa Kemal during his visit to Aşiyân, 1918**  
source: (Doğan, 1975, p.13)

The tradition of commemorating Tevfik Fikret in his house was initiated by Rıza Tevfik several weeks after his death.<sup>122</sup> Since then, Aşiyân has been transformed into a commemoration place and/or, actually, a museum whereas Tevfik Fikret's grave, located in Eyüp at that time, contrarily, did not function as a place for commemoration. However, as Zeki Arıkan proposes, the most spectacular of the first three ceremonies was the one when Mustafa Kemal visited Aşiyân in 1918.<sup>123</sup> Below

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<sup>122</sup> Arıkan, Zeki (2009), "Aşiyân'da," *Cumhuriyet*, October 7.

<sup>123</sup> Zeki Arıkan (2009). For Karaveli, Mustafa Kemal visited Aşiyân twice and the first time was two years after Tevfik Fikret's death on August 18, 1917 (Karaveli, 2007, p. 27). It seems that Mustafa Kemal's visit of Aşiyân is a topic of particular interest in the related literature. Some sources claim that he was accompanied by Süleyman Nazif (1870-1927), a literary figure and a member of Union and Progress Association and Faik Ali Ozansoy (1875-1950), a member of Servet-i Fünun literary genre and also an instructor of French in *Mekteb-i Mülkiye* (Afet İnan, 1968, "Mustafa Kemal, Tevfik Fikret'in Aşiyânında," Ankara: TTK Basımevi, p. 579, Abasıyanık, 1970, p. 196, and Karaveli, 2007, p. 27). Afet İnan seems very sure about these three figures' visiting of Aşiyân. Besides, a copy of the page, considered that Mustafa Kemal and his company signed, is observable in her article, which, she claims, was given her by Munis Faik Ozansoy, the son of Faik Ali Ozansoy (Afet İnan, p. 579). Some other sources oppose this view. For Baydar, he was together with his horse trainer, Emin Bey (Baydar, Mustafa, "Anılarla Fikret ve Atatürk", in *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda*, ed. By Faruk Cumbul, İstanbul: Kardeşler Basımevi, p. 11) and according to Oral, Ruşen Eşref (Ünaydın), Rasim Ferid (Talay), and Selim Sırrı (Tarcan) accompanied him (Oral, Haluk, 2009, "Mustafa Kemal Aşiyân'a Kimlerle Geldi", *NTV Tarih*, August, p. 55). As written in a plaque, which is placed in the showcase of Tevfik Fikret's bedroom in the museum, Mustafa Kemal wrote down into the dairy of *Aşiyân* these words:



is the figure of a chair, on which, as suggested in a source, Mustafa Kemal sat down in his visit (figure 2.63).

When Hikmet Feridun Es visited Aşıyan in 1934, the living room was characterized by divans in Oriental style for lounging. There were also many book shelves and chairs which Tevfik Fikret liked very much. In the middle of the room was a big village brazier, used in winter days. According to his wife, Nazime Fikret, around the oven was the place he liked most. He laid on his cushion next to it and stayed in that position for a long time.<sup>124</sup> Es also observed the tenants who started to live in the house after Tevfik Fikret's death. Actually, at the time of this interview, Nazime Fikret had already hired the rooms of Aşıyan to six students. According to Es's observations, in the rooms where the students stayed, the paintings of Tevfik Fikret were placed together with some photographs of those students, depicting their hometowns (figures 2.64, 2.65 and 2.66).<sup>125</sup>



**Figure 2.64: Nazime Fikret in front of Tevfik Fikret's bust, Yedigün, 1934**  
source: (Es, 1934, p. 4)

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“the admirers of Fikret who are proud of visiting his blessed presence.” However, by examining the signatures in the diary (in the primary visitor register) of Aşıyan, Haluk Oral claims that Mustafa Kemal did not write these words (Oral, Haluk, 2009, p. 55). As Oral explains, he signed the statement of “I am bowing respectfully before the blessed presence of an unbowed figure” (Oral, Haluk, 2009, p. 55).

<sup>124</sup> Es (1934), p. 5.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.



**Figure 2.65: Hikmet Feridun Es and Nazime Fikret during the interview, Yedigün, 1934**  
source: (Es, 1934, p. 4)



**Figure 2.66: Hikmet Feridun Es and Nazime Fikret on the balcony, Yedigün, 1934**  
source: (Es, 1934, p. 3)

Kenan Akyüz, who visited Aşiyân after Tevfik Fikret's death on an unknown date, states that the furnishings of the house were made carefully and the house seemed very tidy. In addition, everywhere was decorated with bibelots, plates and figurines, not so costly but classy, and the walls abounded with paintings, executed by Tevfik Fikret and others such as Abdülmecid and Mihri Hanım.<sup>126</sup>

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<sup>126</sup> Akyüz, Kenan (1994), "Bahçesi-Evinin İçi" in *Mustafa Kemal Aşiyanda*, ed. By Faruk Cumbul, İstanbul: Kardeşler Basımevi, p. 100.

Sait Faik Abasıyanık was another figure who visited Aşıyan in 1946, just after the house was transformed into the museum. He wrote about how he felt while observing Aşıyan's famous objects, belonging to Tevfik Fikret and to the other figures of *Edebiyat-ı Cedide* genre.<sup>127</sup> He went into the bedroom of Tevfik Fikret and caught the sight of the clock. He stated that the clock was stopped at 06.00 (12.18 according to the Turkish style time calculation in Tevfik Fikret's lifetime) as the death time of Tevfik Fikret; however, today, we see the clock as stopped at 07.20. Furthermore, roaming around the room, Sait Faik mentioned the existence of some cushions and several bundles, on one of which the capital T was vignettted, embroidered with *klapdan*, a kind of bent string composed of silver or gold with silk. He also witnessed that there were a fabric glove and a tie in *gövem* colour, a kind of green.<sup>128</sup> Today we cannot find these objects in the museum.

Furthermore, Sait Faik Abasıyanık noted the existence of a Voltaire bust.<sup>129</sup> As Serol Teber explained, after reading Faik's article, he went to the museum in 2003 to see the bust, yet he could not find it. Then he asked the officer about it, but he did not have any information on where the bust was.<sup>130</sup> When I asked for the bust to the director Ata Yersü in 2008, he stated that Sait Faik Abasıyanık could have seen a photograph of Aşıyan before it was transformed into museum. So, today, it is unknown whether it was lost or Sait Faik saw it in a photograph, yet what we know is that the bust is not there presently.

Faruk Cumbul, who visited Aşıyan in 1958, forty three years after Tevfik Fikret's death, found that Aşıyan and the garden was not maintained properly, the structure of the building was in a poor condition and the bridge, connecting the house to the college, was demolished. Moreover, because of the land slides of the garden, the

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<sup>127</sup> Abasıyanık (1970).

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, p. 197.

<sup>130</sup> Teber (2002), p. 203.

museum had been kept closed for two years before his visit and a wooden wall was placed on the way of Aşıyan with the note: “officially closed to visit.”<sup>131</sup>

Yet, it seems that one year later, the museum was reopened. In 1959, Olcayto visited Aşıyan as well, thirteen years after Sait Faik. He described some of the objects in the bedroom of Tevfik Fikret. Similar to Sait Faik, he mentioned the existence of Tevfik Fikret’s night dress embroidered with *klapdan*, bundled and put on the bearing end of the bed. Moreover, he states that there was an armchair in front of the window and a writing desk on which reed pens were observed.<sup>132</sup>

After Tevfik Fikret passed away, a visitor register was provided to receive the visitor comments and ideas on Tevfik Fikret. In this study, the second and the third volumes of visitor registers, between 1955 and 2009, are examined to see who visited Aşıyan previously and how these visitors commented on Tevfik Fikret and on Aşıyan museum. It should be noted here that the administration have kept the registers open only to the well-known and/or public figures, not to the ordinary visitors, yet, some of the visitors requested the administration for writing their thoughts and/or comments.

Among these comments, there are the ones by Munis Faruk Ozansoy (poet/writer/bureaucrat) in 1963, Vefa Poyraz (governor of İstanbul) in 1969, Sadi Irmak, (member of the parliament) in 1977, Durgun Yersuvat (manager of the Association for Galatasaray High School Graduates), in 1992, Osman H. T) in 1993. In addition, there are also Nurettin Sözen’s (mayor of İstanbul) comments in 1991, written in the re-opening ceremony of the museum after a restoration: “today we initiated Aşıyan Museum again.” Similarly, in another re-opening ceremony in 2001, after the most detailed restoration period in the history of the museum, Ali Müfit Görtuna (mayor of İstanbul) stated: “I am so pleased that an important area of our city is becoming beautiful.” In the same ceremony, Sabih Tansel (president of

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<sup>131</sup> Geleş (2003), p. 74.

<sup>132</sup> Olcayto (1959), p. 81.

Bosporus University) wrote in the register that "...to see the house and the museum of Tevfik Fikret restored in this way make one so happy."

Apart from these figures, the comments of the relatives of Tevfik Fikret, Nazime Hanım, and also of the poet Nigar Hanım can be observed in these registers. Rikkat S. Kuray, a relative of Nazime Hanım's, mentions in 1999 that she was impressed since she came to "the house of her aunt" (her father's sister). Her comment is significant since while all of the visitors mention Tevfik Fikret as the former inhabitant of the house, she particularly commemorates her aunt. In other words, she makes remember Nazime Hanım, who was forgotten as one of the main figures in the biography of this house.

Moreover, the notes of a relative of Tevfik Fikret's, Nedret Kuram, is found, who visited Aşıyan in 2002 and in 2004. His second visit was for the exhibition, "Tuvale Düşen Mısrallar". He mentions that "this nice and emotional exhibition which put forward a different side of Tevfik Fikret...his craft in painting affected me so much." Besides, a close relative of the poet Nigar hanım visited Aşıyan and wrote on the register: "thank you for your very kind invitation."

Another visitor, Demir Abaan was one of the students who participated in the transportation of the grave of Tevfik Fikret from Eyüp Cemetery to Aşıyan in 1961. Apart from these public figures, some of the visitors seem to focus on the "traces" reflecting Tevfik Fikret: <sup>133</sup>

Everything inside bears the traces of the period it was inhabited.

We visited with a great interest this museum which was integrated with Tevfik Fikret.

I am so happy to see a part of our poet's world.

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<sup>133</sup> At that time, he moved the grave together with his friend Faruk Cumbul, the writer of the book, titled *Mustafa Kemal Aşıyan'da*. He visited the museum thirty seven years later when he was eighty seven years old.

In this museum, there is an atmosphere that smells history.

The visitors who think that they witness a real history mention particularly that the “atmosphere” of the house make them happy:

Today, here, as sniffing the space you lived giving me pleasure...

We breathed the spiritual atmosphere in this house and resanctified their souls.

I am happy to see the place where Tevfik Fikret lived and committed his works to paper.

It was such a pleasure to discover your secret shelter. In each of my step, I feel that I am committing into your life some more.

This atmosphere is considered as the source of inspiration for Tevfik Fikret’s works. In this sense, space directly plays an active role in his productiveness. Besides, a parallelism or a consistency is searched between the spatial atmosphere and what Tevfik Fikret produced:

I understood once again by breathing the space you lived that a person who lived here can only be a poet!

Your Aşiyân from which you empowered with poetry...

Dark poems in such a bright space...

A visitor writes a poem by mentioning the surrounding of Aşiyân as a source of inspiration:

Write nice poet write  
Write in Aşiyân  
The sea you observed

This scene of the Bosphorus is highly mentioned by the visitors. It seems that some of them have come particularly to view this scene (figure 2.67):

Visiting Aşiyân Museum and viewing the Bosphorus from here make the human psyche boozy.

Especially the scene viewed from the bedroom is great.

I had extreme difficulty in climbing the slope of Aşiyân, however, when you see the landscape from above, you will forget everything.

We are in the drunkenness of viewing İstanbul from the best direction on the hillsides of Bebek.



**Figure 2.67: Tevfik Fikret looking towards the Bosphorus, photomontage by Rıdvan Evrenosoğlu, 1915**  
source: (Karaveli, 2007, p. 108)

The fact that Tevfik Fikret was the designer of Aşiyân is referred by a visitor who perceives Aşiyân as his another work of art/literature:

We are commemorating you with benediction, respect, love and gratitude when we are walking around your most beautiful work of art...

In Aşiyân, it is considered that Tevfik Fikret and his life are represented properly:

Aşiyân Museum, wherein his life is tried to be kept alive.

However, we also come across a statement, questioning the faithfulness of the design of the museum to the original design of the house:

It was nice to feel him in an environment which “he owns.” I was not able to desist myself from thinking that I wish they provided the museum with its original interior design, furniture and ceiling paint.



## CHAPTER 3

### SAİT FAİK ABASIYANIK HOUSE-MUSEUM

#### 3.1 A HOUSE ON BURGAZ ISLAND OR “A DOT ON THE MAP”<sup>1</sup>

*The man was walking alone to the ferry gang board going to the Prince Islands. The gulls were flitting for the sake of people throwing breadcrumbs away. He was jag, probably, because of nearly one bottle of wine. Some time must have passed. He felt suddenly that they had just arrived to the island and it was true. He got off the ferry and crossed the narrow streets in order to arrive to his house. His mother opening the door of the house asked him where he was. She said she wondered him. No sooner had she said “at least you can take your topcoat off” than he sat down on the couch in the living room. When his mother tried to take his coat off, some creased yellow sheets fell into place which were written and scabbled in turn.<sup>2</sup>*

The house mentioned above belongs to Sait Faik Abasıyanık (1906-1954)<sup>3</sup> and his family, located on Çayır Street with the door number of 15 behind the Aghios

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<sup>1</sup> A story written by Sait Faik in which he describes Burgaz Island as “a dot on the map” (Abasıyanık, Sait Faik, 2007, *Son Kuşlar*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, pp. 55-61).

<sup>2</sup> Above is a text I have written to display how the image of Sait Faik Abasıyanık has been shaped in my mind as a result of my readings.

<sup>3</sup> Although his full name is Sait Faik Abasıyanık, after Surname Law, executed on June 21, 1934, mostly it is shortened as Sait Faik. He got really angry with the people who had written and published

Ioannes Prodromos Church<sup>4</sup> on Burgaz Island. Although Sait Faik inhabited not only in this manor, he spent nearly his last ten years there.<sup>5</sup> He dwelt in his other house in Şişli,<sup>6</sup> probably because of its convenience to Beyoğlu, where he liked spending time, getting together with his friends, and making observations for his writings like a journalist.<sup>7</sup> According to Salah Birsnel, he spent his time at the core of the city on weekdays and he went to the island on weekends.<sup>8</sup> When he knew that he had a liver disease, he started to visit more often the house on the island.<sup>9</sup> Then, he moved completely to the island when he was diagnosed as cirrhosis.<sup>10</sup>

Before he moved to his house on the island, he had lived in various houses. He was born in a house in Adapazarı<sup>11</sup> in 1906 and spent his childhood there.<sup>12</sup> Then, his father was appointed to Karamürsel and they lived there between 1910 and 1913. Afterwards, they came back to Adapazarı and moved to a house<sup>13</sup> near the central station of the city.<sup>14</sup> In 1924 when he was attending high school, the family moved to

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his name with a last name “Adalı” (someone who lives on an island) when they printed one of his stories (Abasıyanık, Sait Faik, 2005, *Karganı Bağışla: Bütün Yapıtları/Mektup*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 79) since it was generally and mistakenly used as a nickname denoting that he lived on Burgaz Island. However, as Sevgül Sönmez emphasizes this nickname “Adalı”, corresponds to his birthplace “Adapazarı” since people who live there call the name of the city shortly as “Ada”, which is “Island” in English. (Sönmez, Sevgül, 2007, *A’ dan Z’ ye Sait Faik*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 28).

<sup>4</sup> This church is found in many stories written by Sait Faik.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, p.169.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Halman, Talat Sait (1983), “Introduction: Fiction of a Flan ur” in Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1983), *A Dot on the Map: Selected Stories and Poems*, ed. with an introduction by Talat Sait Halman, asst. by Jayne L. Warner, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Turkish Studies, p. 3.

<sup>8</sup> Birsnel, Salah (1984), “Sait Adında Bir Balık” in *Bir  yk  Ustası: Sait Faik*, ed. by Mahmut Alptekin, İstanbul: Dilek, p. 165.

<sup>9</sup> Abasıyanık (2005), p. 62.

<sup>10</sup> S nmez (2007), p. 191 Contrary to the idea that he died because of liver disease; his actual reason of death is a lung problem. This information became known as a result of the scan of Sait Faik Archive in the museum by Sevg l S nmez (S nmez, 2004, p. 104).

<sup>11</sup> The house was on Atat rk Boulevard, Adapazarı. Since the house was damaged in the earthquake in 1941, it was pulled down. Now, there is Ahmet Faik Apartment in its place (S nmez, 2007, p.191).

<sup>12</sup> Uyguner, Muzaffer (1964), *Sait Faik Abasıyanık: Hayatı, Sanatı, Eseri*, İstanbul: Varlık, p. 3.

<sup>13</sup> The street of this house where he lived is now commemorated with his name. (S nmez, 2007, p. 191).

<sup>14</sup> S nmez (2007), p. 191.

İstanbul<sup>15</sup> and they inhabited near Bozdoğan Kemerı (aqueduct).<sup>16</sup> Furthermore, he spent considerable time outside Turkey. He went to Lausanne, Switzerland in 1931 in order to study economics on the request of his father. However, he stayed there only about fifteen or twenty days, then, he went to Grenoble, France.<sup>17</sup> When he came back to Turkey in 1934,<sup>18</sup> he stayed with his family in Rumeli Apartment on Rumeli Street, Şişli.<sup>19</sup> At that time, his family rented a house on Burgaz Island to stay during the summer.<sup>20</sup> After some years, they moved to another house, located on Kırağı Street, Şişli. In 1934, they bought the house on Burgaz Island.<sup>21</sup> Apart from these, he also rented a room in an apartment building on Küçükparmakkapı Street in Beyoğlu to stay when he did not go to the island or when he missed the ferry.<sup>22</sup>

He lived in the house located on the island together with his mother and their servants, a cook, a gardener and a maid. The household did not have many guests.<sup>23</sup> In the days that she greeted her guests, Makbule Abasıyanık entertained them with the help of her maid who was a close relative of Makbule Abasıyanık.<sup>24</sup> As Çetiner states, in those days, she talked mostly about his deceased husband, Mehmet Bey and his son, Sait Faik.<sup>25</sup> The daughter of Sait Faik's uncle, Ülker Abasıyanık Otman also lived with them for a short time and she left there in 1953. As Otman mentions, she was the only person whom Sait Faik allowed to enter his room.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Uyguner (1964), p. 4.

<sup>16</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 191.

<sup>17</sup> Uyguner (1964), p. 4.

<sup>18</sup> His date of coming back is stated as 1935 by Muzaffer Uyguner (Ibid. p.5). However, his actual returning date was towards the end of the year 1934 (Abasıyanık, Mustafa Raşit , 1996, “İnsan Sait Faik’i Tanımak” in *Sait Faik Abasıyanık 90 Yaşında*, ed. by Perihan Ergun, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 73).

<sup>19</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 191.

<sup>20</sup> Abasıyanık (1996), p. 73.

<sup>21</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 191, His father died in the house located on Burgaz Island in 1938 (Ibid, p. 24).

<sup>22</sup> Güler, Ara (2005), *Bir Devir Böyle Geçti Kalanlara Selam Olsun*, İstanbul: İnkilap, p. 41.

<sup>23</sup> Çetiner (2001), *Komşum Sait Faik*, İstanbul: Ulusal, p. 14.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 35.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 14.

<sup>26</sup> Otman, Ülker Abasıyanık (1996), “Amca Kızından Sait Faik’e Dair” in *Sait Faik Abasıyanık 90 Yaşında*, ed. by Perihan Ergun, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 67.

According to Çetiner, Sait Faik’s closest friends were his dogs named “Nonoş (Piçoz<sup>27</sup>)”, “Cim” and “Arap,” who were also members of the household. He enjoyed himself with his dogs by either wandering with them around the island or playing with them.<sup>28</sup> These dogs welcomed the guests in front of the door, which were almost a part of the everyday life of the house as well as Sait Faik’s.<sup>29</sup>



**Figure 3.1: Bust of Sait Faik located near the ferry gangboard source: (author, April 2009)**

Sait Faik used the island as a “home-like” space since he welcomed his guests not in his house but at the entrance of the ferry gang board (figure 3.1).<sup>30</sup> He waited for the ferry, if his guest did not get off, he wandered around and then he come to the board again.<sup>31</sup> Furthermore, he liked entertaining his guests in the coast of the island or

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<sup>27</sup> Ergun, Perihan (1999), “Sait’in Burgazada’ daki Dostları” in *Sait Faik Bütün Eserleri 9: Balıkçının Ölümü Yaşasın Edebiyat*, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 220.

<sup>28</sup> Çetiner (2001), p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>30</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 90.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid, p. 103.

Kalpazankaya, a piney area where Sait Faik liked to spend time and sometimes to write as well.<sup>32</sup>

When he lived on the island, he enjoyed spending time with fishermen and going to fishing with them as well as he liked writing their stories. After Sait Faik's death, Perihan Ergun made an interview with his "non-literary" friends, such as "fishermen, youngsters, loiterers, owners of coffee houses" on the island and reached the conclusion that many of them did not even know that Sait Faik was a famous man; and also that they did not realize that he was a writer. Arif Sezgin, an inhabitant of the island, mentioned that he and other fishermen supposed that he was a child of a rich person who intended to live like them. They realized that he was a famous man when they heard about his death and went to Şişli mosque for his funeral prayer.<sup>33</sup> Another inhabitant of Burgaz Island, Sefer Dayı, explained the friendship of Sait Faik in these words: It is so that he stated that "if he was alive, would I creep like that? In that great manor, I would find a place to accommodate. His mother donated it to the orphan school [i.e. Darüşşafaka]..."<sup>34</sup> In other words, he was sure that Sait Faik would have provided a place for him to accommodate.

His relationship with the sea was also one of the decisive constituent in his island years. It is told that one day when he caught a fish, he kissed and left it to the sea again, then said: "Look, from now on a fish that I kissed is swimming in the sea."<sup>35</sup> Occasionally, he sailed by himself. According to a memoir by Mustafa Şerif Onaran, one day, he and some of his friends wanted boating and they made a sign to a fisherman coming across and implied him to come rapidly. When he came, they realized that he was Sait Faik.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid, p. 109.

<sup>33</sup> Ergun (1999), p. 218.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, p. 218.

<sup>35</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 46.

<sup>36</sup> Onaran, Mustafa Şerif (2004), "Birkaç Resim, Birkaç Öykü" in *Bir İnsanı Sevmek: Sait Faik*, Süha Oğuzertem (ed.), İstanbul: Alkim, 52-58, p. 53.

Otman proposes that Makbule Abasıyanık (figure 3.2) was an authoritarian person and the dominant figure in the house and in Sait Faik's life.<sup>37</sup> Orhan Tuncer, a grocery store owner on Burgaz Island, witnessed domineering attitude of his mother as well. As he explains, Sait Faik was emotionally and also economically dependent on his mother. Once when they went fishing together, Sait Faik got permission from his mother and promised her to return home on time and told Tuncer: "let's be picked, we are going back to the house, if we are late, my mother gets angry." According to Tuncer, that "chain of love" between the mother and her son was broken at times when Sait Faik went to Beyoğlu.<sup>38</sup>

So, while some witnesses define the relationship between Sait Faik and his mother by pointing out the authoritarian personality of his mother, Sevgül Sönmez explains it in terms of the intimate emotional attachment and affection between the mother and the son. As Sönmez indicates, when Sait Faik was far away from the island, he always intended to go back to the house on the island and to his mother. As Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu tells, one day towards evening when he and Bedri Rahmi went fishing around Kaşık island, there emerged a storm and it became hard to go back to Burgaz island, however, Sait Faik insisted and convinced Bedri Rahmi and other people around him by saying that his mother would wonder him, so they went back to the island. As Sait Faik guessed properly, his mother had been waiting for him for hours in front of the window.<sup>39</sup>

When Sait Faik lived on the island, As Otman mentions, many people including some writers and his fans came to visit him; however, he got disappeared and did not meet them. Furthermore, he did not bring his friends to the house on the island.<sup>40</sup> As Harry Ojalvo, a fisherman friend of him, says, the island was an ivory tower for Faik,

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<sup>37</sup> Abasıyanık (1996), p. 67.

<sup>38</sup> Ersöz, Cezmi (1996), "Sıradan İnsanları Yazmayı Seven Sait Faik'in Bakal Arkadaşı Anlatıyor" in *Sait Faik Abasıyanık 90 Yaşında*, ed. by Perihan Ergun, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 400.

<sup>39</sup> Eyüboğlu, Bedri Rahmi (1999), "El İle Gelen" in *Sait Faik Bütün Eserleri 9: Balıkçının Ölümü/Yaşasın Edebiyat*, Ankara: Bilgi p. 216.

<sup>40</sup> Otman (1996), p. 68.

he did not prefer to get together with his friends on the island; he met them in Beyoğlu.<sup>41</sup>



**Figure 3.2: Sait Faik and his mother in the garden of the house, unknown photographer/date source: (Tapınç & Sönmez , 2003, p. 29)**

Although he was attached spatially not only to the island but also to the centre of the city, Beyoğlu, as his living place and the space of his literary production as well, today only Burgaz Island is associated with Sait Faik. That is why even in the visitor register of the museum, the first comment written in the name of “Burgaz Island Society of Embellishment Administrative Committee” mentions his identity constructed around Burgaz Island. They call him “Burgaz Islander”<sup>42</sup> in the text.<sup>43</sup> Similarly, Atilla Birkiye states that “Reading Sait Faik is, in some means, to know

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<sup>41</sup> İz Tv (2008), Documentary, “Bağımsız Filmler 142: Adada Yankılanan Ses.”

<sup>42</sup> It is “Burgazlı” in Turkish.

<sup>43</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 170.

and to love about Burgaz [island] ... Burgaz and Sait are like the skin and the nail. When you call one of them, the other comes.”<sup>44</sup>

This is not only because he lived a part of his life in the island, but also because he reflected these times on his literary production. As Sibel Yardımcı and Tuğba Doğan state, the image of “island” has a decisive role in Sait Faik’s stories with its multi-layered structure; however, it is a sum of coincidences and relationships rather than a direct representation of a real space.<sup>45</sup> Although he mainly wrote about the island, associating him only with Burgaz Island means ignoring his other life.



**Figure 3.3: Sait Faik and his friends in Beyoğlu, Ara Güler, unknown date**  
source: (Güler, 2005, p. 47)

On the other hand, the crowd of the streets and especially the night life of Beyoğlu constituted a significant part of his life story, has “other life” which was completely different from the one he experienced on and around the island (figure 3.3). He was seen in Beyoğlu mostly in the mid-afternoons and he did not leave there until midnight. He barged in a coffee house for a short time and then he either went to

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<sup>44</sup> Birkiye, Atilla (1996), “Ölümünün 41. Yılında Sait Faik Abasıyanık” in *Sait Faik Abasıyanık 90 Yaşında*, ed. by Perihan Ergun, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 385.

<sup>45</sup> Yardımcı & Doğan (2009), “Mekan-Zaman-Anlam: Sait Faik Öyküsünde Ada”, *Özneler, Durumlar ve Mekanlar*, ed. by İ. Emre Işık & Yıldırım Şentürk, İstanbul: Bağlam, p. 67.



another coffee house or to one of other alternatives such as an alehouse, an exhibition, a cinema, and on a theatre. In the meantime, he went up and down on İstiklal Street and drank plentifully. He stopped by many places from *Mehdi Baba Tea House*, *Nisuzaz*, *Petrograd*, *Moskova* coffee houses to the alehouses such as *Nektar*, *Tuna*, *Balkan*, *Orman*, *Cumhuriyet*, *Özcan*.<sup>46</sup>

Talat Sait Halman describes him as a “flan ur,” who observes his surroundings, streets, people, and then writes on them.<sup>47</sup> He could not write unless he wandered in the streets of and around Beyođlu and watched the ordinary people strolling there. Leyla Erbil improves this idea by stating that the “eye” was the focal point in Sait Faik’s writings. For her, it was a literary necessity for Sait Faik to “peek” the people, especially the ones who were miserable, ugly, and derelict. So, to be able to observe them, he went out from his house in ŐiŐli and passed through the districts such as Beyođlu, Kumkapı, Dolapdere, T nel, and Arnavutk y.<sup>48</sup>

In the biographies, written on Sait Faik, he is hardly depicted inside the house. These are *Elveda Panco*<sup>49</sup> by Yusuf Solmaz and *KomŐum Sait Faik* by Ayten  etiner. While the first one is a constructed novel-biography,<sup>50</sup> the second is a memoir book about the encounters with Sait Faik on the Island.

In Yusuf Solmaz’s novel, Sait Faik’s everyday life is constructed outside the house. He is depicted either in Bedri Rahmi Ey bođlu’s atelier, in *Eftalikus’s* or

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<sup>46</sup> Birsel (1984), p. 165. He also spent time in *Lambo* and *Mustafa’s* alehouses, *Elit* pastry shop and *Eptalaφος*, *K ll k*, *Halk* and *Meserret* coffee houses. (Seveng l, S nmez, 2006, “Nisuzaz’da BuluŐalım” , *Kitap-lık*, 90, 76-78, p. 76) .

<sup>47</sup> Halman (1983), p. 3.

<sup>48</sup> Erbil, Leyla (1998), “Sait Faik’te G z” in *Zihin KuŐları: Metinler*, Istanbul: Yapı Kredi, 51-65, p. 60.

<sup>49</sup> “Panco” is an important figure in Sait Faik’s stories he wrote in his book, *Alemdađda Var Bir Yılan*. As Seveng l S nmez suggests, Panco is the person whom Sait Faik intimately misses and even Panco is, in some means, his alter ego (S nmez, 2007, p. 158).

<sup>50</sup> As Solmaz puts forward in the introductory section of his book, he has motivated himself to perceive Sait Faik from a different point of view. Accordingly he dealt with Sait Faik more intimately and emotionally. Even he went to the museum in order to understand him, to feel the atmosphere where Sait Faik once lived (Yusuf Solmaz, 2005, *Elveda Panco: Farklı Açıdan Sait Faik Abasiyanık*, Ankara: Babil, p. x).

*Şehzadebaşı* coffee houses, in *Izmir* restaurant, in such as *Nektar*, *Tik Lak*, *Cumhuriyet* and *Mustafa's* alehouses or on the streets, walking, mostly around Beyoğlu, on İstiklal or Gümüşsuyu streets, or around Tepebaşı, and sometimes at the outskirts of Beyoğlu. He is seen as a man who is wandering through and going back to the house to sleep, and remarkably, this house is the one located in Şişli, not on Burgaz Island. Actually, it is only once that Sait Faik is portrayed in his house on the island while sitting in front of his writing desk and jotting down on his yellow sheets<sup>51</sup>.

Çetiner pictures Sait Faik as a man who mostly spent his time out of his house on the island. He was seen strolling mostly around Burgaz Island, sitting, thinking and writing in Kalpazankaya<sup>52</sup> or walking anywhere on the streets of the island,<sup>53</sup> shopping; going to the ferry gang board; waiting in the bridges; or sitting within ferries.<sup>54</sup> On the other hand, she often did not find him in his house except from one instance when Faik was giving an interview to a reporter.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, she came across with him mostly at the centre of the city, on Karaköy or Beyoğlu streets.<sup>56</sup> All these encounters are the clues making one feel that it is difficult to place Sait Faik in the house all the time and, briefly, in the book, Sait Faik is pictured as a man who could not be found in his house.

Despite these encounters outside the house, Çetiner still dreams Faik within the house<sup>57</sup> on the island while writing, drinking, thinking, etc. For instance, she constructed the room where he might have studied mentally before she saw it in reality. She dreamed antique furniture such as carved coffee tables, baroque

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<sup>51</sup> Solmaz (2005), p. 35.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 53.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, p. 39.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, p. 31.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid, p. 39, 62, 69 .

<sup>57</sup> In her narration what belongs to the dream world and what to the real is not so clear-cut. There are three levels in the book: dreams, recent history and past times. Particularly in terms of spatial descriptions, the reality is blurred.

armchairs, vases and a typewriter;<sup>58</sup> however, he did not have any typewriter in his lifetime and, because of this, in the museum we do not come across any typewriter today. Therefore, Çetiner domesticates Sait Faik or constructs him within the limits of the house through memory-narrative although she scarcely found him there. Similarly, in Solmaz's text, he is appropriated into Burgaz Island, though he spent less time there and he was mostly depicted at the centre of the city in this novel.

After his book, *Medar-ı Maişet Motoru*, was denounced and banned in 1944, Sait Faik was offended and retreated in his house on the island. This resentment did not take long time and he went back to the city centre, to Beyoğlu. According to Muzaffer Uyguner, his coming back to İstanbul meant his turning back to literary life, to writing.<sup>59</sup> This was not the first and only time he stopped writing. He also decided not to write when his father died in 1939 and when he was diagnosed cirrhosis in 1951.<sup>60</sup> However, writing was a vital important and unavoidable activity for him. In this regard, the city was the place related to writing. In his story, “A Dot on the Map,” considered by Ayfer Tunç as highly autobiographical, Sait Faik talked about how he had been fed up with the ongoing ugliness and dishonesty in the city and therefore left writing. Then, he witnessed an unequal sharing among fishermen, demonstrating that heartlessness is prevalent on the island as well, yet, up to that time, he supposed that the inhabitant of the island were honest and modest.<sup>61</sup> Thus, he decided to write again:

I had promised myself never to write again. What is writing but blind ambition? Here, among honest people, I was going to wait for death in tranquillity. What use were greed and fury to me? But I couldn't do it. I ran to the tobacconist and bought a pencil and paper. I sat down. I took out the pocketknife with which I sometimes whittle little sticks when I got bored walking along the lonely roads of the island. I

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>59</sup> Uyguner (1964), p. 7.

<sup>60</sup> Ergun, Perihan (1996), “Sait Faik Anma Günleri 19 Yaşında” in *Sait Faik Abasıyanık 90 Yaşında*, ed. by Perihan Ergun, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 326.

<sup>61</sup> İz TV (2008) and Yardımcı, Sibel & Doğan, Tuğba (2009), pp. 78-79.

sharpened the pencil. Then I held it and kissed it. If I hadn't written, I would have gone out of my mind.<sup>62</sup>

This story reveals that there is a duality between the city and the island in terms of his biography as well as in relation to the subject matter in his stories. That is why he preferred moving to the island to write yet this did not mean cutting his connections with the city.<sup>63</sup>

In accordance with his spatial duality and weak spatial attachment, his writing activity took place outside as well as inside the house. In an interview, for instance, he replied the question of where and how he usually wrote as “It is not something like that I sit down in order to write. I must feel like writing. I write my stories for the most part among people, in a fisherman café and in my house in the middle of the night after my mother went into sleep.”<sup>64</sup> Thus, he did not have a specific place to write, so the “house” was not the only answer.

He usually did not write in a systematic way and in a well-disciplined house atmosphere; rather, he had yellow worksheets<sup>65</sup> with him to write whenever and wherever he wanted.<sup>66</sup> He wrote as well as he observed. In one of his correspondences with Yaşar Nabi Nayır, he said “...I had written two fishermen stories. I know you will not believe that but I lost both of them...”<sup>67</sup> He did not use to collect his stories in an organized way as he did not write them with a typewriter but

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<sup>62</sup> Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1983), “A Dot on the Map” in Abasıyanık, Sait Faik, *A Dot on the Map: Selected Stories and Poems*, ed. with an introduction by Talat Sait Halman, asst. by Jayne L. Warner, Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Turkish Studies, p. 45.

<sup>63</sup> Yardımcı & Doğan (2009), p. 70.

<sup>64</sup> Erdal, Gülen (1999), “Sait Faik’le Son Röportaj” in *Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1999), Bütün Eserleri 10: Açık Hava Oteli: Konuşmalar-Mektuplar*, ed. By M. Uyguner, Ankara: Bilgi, pp. 153-156.

<sup>65</sup> As Muzaffer Uyguner informs Sait Faik wrote most of his stories in a yellow paged school notebook with a lead pencil. (Uyguner, 1964, Ibid. p. 7).

<sup>66</sup> In a correspondence to İhsan Devrim, he intends to send one of his stories to him. He apologizes since some parts of the pages are written on yellow worksheets (Abasıyanık, 2005, p. 91).

<sup>67</sup> Abasıyanık (2005), p. 79.

with a lead pencil.<sup>68</sup> In other words, he carried his writing machine together with him. This situation is explained properly in Leyla Erbil's own words:

The writing desk of Sait Faik was in his pocket. He wrote down everything that made his mind birds flying in Ottoman in his yellow-sheeted notebook he carried in his pocket that he called "grocer's register". He could write in a park lounge, in an alehouse table, or on his knees!<sup>69</sup>

As Leyla Erbil states in her text, one day Erbil's sister saw Sait Faik in Beyoğlu, looking at the shop windows behind which fishes were displayed. He waited for a long time staring at them. Erbil's sister contemplated on the issue by saying "He does not need to live on the island to write the stories of fishes and fishermen!"<sup>70</sup> As Leyla Erbil also proposes, although his stories include autobiographical elements, it would be misleading to perceive all the written works of Sait Faik as autobiographical.<sup>71</sup> Nevertheless, what he wrote is reflected in his identity and determines his spatial belonging. That is why his image as "the islander" was born out of these written materials. Although his spatial attachment is not restricted to Burgaz Island or Beyoğlu, it is attempted to be constructed within his house in the island.

Briefly, it would be insufficient to spatialize Sait Faik's writing habit and expressing its spatial connection only either with the island or with the city. Since we know that his space of writing was not situated within any house or any specific place; his writing practice required merely a lead pencil and yellow draft sheets, and since he had not any typewriter to make a clean copy of what he had written, everywhere could be his house, indeed his "home," his production space. Or saying in reverse, Sait Faik is "homeless" in terms of his practice "space" for writing.

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<sup>68</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 122.

<sup>69</sup> Erbil (1998), p. 58.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p. 60.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, p. 58.

### 3.2 THE MAN WHO WAS THERE BUT NOT ALL THE TIME

*The literature means after all this. We should write the one who is not idle, so that it resembles something meaningful. When we begin writing what is idle, indeed, it would be eminently autobiographical, I said, and then we laughed at this.*<sup>72</sup>

The house of Sait Faik was transformed into a museum in 1964,<sup>73</sup> ten years after he passed away, especially through his mother Makbule Abasıyanık's efforts<sup>74</sup> before she died in 1963.<sup>75</sup> Today, the house-museum of Sait Faik Abasıyanık is managed by Darüşşafaka Association, since Sait Faik wanted to donate his property, his house on Burgaz Island and the publication rights of his books to this institution. He decided to do that after he visited Darüşşafaka High School several times.<sup>76</sup> It is told by Sönmez that once he said to his mother "Let's donate our property to Darüşşafaka...They provide very good opportunities to orphans." Remembering this statement, his mother executed his testament after the death of Sait Faik<sup>77</sup> by dictating it to the 4<sup>th</sup> public notary of Beyoğlu.<sup>78</sup>

At the time of the opening of the museum, archival materials, including drafts, personal documents, translation documents, letters, etc. were classified and protected by Burhan Arpad enthusiastically but inefficiently by putting them in yellow envelopes. He also provided a visitor register in order to make visitors write their

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<sup>72</sup> Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1970) "Genç Edebiyatçılar" in *Bütün Eserleri 7: Alemdeğda Var Bir Yılan/Az şekerli/Şimdi Sevişme Vakti*, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 203.

<sup>73</sup> Before that, a plaque was put to the entrance of the house in 1960 (Siyavuşgil, Sabri Esat, 1964, "Sait Faik Öleli" in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Sait Faik*, ed. Yücebaş, Hilmi, Istanbul: İnkılap and Aka, p. 22).

<sup>74</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 169.

<sup>75</sup> Uyguner, Muzaffer (1964), *Sait Faik Abasıyanık: Hayatı, Sanatı, Eseri*, Istanbul: Varlık, p. 9.

<sup>76</sup> Abasıyanık (2005), p. 6.

<sup>77</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 168.

<sup>78</sup> Tapınç, Onca,&Sönmez, Sevgül (2003), *Bir Usta, Bir Dünya: Sait Faik Abasıyanık*, pp. 80-81.

impressions about the museum. Despite being an initial attempt to conserve the archival material of the museum, Arpad's classification was not meticulous. For instance, their record numbers were uncertain and many documents were harmed since they were stapled to each other.<sup>79</sup> Besides, some of the documents were saved in the attic floor, unseen by the visitors; the rest of the archival material was not organized for the ease of users.<sup>80</sup> All this information revealed through the study and archival research made by Sönmez in 2003, who also published this study partly under the title, *A' dan Z' ye Sait Faik*. Furthermore, the entire documents were printed by Yapı Kredi Publication under various titles, such as *Kargamı Bağışla* which includes letters of Sait Faik Abasıyanık.<sup>81</sup>

Regarding its opening, Sait Faik Abasıyanık Museum was discussed at length in terms of the museum's value and place in the society of literature. As Sönmez mentions, in a newspaper article, Orhan Seyfi Orhon proposes on August 20, 1959 that Sait Faik Museum should not have been among the first attempts to transform a writer house into a museum when there are the houses of other significant figures such as Nedim, Namık Kemal, Ziya Paşa and Hüseyin Rahmi. He gives the example of Hüseyin Rahmi by stating that the house of Hüseyin Rahmi is more valuable to be a museum than Sait Faik's house since, for Orhon, he spent remarkably long time in his house. In order to criticize this article, two articles were written by Aziz Nesin in *Akşam* and Naim Tiralı on August 21, in *Vatan* newspapers.<sup>82</sup>

Aziz Nesin says in his answer to Orhan Seyfi Orhon that the municipalities and governments do not have any interest in transforming writer houses into museums. Thus, all these efforts are made by individual or regional initiatives as in the case of Sait Faik's house, which was transformed into a museum by Darüşşafaka Society, Burgaz Island Society of Embellishment and Makbule Abasıyanık. Moreover, he

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<sup>79</sup> Sönmez, Sevengül (2004), "Edebiyat Arkeolojisinin Yöntemleri ve Sait Faik Arşivi" in *Bir İnsanı Sevmek: Sait Faik*, Süha Oğuzertem (ed.), İstanbul: Alkım, 97-106, p. 101.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p. 102.

<sup>81</sup> Abasıyanık (2005).

<sup>82</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 169.

adds that this institution could not found the museum for any other figures that Orhon listed in his article since the society worked within the limits of Burgaz Island.<sup>83</sup> For Nesin, the reason why all these literary figures' houses are not transformed into museums is cultural immaturity of the society to realize this since when a writer dies, most of the inheritors intend to avoid this figure's belongings, which are so invaluable, such as newspaper collection or books by giving them to a waste picker.<sup>84</sup>

Besides, Naim Tiralı proposes, as an answer to Orhon, that Orhon supports the figures which appeals to his literary taste. However, for Tiralı, his attitude should have been a reproach towards the general disinterest of the society and other responsible official institutions since they rarely attempt to conserve such places and found museums.<sup>85</sup>

Sait Faik's house is a three-storey manor (figures 3.4 and 3.5). In today's museum version, the ground floor has three rooms, one of which is designed as a living room, the second is a dining room and the third one is reserved for a kitchen and a bedroom for the museum caretakers, Şadiye Yıldırım and her son, İlhan Yıldırım.<sup>86</sup> The first floor has four rooms, namely, a bedroom, a study, two other rooms, reserved for Sait Faik's books, archive and some other memorabilia and a toilet. Lastly, there is an attic floor, closed to visitors, which is used as a storeroom.

The house is painted white probably in recent times. After entering into the garden, a statue of Sait Faik on the left side (figure 3.6) welcomes the visitors. Postured as sitting on a group of stone and leaning against the wall, it is made of bronze. This

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<sup>83</sup> Nesin, Aziz (1964), "Sait Faik Müzesi," in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Sait Faik*, ed. Yücebaş, Hilmi, İstanbul: İnkılap ve Aka, p. 20.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Tiralı, Naim (1964), "Sait Faik Hatıra Evi ve Sanata Saygı", in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Sait Faik*, ed. Yücebaş, Hilmi, İstanbul: İnkılap ve Aka, p. 22.

<sup>86</sup> Besides, they have a dog as well named *Panco*. Before Şadiye Yıldırım started to work as an officer in the museum, her uncle was responsible as caretaker there.



statue was carried in May 2008 to the museum garden from its previous place, a tea garden located in Kalpazankaya.<sup>87</sup>



**Figure 3.4: Sait Faik Abasıyanık's house, Burgaz Island**  
source: (author, April 2009)



**Figure 3.5: Sait Faik Abasıyanık's house, Burgaz Island, unknown photographer/date**  
(source: Şimşek , 2009)

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<sup>87</sup> In the 5<sup>th</sup> reunion of commemorating Sait Faik in 1993, *Ada Dostları Derneği* decided to offer Recep Tezcan, a sculptor who attended the commemoration, to make a statue depicting Sait Faik. Three years later, he prepared the statue out of polyester and then it was covered with bronze. Anonymous Writer (2008), "Sait Faik Heykeli Yeni Yerinde", *Ada Gazetesi*, Haziran, sayı: 59.

On the right side of the garden entrance is a bust of Sait Faik, again made of bronze (figure 3.7). Walking along the pathway towards left, the manor's garden is observed. It is in desolated condition and whose floor was partially broken, where, as Şadiye Yıldırım, the caretaker of the museum, informs, a service structure existed formerly, yet, it was demolished due to the building commission of the Prince Islands municipality (figure 3.8). At times when the museum opened recently, this area was used by Darüşşafaka to offer tea for the teachers who lived in the island.<sup>88</sup> The garden seems well-kept and in the middle is an iron framed garden tent, under which is a plastic table and chairs, used by the officers (figure 3.9).



**Figure 3.6: Statue of Sait Faik**  
source: (author, April 2009)



**Figure 3.7: Bust of Sait Faik**  
source: (author, April 2009)

The manor's timber door (figure 3.10, part 1) is reached after climbing several door steps (figure 3.11). Entering into the house, on the left side are Sait Faik's fishing equipment in front of a wooden hatchcheck. On the right is the staircase and beyond that is the door of the kitchen (figure 3.10, part 2), closed to the visitors today. Across the entrance door is famous face mask of Sait Faik (figure 3.12), taken at the time of his death, in a showcase, and another bust of Faik.

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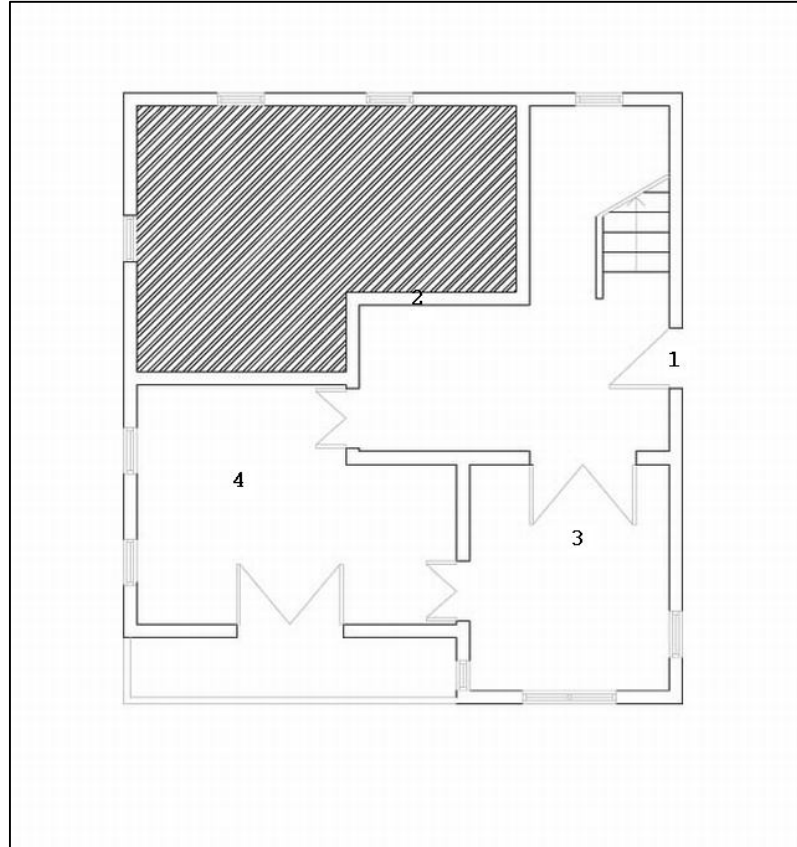
<sup>88</sup> This information was given by M. Haluk Zelef, Instr. Dr., METU Department of Architecture.



**Figure 3.8: View from the garden**  
source: (author, April 2009)



**Figure 3.9: View from the garden**  
source: (author, April 2009)



**Figure 3.10: Sketch of the ground floor plan,**  
source: (Y. Yeşim Uysal, 2009)

The mould of Sait Faik’s face was taken by Fatin Yılmaz, a student of Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu with the help of a nurse at the time of his death. Positive mould of his face was prepared in the atelier of Bedri Rahmi, then Güngör Kabakçioğlu, took the mask and went to *Foto Süreyya*, a photography studio, in Tünel in order to have its print out. For a long time, the mask was lost. Then, Kabakçioğlu found it at the centre of Darüşşafaka in *Şişli Site Cinema* in 1994 in a terrible condition since it got tarnished and was in dust. It was put on display with the insistent efforts of Kabakçioğlu after 42 years in 1996.<sup>89</sup> Next to the showcase of the mask is a poster of “Sait Faik Story Prize” award ceremony, organized in 2003. Near the poster, on the left wall, an oil painting depicting a shore in a cloudy weather is placed.



**Figure 3.11: Entrance of the house**  
source: (author, April 2009)



**Figure 3.12: Face mask of Sait Faik**  
source: (author, April 2009)

On the left side of the entrance is a living room (figure 3.10 part 3) where a sitting group (figure 3.13) straight across the door of the room, a chinaware stove (figure 3.14) on the left, used by Sait Faik and Makbule Abasıyanık to make popcorn or roasted chestnuts for their guests,<sup>90</sup> a brazier in the middle (figure 3.15), a wooden and a marble coffee tables on the right side (figure 3.16) are observed and on the

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<sup>89</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 132.

<sup>90</sup> Çetiner, Ayten (2001), p. 88.

walls are some family photographs and three paintings, given as a gift by the former inhabitants of the house. On the stove and on the marble coffee table, located on two diagonally opposite corners, are two *ebru* (marbling art) paintings, leaned against the wall. Next to this marble coffee table is a brass gaslight chandelier floor lamp. Turhan Ilgaz mentions that there were two antique clocks on the coffee tables and a porcelain ashtray in Sait Faik's lifetime.<sup>91</sup> Today we cannot find these items in the living room.



**Figure 3.13: Living room**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.14: Stove in the living room**  
source: (author, December 2007)

The second room on this floor is the dining room (figure 3.10, part 4), reached after passing through the living room. In the middle of the room is a dining table on which is a light blue, flower figured ceramic vase (figure 3.17) and around which are chairs.

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<sup>91</sup> Ilgaz (1984), p. 153.



**Figure 3.15: Brazier**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.16: Coffee tables**  
source: (author, December 2007)

Across the entrance is a wooden cupboard with a mirror; on the left of the entrance is a brass gaslight chandelier floor lamp and, then, a door, opening to a balcony (figure 3.18). On the right are two other cupboards (figure 3.19), and, on the far right corner of the room is a kind of small bamboo side table (figure 3.20). On the walls of the room, some paintings are observed; including two print outs of different watercolour landscapes, two cartoons, showing two different little girls, and a battered print, depicting Mustafa Kemal.



**Figure 3.17: Dining room**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.18:**A cupboard in the dining room, photograph, 2007  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.19:** Chandelier lamp in the dining room  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.20:** Bamboo side table in the dining room  
source: (author, December 2007)

After climbing the first floor, across the stairs, the visitor is welcomed by a desk and a visitor register on it. Above the desk, on the wall are two photographs depicting two different views of the sea. On the left side are a wooden commode and a ceramic vase on it. On the ceramic vase, Sait Faik's famous hat is exhibited (figure 3.21). This hat is the one which was jogged into public memory through the photograph taken by Ara Güler.<sup>92</sup> In this photograph, Sait Faik poses with his dog Arap to the camera of Güler (figure 3.22). Turning right, at first, the door of the bedroom is seen on the left. Then, the entrance of the room, where Faik's library is exhibited, is observed and on the right are the toilet, closed to the visitors, and the room, designed as Sait Faik's study. After walking along the corridor, at the end, is another room, where Faik's archive is placed.



**Figure 3.21: Sait Faik's hat**  
source: (author, December 2007)

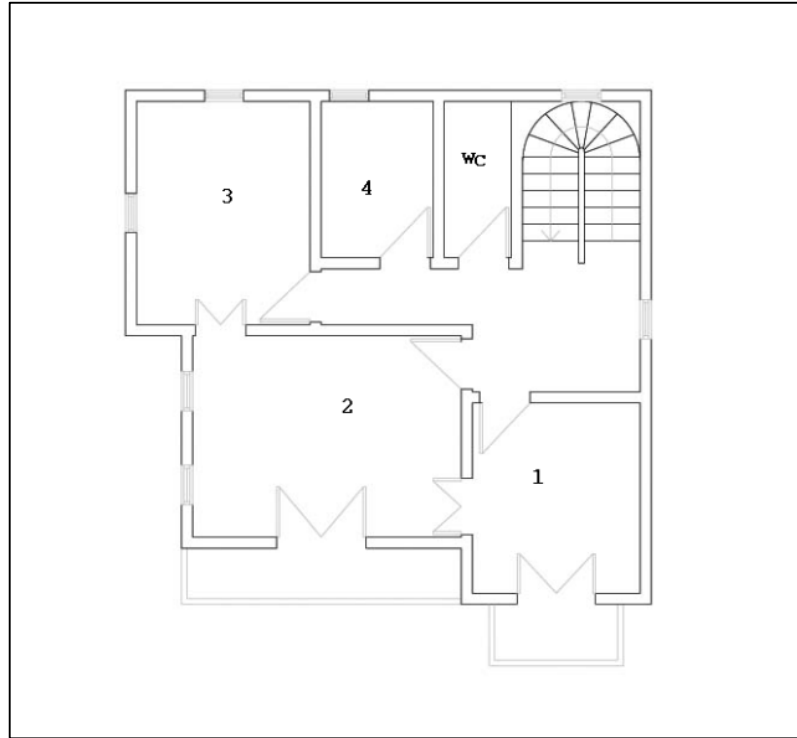


**Figure 3.22: Sait Faik, photograph**  
by Ara Güler, unknown date  
source: (Güler, 2005, p. 45)

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<sup>92</sup> This was not the only photo of Sait Faik that Ara Güler had taken. In many occasions, he shot Sait Faik in various poses. When Sait Faik's disease became serious and he was taken into Marmara Hospital, Ara Güler came with his camera. By the time Sait Faik saw the camera, he said in his usual allusive mood: "Buddy! Have you come to take my photo in case I would kick the bucket?" (Güler, 2005, p. 43).





**Figure 3.23: Sketch of the first floor plan,**  
source: (Y. Yeşim Uysal, 2009)



**Figure 3.24: Sait Faik's bed**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.25: Sait Faik's pyjamas**  
source: (author, December 2007)

In the bedroom (figure 3.23 part 1), on the left is his bed (figure 3.24) and on his bed his pyjamas in a plastic bag (figure 3.25). Above the bed, on the wall, are an oil painting, depicting a nude woman, and two photographs. In one of the photographs, Sait Faik together is seen with a friend of him who lived on Burgaz Island (figure 3.26) and with his friend Kerim Kaptan in the other, taken in Kocaeli in 1953 (figure 3.27) and.



**Figure 3.26: Sait Faik with a fisherman,  
unknown photographer/date  
source: (author, December 2007)**



**Figure 3.27: Sait Faik with Kerim Kaptan,  
unknown photographer/date  
source: (author, December 2007)**



**Figure 3.28: Towel in the bedroom  
source: (author, December 2007)**

At the bearing end of the bed, a barely dirty towel is hung up (figure 3.28). Next to the right side of the bed is a bedside table (figure 3.29) on which is a table lamp, ornamented with gazelle cartoons (figure 3.30). Beyond the bed to the right is a bamboo sitting group including a single and a double chair as well as a bamboo desk with a mirror and two drawers (figure 3.31). On the table, two candleholders, a family photograph, a clock, a jewel box and a branch of dried pomegranate (figure 3.32) are observed. Sait Faik had taken a photograph by Ara Güler in front of this bamboo desk. In the photograph, Sait Faik is seen while he is reading a book and, at the same time, some books are observed on the desk (figure 3.33).



**Figure 3.29: Bedside table and the table lamp in the bedroom**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.30: Table lamp with gazelle figures**  
source: (author, December 2007)

Considering that the photographs of Sait Faik taken by Ara Güler display him outside the house and mostly in alehouses in Beyoğlu together with his friends or on the streets, this photograph is an exception since it was taken inside the house and while writing/reading. Actually, this is probably the one and only photograph within which Sait Faik is observed in front of the writing desk.



**Figure 3.31: Desk with mirror**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.32: Dried pomegranates**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.33: Sait Faik while Studying , photograph by Ara Güler, unknown date**  
source: (Güler, 2005, p. 55)

Close to the desk, on the wall, is a pattern work, executed by Bedri Rahmi and given as a gift to Makbule Abasıyanık. On the paper, his signature and note “to the aunty Makbule, B. Rahmi, 1952” is seen (figure 3.34). In the middle of the room, a bamboo coffee table, covered with a piece of white cloth, is placed. On the table a sea shell and a sign stating “do not touch the furniture” draw attention (figure 3.35). Diagonally opposite to the table, on the far right corner of the room, is a rotating

bookshelf (figure 3.36) and above the shelf is a painting by Bedri Rahmi (figure 3.37). In the painting, he depicted “Mercan Usta,” working as a shoeshine under the Galata Bridge, who is the main figure in a story of Sait Faik, *Gün Ola Harman Ola*. On the painting, dated 1952, Bedri Rahmi wrote “To Sait Faik for the sake of Mercan Usta.”<sup>93</sup>



**Figure 3.34: Figure by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu source: (author, December 2007)**



**Figure 3.35: “do not touch the furniture” sign on the coffee table source: (author, December 2007)**

Next to the bookshelf is a coat hanger with Sait Faik’s torn ties and scarves (figures 3.37 and 3.38), among them, a blue colour-striped scarf, ties in red, claret red, light blue, and a white figured brown tie can be observed. Faik was known as a man who did not care much about his clothing. Most of the time, he wandered in İstiklal street with a leather jacket and a gingham shirt. Many people found this odd but he did not feel strange. However, when he went to Paris in order to be treated in 1951, he was offended by the behaviour of a waiter in a café and supposed that it was owing to his clothing. He took his friend Naim Tirali with him and shopped. He bought a coat, velvet trousers, two cardigans and a fedora hat.<sup>94</sup>

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<sup>93</sup> Sönmez, Sevengül (2007), p. 134.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid, p. 113.



**Figure 3.36: Rotating bookshelf**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.37: “Mercan Usta,”**  
painting by Bedri Rahmi  
Eyübođlu, 1952  
source: (Sönmez, 2007, p. 81)



**Figure 3.38: Sait Faik’s scarves**  
and ties  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.39: Sait Faik’s scarves**  
and ties  
source: (author, December 2007)

Beneath the hanger is a bamboo chair. Next to the chair is a cupboard, the same with the one in the dining room, located close to the entrance of the room, where bowls for face washing (figures 3.40) and a small bottle of cologne “Limon Çiçeđi” (figure 3.41) are displayed. Lastly, there are his decrepit brown leather shoes nearby the cupboard (figure 3.42).

The second room on this floor (figure 3. 23, part 2), whose former function is not known, has a library on the left side of the room's entrance, in which Sait Faik's books, published during his lifetime and after his death, are exhibited. Moreover, the figures who won the Sait Faik Story Prize<sup>95</sup> are represented through one copy of their winners' books. This prize was given for the first time in 1955.<sup>96</sup> Among the prize-winner books, *Yüksek Gerilim* (Adalet Ağaoğlu, 1974), *Bir Gemide* (Ferit Edgü, 1978), *Kavga* (Muzaffer Buyrukçu, 1967), *Yabanın Adamları* (Tarık Dursun K, 1966), *Sular Ne Güzelse* (Erdal Öz, 1997), *Önce Ekmek* (Orhan Kemal, 1968), *Aşk Mutfağından Yalnızlık Tarifleri* (Yekta Kopan, 2001), and *Parasız Yatılı* (Firuzan, 1978) are observed.



**Figure 3.40: Bowls for face washing**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.41: "Limon Çiçeği" cologne**  
source: (author, December 2007)

Furthermore, the books Sait Faik read in his lifetime are collected in the same library. Besides, all the books he wrote and their copies, printed by Varlık and then Bilgi publications, are placed. On the window of this showcase, detailed enumeration of books is adhered. On the first shelf of the showcase, in front of the books, a black figured green ceramic pitcher is displayed. This is one of the famous objects in Sait

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, p. 168.

<sup>96</sup> Until 1960, the cost of the prize was met by Varlık publications. Between 1960 and 1963, it could not be realized. After the death of Makbule Abasıyanık in 1964, it was undertaken by Darüşşafaka Community and has been given regularly since then (ibid, p. 168).

Faik Museum since it was made by Bedri Rahmi (figure 3.43). He had brought this pitcher filled with wine and given it to Sait Faik as a gift.<sup>97</sup>



**Figure 3.42: Sait Faik's shoes**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.43: "pitcher" by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu**  
source: (author, December 2007)

Next to the library is a writing desk on which two different types of vases, a simple slim glass and a colourfully painted one are placed. This writing desk was previously used in the shop of cereal commerce, where Sait Faik worked for a short time (figure 3.44) on his father's request. Yet, Sait Faik did not succeed in and the shop was closed. Eventually, this desk remained as a piece of furniture from that shop.<sup>98</sup>

In the room, there are three showcases, two of which are located across the desk and the third one is placed on the right side of the entrance, right across the large window of the room. The first one, located across the desk, protects Sait Faik's passport, identity card, a receipt withdrawn in the name of Sait Faik, and a document by the board of education, stating the necessity of an official examination of Sait Faik's *Medar-ı Maişet Motoru*. In 1970, Turhan Ilgaz listed additional documents and

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid, p. 81.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, p. 104.



objects within this showcase, such as a small calendar of *İş Bank* belonging to the year 1941, a photograph showing Sait Faik with his dog (this may be the one taken by Ara Güler and if it is so, it means that its place has been changed), and a flight ticket which was bought from *Air France*.<sup>99</sup>



**Figure 3.44: Writing desk**  
source: (author, December 2007)

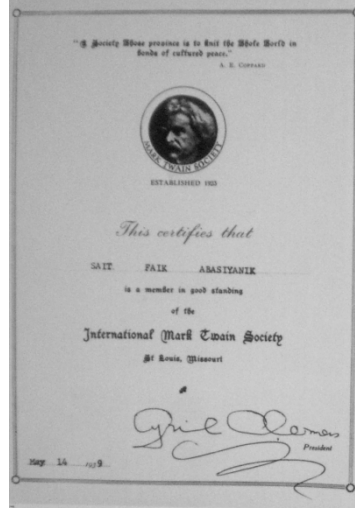
The second showcase, positioned across the desk, displays original copies of the first editions of Faik's books, such as *Mahalle Kahvesi* (1950), *Alemdağda Var Bir Yılan* (1957), *Az Şekerli* (1954), *Şimdi Sevişme Vakti* (1953), as well as some pieces of texts on Sait Faik in different languages and some books including *Adapazarı* (1936) by Talat Tarkan, *Önce Ekmekler Bozuldu* (1946) by Oktay Akbal, and *Sığınak* (1946) by Samim Kocagöz. Next to this showcase is a chair with its battered leather surface. Between these showcases is a coffee table, on which again the same sign, "do not touch the furniture" is placed. In the middle of the room there is another coffee table, covered with a fawn colour velvet cloth with white flower figures.

The third showcase houses Sait Faik's books, printed in other languages, some related press clippings, and the biographical book, written by Yusuf Solmaz, titled

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<sup>99</sup> Ilgaz, Turhan (1984), "Sait Faik'lerde Bir Gün" in *Bir Öykü Ustası: Sait Faik*, ed. By Mahmut Alptekin, İstanbul: Dilek, p. 153.

*Elveda Panco* and published in 2002. In the museum visitor registers, we come across a comment written by Yusuf Solmaz. As he states, he brought this book that he had written to the museum as a gift to Sait Faik.



**Figure 3.45: A copy of “Mark Twain Prize” document, photograph by Ara Güler source: (Güler, 2005, p. 50)**

On the walls of the room a quotation from Sait Faik, stating “For what would literary works be good if it does not direct one to a novel and happy, good and beautiful world?,” his poem, *Gazeteler ve Çocuk*, some other poems, including Fazıl Hüsni Dağlarca’s *Ağıt* and Behçet Necatigil’s *Anlamak*, written after his death,<sup>100</sup> his brief biography, provided by Darüşşafaka Association with an Anonymous Writer, a watercolour painting, depicting him and the document stating that he won the prize of *International Mark Twain Society* in 1953<sup>101</sup> for his contribution to literature were framed and placed. It is known that he was glad for that prize since it had been given to Mustafa Kemal previously in 1937. This certificate, displayed in the museum, is

<sup>100</sup> Alangu, Tahir (1956), *Sait Faik için Bir Biyografi ve Basında Çıkmış Seçmeler*, İstanbul :Yeditepe, pp. 71,72

<sup>101</sup> Sönmez (2007),p. 131.

not the original copy of the document, but a copy, multiplied through photography by Ara Güler in 1953 and donated to the museum when opening<sup>102</sup> (figure 3.45).

In the third room (figure 3. 23, part 3), reached by passing through the previous room and also the corridor, there is a display cabinet on the left in which the prizes given to Sait Faik and the prizes given on behalf of Sait Faik until today are placed as well as a magazine, *Ulusoy Travel*, published in 2000, whose related page with a heading *Sait Faik 'in Burgaz'ı* is open on the shelf, and a book, entitled *Türkiye Müzeleri*,<sup>103</sup> mentioning the museum are exhibited. Additionally, there are also a copy of the invitation letter of the 38<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sait Faik Story Prize printed by Yapı Kredi publications, and another painting by Bedri Rahmi, figuring a woman (figure 3.46).

Around the room are four leather chairs, on one of which there is a decrepit leather cushion and on the walls of the room are some photographs, depicting Sait Faik's mother and father together with his uncle, the brother of his mother, Nafiz Hızal, Sait Faik at the time of his childhood, adulthood and his uncle Nafiz Hızal alone. On the far left corner of the room next to the window is a small wooden box showcase on a wooden commode, where hand-writings, letters, and postcards written to Sait Faik and also written by him are exhibited (figure 3.47). Two of the postcards are turned up, so they can be read. One of them was sent by Aka Berk from Paris at an unknown date.<sup>104</sup> The second card was posted by Tunç Yalman from Nairobi on April 5, 1953.

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<sup>102</sup> Güler (2005), p. 42.

<sup>103</sup> Önder, Mehmet (1999), *Türkiye Müzeleri*, Ankara: Türkiye İş Bankası Kültür Yayınları.

<sup>104</sup> Abasıyanık (2005), p. 229.



**Figure 3.46: Woman figure by Bedri Rahmi Eyübođlu, painting, unknown date**  
source: (author, April 2009)



**Figure 3.47: Postcards**  
source: (author, December 2007)

On the right hand side of the room, near the window, is a huge display cabinet. In this cabinet, there are the books and the magazines in Turkish, French and English that Sait Faik collected in his lifetime, such as *Varlık*, *Guerir*, *Conferencia*, *Success*, and *Selection*, some manuscripts and books written in Ottoman script, and a good deal of newspaper sheets. Some of the manuscripts are drafts of his stories. All of

them are enumerated in detail and the list of them is adhered on the window of the cabinet.

The fourth room (figure 3.23, part 4), closed to visitors with a rope and “stop-sign” (figure 3.48), is designed as the study of Sait Faik, where we see a wooden chair and a desk, on which the flag of Bursa High School for Boys is lying. Besides, on the desk are a marble ashtray, a small miniature vase, writing desk equipment, a copy of his first story, *İpekli Mendil* which he wrote while studying in the high school, some materials related to Bursa High School, such as a decorated dish on which the name of the school was drawn up, and some publications of the school itself and the ones related to Sait Faik (figure 3.49).



**Figure 3.48: View from the study of Sait Faik**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 3.49: View from the study of Sait Faik**  
source: (author, December 2007)

The reason why the room was designed with these objects and publications, related to Bursa High School, is that Sait Faik studied there.<sup>105</sup> In the room, there is also a

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<sup>105</sup> About Bursa High School, he had an interesting anecdote. At first he started his high school education in İstanbul High School (İstanbul Erkek Lisesi); however, he was transferred to Bursa High

coffee table and two bamboo chairs, on one of which is an embroidered cushion. On the coffee table is a miniature vase and an autumn landscape oil painting and on the wall of the room is another painting, depicting an autumn landscape as well.

Sait Faik's study, exhibited in the museum, seems inappropriate in terms of its design because of two reasons. Firstly, the light the room receives is very weak in comparison with the rooms facing the sea front. Secondly, Ara Güler took Faik's photograph while studying in the room, designed as his bedroom. Considering that this room as his study is not mentioned in the biographies, written on Sait Faik, and the photograph Ara Güler took is the only source depicting him inside the house while studying, it can be said that Sait Faik did not use this room, designed as his study, for reading and/or writing.<sup>106</sup>

Presently, the museum<sup>107</sup> is under restoration. According to the information given by Arzu Yağmur, an officer from Darüşşafaka Association, the restoration process began in September 2009 and it is still continuing.<sup>108</sup>

One of the most important characteristics of Sait Faik Museum is its well-organized, reviewed, numbered, and collected archive, covering his manuscripts and correspondences.<sup>109</sup> Sönmez draws attention to the importance of preserving the

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School together with his 41 friends as a result of a punishment because they put a needle on the cushion of their teacher (Uyguner, 1964, p. 4).

<sup>106</sup> Ayten Çetiner, who visited the house many times in his lifetime and Sait Faik museum after some decades he died, in 1995, states that his study was located on the attic floor depending on her earlier visits; however, she was not surprised when she saw Sait Faik's study on the first floor. (Çetiner, 2001, p. 37). This makes us think that either her act of remembering dislocated or Sait Faik's study was on the first floor in the past as it is today in the museum.

<sup>107</sup> On October 6, 2003, a fire danger was eliminated hardly in the garden of the museum and around the forests of the island. Under the effect of southwester, a pine cone was broken away and conflagrated the palm tree in front of the house. With the help of the son of Sait Faik's uncle's daughter, Ali Otman, who heard the screams of Şadiye Yıldırım, the museum officer, the fire was brought under control (Perihan Ergun, 2004, "Ölümsüz Yazarın 50. Ölüm Yılında", in *Bir İnsanı Sevmek: Sait Faik*, Süha Oğuzertem (ed.), Istanbul: Alkım, p. 20). The fire danger is also mentioned in the visitor registers of the museum six days after the disaster.

<sup>108</sup> Arzu Yağmur, Darüşşafaka Association, April 2009.

<sup>109</sup> These were organized by Sevgül Sönmez and printed by Yapı Kredi (Sönmez, 2007 and Abasıyanık, 2005).

archives of writers in house-museums and underlines Sait Faik Museum as the only prominent example.<sup>110</sup>

### 3.3 SAİT FAİK'S VISITORS

In one of her articles, entitled “Bir Müze Defterini Okumak”, Sönmez examines Sait Faik Abasıyanık museum’s visitor registers, opened to visitors in 1959.<sup>111</sup> While doing that, she points out the visitors’ desire to leave their traces or to show their love for the writer when they comment and jot down on the visitor registers.<sup>112</sup> This desire can be a guide for us to understand how the visitors read the writer through the narrative presented in the museum, how they observe their surroundings, and how they behave within the museum. Briefly, how they use the space mentally and bodily. In this study, I have examined the registers written between 1990 and 2008.<sup>113</sup>

The basic themes are the conception of the house-museum as a prior source of inspiration, a space revealing Sait Faik’s private life, a space complementary to his life story, a bearer of his supposedly “still-existing” soul, a space forbidden to touch, a space to live and share a common moment with him, a lived space of him, a source of admiration to him and to the place where he once lived, a proof of his death and a space as a kind of his “creation.”

The perception of the house-museum of Sait Faik as a source of inspiration constructs the building as an initiator or encourager of the act of writing. This proposition strengthens the idea that there is an assumed relationship between where the writer lived and what he wrote. A visitor finds the place inspirational:

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<sup>110</sup> Sönmez (2007), p. 6.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Sönmez, Sevengil (2003), “Bir Müze Defterini Okumak”, *Sanat Dünyamız*, Bahar 87, 4-6, p. 4.

<sup>113</sup> This is because the registers, written before 1990, were not found in the museum and Darüşşafaka Association.

I love the spaciousness of this house; the simplicity of the furnishings; the tall doors and the high ceilings. The views over the church and the sea are inspirational. A beautiful house to live, work and relax.

As can be seen in the text, the visitor perceives the house, the view of landscape, and the location of the house (e.g. its closeness to the sea, etc.) had an effect on the writer's production. Other visitors utter similar statements:

I suppose that it is inevitable for someone who lives in such a beautiful island and house to write so wonderful poems.

We believe that your house<sup>114</sup> is a great source of inspiration.

After we saw the space once you lived, we realized why you became a writer. We are proud of knowing that the initiation of those beautiful works is this house.

It would have been an outrage to the life if someone had not been a writer while living in such a beautiful place.

In such a place one can write both story and poem.

One is not able to desist oneself from writing and engaging in romanticism after going out of that balcony.

I am imagining Sait Faik sitting in the balcony located downstairs. Who knows that he was founding what kind of stories by listening to the silence of the island. I am greeting the fictional level that this house provides him.

I am sure that it is this place that constituted the magic of your stories rather than your wonderful wording.

A wonderful room and a wonderful house. One understands better now how beautiful the stories that had been written here.

Now I am going back home by having collected secret stories from your writing desk, books, chairs, and carpets.

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<sup>114</sup> The words "you" and "your" are used to address personally to Sait Faik.



Someone who has not read the books of Sait Faik hopes to find the “magical atmosphere” in his writings:

We felt ourselves in a different world. A desire came into being to read your books. We hope we will catch your magical atmosphere in your books as well.

Visitors also propose that what he wrote reflects this house. In other words, they search the clues of the stories here in the museum or the clues of the house in the stories:

Seeing the house where you wrote these books made me live those stories even for a moment.

Observing your house directed us to read your books again with a different eye under this impression.

What you told is modest like the design of your house.

Although it is seen as a source of inspiration, someone accepts the possibility that Sait Faik may not have written his stories here. This is one of the rare references stating his life experienced mostly outside this house:

If you had written these stories in this house, the beauty of this house would have helped you and inspired you to write such beautiful stories.

Furthermore, visitors perceive Sait Faik’s house as a space to complement his life story and what he wrote. Accordingly, it is supposed that the house makes Sait Faik visible and that it has an incontestable affect on his literary product. So, what the visitors say is knotted within these words: to integrate with/get close to the writer, to live or understand the writer through the house. They also consider that the house reveals the writer and visiting the house means to see the writer.

Your house that I saw for the first time made me taste the same pleasure again that I had from your stories I read.

While wandering inside Sait Faik's house, we felt as if we saw him from the window he gazed out of, the room he had a rest, the desk he wrote on.

Seeing the house that you inhabited and your belongings got me closer to you.

Oh, Sait pasha, oh, great writer. When I was climbing the stairs, touching your pyjamas in your house, I, so to speak, integrated with you, I felt you inside of me.

I sat down on your bed, I wandered around your room by merging with you.

I came to feel you, to view beautiful İstanbul from your eyes by strolling inside the house where you lived.

While seeing your museum, I suppose that we interpreted your works better.

I understand you and your stories better now.

When I visited the house of Sait Faik Abasıyanık whose works I read formerly and whom I love so much, I recalled what I read.

To live Sait Faik to an extent, to share a space, to wander in a place with which I can associate what I read are so gorgeous.

In every corner of this house where I entered dreadingly, I saw you. My fears came true.

To see the place where you lived is like to become acquainted with you when you are not alive.

Living you was so nice. The house, these belongings...

We come across similar sentences in a good deal of comments. Nevertheless, one comment deviates from the others. It states that seeing how Sait Faik perceived and/or experienced his house or living space is impossible.

We have seen the place you wandered, you studied, and you went to sleep. It is a skill to see where you look at.

While some visitors approach the museum in terms of getting closer, emotionally to Sait Faik, some others feel that it is a kind of touching unintentionally to or peeking the private life of Sait Faik.

In this hot summer day, we thank you for your hospitality to these two strangers who recorded your private life for a moment even if it was involuntarily.

How can be the striped pyjamas of a dead man observed?

Some visitors give references to the “lived” character of Sait Faik’s personal belongings and try to make inferences about his relationships with these objects by watching how they look:

Maybe the things that you hated most are your ties.

Position and condition of the ties made this visitor think that the ties were used loutishly. However, it would be possible to think the reverse: Sait Faik may have loved them too much and hence worn them often. After all, idea supposes that they were once used by Sait Faik as this statement:

Now Sait Faik is not here, but I am writing to him leaning on the desk he used tens of years ago.

This comment attaches importance to the act of touch in a real sense. The objects used formerly by Sait Faik are regarded by the visitors as they have a role between the one observes (and touches) and Sait Faik. One comment emphasizes that when someone touches, the objects may allow her/him feel Sait Faik:

I love you. Actually, I had fallen in love with you for years but I had not known it. Today I understood it when I looked at and then touched your pyjamas, your ties and the things that you touched formerly.

When I come to your house every time, I feel sad because I touch most of your belongings by ignoring the sign stating “do not touch the furniture!”

I have touched nearly everywhere in your house. Lifeless objects bear the traces of lives on them; however, sometimes they do not reveal a secret. I am allowed to get it. I have sensed and felt it.

We have touched you. We are so happy.

It is immanent for all of these comments that Sait Faik had once lived there. This is perpetuated by another set of comments which focus on the peculiar atmosphere or the particular aura of the house-museum.

I am glad to breathe the atmosphere of this languishing house you lived, to touch the objects you used and to step on the ground that you stepped before.

Especially the phrase “breathing the same atmosphere” is used very often in the visitor comments.

First time we come to Burgaz Island. When we heard about you, we came here immediately to breathe the period you lived.

At present, here, in this house which is full of memories I am breathing the atmosphere that you had also once breathed.

Remarkably, a similar statement was made by Sait Faik himself in his writing on Aşiyân Museum after he visited it. He said that “I breathed a different atmosphere through their memories.”<sup>115</sup> He also states in his article that through such museums one can recognize the literary figures; respect them and by means of these museums, the value of one’s poems can be understood. As he explains, he does not think that he will ever have such a museum, and even, that belongings will probably be sold in flea markets. So, what he means is that these types of literary museums are

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<sup>115</sup> Abasıyanık (1970), p. 199.

important for figures like him who attempts to write, but, his belongings are not as valuable as the ones exhibited in Aşiyen museum:

It is possible that his clothes will be sold in flea market, his patched bluchers will be found as attached to a fisherman's hook, his glasses will be found in a garbage, his tie will be in a condition which cannot even be tied into a waist, however, if he would think about that his poems will leave a mark in lips and hearts, he should not forget he is in debt to these people exhibited in this museum.<sup>116</sup>

Sophisticating the moments of sharing, many of the visitor comments state that the souls are eternal. Accordingly, Sait Faik is constructed as an observing subject in the house-museum when the visitors visit the museum. These two ideas share the same preposition: the soul of the writer is still circulating around. Besides, it is believed that this museum also contributes to the eternal existence of Sait Faik's soul by making people remember him.

Your soul is circulating around the rooms of this house.

I am sure that you are observing from a corner those people visiting you.

I know that you see and feel the people who come to your house and love you.

We felt in every moment that your beautiful eyes traced us.

As if you are here now.

I still feel your existence here in this house.

Maybe you are in your study now!

It is a nice and meaningful day. I feel as if I am talking to Sait Faik.

I had a feeling in your house that you had never died.

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid, p. 193.

We were so crowded; I hope you were not disturbed.

Indeed, the very function of these registers is to make visitors communicate with the “writer” in the form of talking, opening oneself to him, joking, or complaining to him about a trouble. He is acknowledged as still living, feeling, seeing, etc. Otherwise, for whom these notes are taken?

It is better you do not live today. Actually, you know, the situation of the world that you complain about is now five times worse than before.

Master, we drank together in Kalpazankaya. You invited us to your house. Thank you. We had really good time but let us go.

Master, we visited you but you were not at home. We left a message to the doorman. Call us when you come back.

We came to you but you had gone fishing.

We came but we could not find you here.

We came but you were not here.

Without caring about the “do not touch” signs, many visitors touch the objects and even personal belongings of Sait Faik. Some visitors go even further:

We left a small bottle of *istafilina*<sup>117</sup> under your bed for you to pour it to your liver quietly.

Leaving a bottle of drink is also the acknowledgement of the eternal soul. Yet, there are also some visitors who think the opposite way and perceive the museum as the epitome of death or a sort of temple of death:

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<sup>117</sup> Raki or Ouzo. *Istafilina* means grape in modern Greek.

If you would be here not with your soul but your body, such a crowd of people who love you could not be collected in front of your house.

Some of the visitors mention that they love house-museums than others. The reason for this is their revealing of the writers' private life as explained in the second statement below:

Although I visited many museums, this museum was much better than any other.

This museum is not like every museum! There is more sense. I could feel it. Because, I know that Sait Faik walked, ate, drank and slept in this house. The most precious one among all museums is the museum that was used as house before.

Since the island is known more or less through the figure of Sait Faik, visiting the museum becomes the reason for some visitors to come to the island. This supports the idea that the entire island is actually the "house" of Sait Faik.

The island is beautiful with you and you are beautiful with the island.

We are keeping alive your stories on Burgaz Island again.

I could not reconcile myself to Burgaz Island, however, after I saw your house and around, I calmed down.

I believe that Burgaz Island is distinctive together with you. You are ensouling here.

It would possibly have been a shame if one had come to Burgaz Island and had not visited the house of Abasıyanık.

Gulls, fishermen and the island...this is Sait Faik!

I came to this island since your house is here.

While the visitor comments in the registers generally mention the house and of Sait Faik's life in the house, quite surprisingly, a visitor statement does not associate Sait Faik with this house. It is the only example which describes him as "flan ur":

You are a wonderful writer and you will never be forgotten.  
So long the flan ur of İstanbul.

In addition to these perceptions about the relationship between Sait Faik and the museum, it is also possible to see the comments on some problems the visitors experienced in the museum. For instance, prohibition on taking photograph or touching the furniture is the main grievance among the visitors. Equally, most of the visitors found the museum neglected and the belongings or furniture dilapidated. It is mentioned that the museum requires more attention.

What a pity! We could not care for this house you left. The windows are broken. Your books got dusty.

I criticize the people who have left your belonging here like that carelessly.

Does not the house need a little bit of care, or am I mistaken?!

Additionally, the visitors demand more information about the life of Sait Faik and the museum. They state that they require a guide or brochure in order to understand how Sait Faik used this space and to receive information about specific objects exhibited in the museum.

The inadequacy of a brochure about the writer became a big problem for me.

It is nice to see the house and furniture belonging to Sait Faik...however; there is no information about the life story and his place in Turkish Literature.

I think that more details can be given as...information.



Such demands are the result of a standard view of a relationship between museum and information. The audience-visitor claims it and expects it:

After all, I wish that this museum would have been given a museum shape. There would have been expressions on the entrances of the room doors. Sitting room, bedroom or he had written his writings in this room, etc...Besides, at the entrance, it would have been nice to see an informative board about his life story with enlarged fonts.

This visitor perceives the museum as a space of information. Thus, this proves that the very function of the house-museum is seen not only to provide emotional satisfaction, but also to respond the motivations of the visitors.

## CHAPTER 4

### HÜSEYİN RAHMİ GÜRPINAR HOUSE-MUSEUM

#### 4.1 THE FARTHEST POINT OF THE ISLAND

Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar (1864-1944) spent a considerably long part of his life, between 1912 and 1944, in his house on Heybeli Island. The house is located on one of the panoramic hills of the island (figure 4.1). He desired to have his house exactly there. The exact location of the house is described in the document of purchasing decision by İstanbul Provincial Assembly Permanent Committee Administration as such:

Mentioned property which is located in Çiçekli Dağ and Yüksek streets on Heybeli Island covers 19<sup>th</sup> plate, 80<sup>th</sup> square 7<sup>th</sup> parcel number and 447 m<sup>2</sup> building land. Aforesaid property is slightly distant from residential area and within pinewoods...The building is made up of four floors including a masonry basement...two regular and an attic floors...Building system was made of wood upon a masonry basement floor...<sup>1</sup>

The house of Hüseyin Rahmi could be reached after climbing a slope. Many writers mentioned particularly this difficult approach to the house while talking about its location. For example, Hikmet Feridun Es recalls:

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<sup>1</sup> İstanbul Provincial Assembly Permanent Committee Administration (1964), taken from *Kuyruklu Yıldız Altında Bir Ev: Dört Devrin Yazarı Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar'ın Mirasının ve Evinin Akıllara Durgunluk Veren Serüveni*, İstanbul: Adalar Vakfı, p. 67.

...Under the burning sun, pines smell more, although I left İstanbul cool, Heybeli was burning furiously. By removing my topcoat and mopping my face constantly, I started to climb the narrow bank. I passed by the large villa built recently. Now, I am on the highest hill of Heybeli...<sup>2</sup>



**Figure 4.1: Location of the house on the island, source: (M. Haluk Zelef, September 2009)**

Similarly, the poet Şükufe Nihal, complained every time she went to Hüseyin Rahmi: “to come here, it is better to get on a plane!” Once Hüseyin Rahmi replied her: “You are right, the way to my house is more famous than me!”<sup>3</sup> Besides, to be able to find the house, one requires an address description by the inhabitants of the

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<sup>2</sup> Es, Hikmet Feridun (1964), “Nasıl Yazarsınız?: Hüseyin Rahmi Anlatıyor” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, ed. by. Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 58.

<sup>3</sup> Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 18.

island. İsmail Hakkı Baltacıođlu tells how he had to ask many people to find the way to the house.

On the left side I stopped in front of the tobacco and water-bearer shop. I asked, “Where is the hill?” A boy, cunning as a dunny rat, asked me, “Whose house are you searching for?” I said, “Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, the novelist.” The boy thought for a short time. He did not think who Gürpınar was. Rather, he was trying to find the easiest way to the house. “Find the asphalt road! Walk along! On the right, you will see the school, detour to right or left and you will go upgrading. When you arrive at the pinery, ask someone...On the asphalt road, I asked the owner of the small shop for the school. He said that it was ahead on the left side...Now I am climbing the narrow bank. I approached to the pinery... I stopped by a beautiful villa. I asked the maid in the garden and she said, “I do not know”... “My girl, please ask the people inside...!” Unpleased, she went inside... “Look, the manor above!...”<sup>4</sup>

In addition to the difficulty of climbing the bank and reaching the house, it was also a problem to find the entrance as Hüseyin Rahmi described in a letter to Refik Ahmet Sevengil in December 1926:

Since I live fairly secluded, visiting of our house does not resemble to any other house located in the city. Hereupon I find it necessary to explain: The main entrance of the house is situated westwards. However, it is always locked since it is located on a site to where even goats can climb hardly. Eastwards we opened a coop door; we enter and go out of the house from there. Yet, there is neither a handle nor a knocker on it...neither a bell nor a rattle...One should take a largish piece of stone from the ground, then...knock it repeatedly and overwhelmingly. Because there is no one with so sensitive ears who can run for the initial booms...My dear colleague, I do not explain this to everybody. You should grind the door until you have it opened. You will enter into the puncheon of Diogenes.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Baltacıođlu, İsmail Hakkı (1964), “Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar ile Görüşüm!” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, ed. by. Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 61.

<sup>5</sup> Sevengil, Refik Ahmet (1944), *Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar: Hayatı, hatıraları*, İstanbul: Hilmi, p. 162-63.

As Efdal Sevinçli proposes, when Hüseyin Rahmi earned 700 liras from the sales of his novel *Şipsevdi*, published in 1911, he commissioned this house, though it is not known to whom. When the construction of the house was completed, he moved there in 1912.<sup>6</sup> Before he moved to this manor, he lived in another house on Heybeli Island, on the street, called today Hüseyin Rahmi Bey Street. He inhabited there as the tenant of Hacı Sami Bey for 10 years, however, he fell out with his householder when they ended up in a court because of hire increase.<sup>7</sup> So he was acquainted with the island previously by means of this tenancy experience. Apart from this experience, he spent his former life in various houses in İstanbul. He was born in Taksim in 1864, in the place of today's German Consulate building<sup>8</sup> and grew up in his grandmother's house in Yakupağa district, Aksaray.<sup>9</sup> This house was burned as a result of the great fire broken out in Aksaray in 1919. Then, he lived in Erenköy and Sarıyer.<sup>10</sup>



**Figure 4.2: Aliye Hanım and Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar, unknown photographer/ date source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar Museum)**

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<sup>6</sup> Sevinçli, Efdal (1990), *Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar: Yaşamı, Sanatçı Kişiliği*, İstanbul: Arba, p. 30

<sup>7</sup> Farsakoğlu et al, p. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Olcayto (1964), "Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar" in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, ed. by. Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 51.

<sup>9</sup> When Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar was 4 years old, his mother, who was 22 years old, died of tuberculosis. (Ibid, p. 51).

<sup>10</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 19.

In his house on Heybeli Island, Hüseyin Rahmi lived together with Aliye hanım, Hüseyin Rahmi's aunt-in-law, her daughter Safter hanım,<sup>11</sup> and Colonel Hulusi Bey, a close friend of Hüseyin Rahmi's. Although we have less information on Aliye hanım (figure 4.2), Refik Ahmet Sevengil describes her as an “old “gentlewoman”; a polite, cultivated, sensible, clever lady...”<sup>12</sup> Sevengil, as a neighbour who was closely acquainted with Hüseyin Rahmi,<sup>13</sup> often visited him in his house and hence he knew people living there well.

According to Sevengil, Aliye hanım resembles a “typical elderly İstanbul resident woman figure” and she had an “eloquent expression.”<sup>14</sup> Contrary to Aliye Hanım, information on Safter hanım is not available. However, we know that she was together with Hüseyin Rahmi until he died in 1944.<sup>15</sup>

Another inhabitant, about whom we know more than the others, was Colonel Hulusi Bey. Hüseyin Rahmi had been acquainted with Colonel Hulusi Bey since his childhood. When Hüseyin Rahmi was living in Aksaray, he inhabited in Yüksek Kaldırım.<sup>16</sup> Hüseyin Rahmi's fellows were also acquainted with him. For Sevengil he was a kind man:

Colonel Hulusi Bey was a man whom I liked, respected and admired so much. His goodhearted, single-minded, smooth-spoken and adorable attitude made people meet him with sympathy. Everybody liked, respected and admired him as I did, however, before me and anybody; he was the beloved Hulusi Bey of Hüseyin Rahmi.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> As Farsakoğlu states, there were not any belongings of either Aliye hanım or Safter hanım found in the museum, because, as she supposes, the inheritors threw them away (Interview with Hatice Farsakoğlu, August 2009 ).

<sup>12</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 121.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, p. 9.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 21.

<sup>15</sup> Yardımcı, İlhami (1964), “Hüseyin Rahmi'nin Hususiyetleri” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, ed. by Hilmi Yücebaş, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, p. 17.

<sup>16</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 14.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, p. 155.

They had known each other for more than 50 years and lived together for 22 years till the death of Colonel Hulusi Bey in 1933 (figure 4.3). In the house on Heybeli Island they shared their lives. Hulusi Bey was responsible to fulfil shopping needs of the house.<sup>18</sup> Once, Hüseyin Rahmi had a serious disease. The doctors recommended strongly a nurse who could take care of him but Colonel Hulusi Bey believed that even the best nurse could not do it better than he could do, and therefore he looked after Hüseyin Rahmi by himself.<sup>19</sup>



**Figure 4.3: Hüseyin Rahmi and Colonel Hulusi Bey in Heybeli Island, photograph, unknown date source: (Sevengil, 1944, p.81)**

During the years when they lived together, they shared the space in such a way that while Hüseyin Rahmi was working on his novels in his study, Hulusi Bey stayed in the living room and read books, most of the time the books of Hüseyin Rahmi. In fact, Colonel Hulusi Bey was the first critic of Hüseyin Rahmi's.<sup>20</sup> He was like a

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p.157.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, p. 155.

supervisor giving ideas to Hüseyin Rahmi about what he wrote. Furthermore, he was the one who brought Hüseyin Rahmi's articles to the newspaper offices, almost bargained for them, was paid and signed the receipts.<sup>21</sup> He accompanied Hüseyin Rahmi at particular social organizations and also during the interviews performed at the house. So, they were together nearly all the time.<sup>22</sup>

Most of the time, it was Colonel Hulusi Bey who welcomed the guests of Hüseyin Rahmi and had conversation with them. As Hikmet Feridun Es recalls:

A lovely face reminding grand old-time commanders with his long moustaches was seen from the half-opened door: the dearie companion of the master...He opened the door, "Please come in, what on earth have brought you here?" We went into the garden. When we were climbing the stairs, Hulusi Bey told regretfully: "Rahmi Bey had serious diseases, formerly influenza, and then a strong pneumonia...afterwards malaria. Doctors abandoned hope. He was recovered by means of a miracle. Now he is healthier. Here you are. I will call him."<sup>23</sup>

Hulusi Bey also spent all of his military life in İstanbul. Even when he was retired, he did not leave İstanbul and their relationship was not broken. When Colonel Hulusi Bey passed away in 1933, the days on the island became distressing for Hüseyin Rahmi and the flow of his life was interrupted. The absence of Colonel Hulusi Bey was so sorrowful that Hüseyin Rahmi could not adapt himself to live without him. He could not go to his house on the island for a while, wander around the island and console himself. Consequently, Hüseyin Rahmi, who did not go out of İstanbul until the death of Colonel Hulusi Bey, went to Egypt in a winter.<sup>24</sup> His spatial attachment to the house and to the island was dissolved as well. Even when he returned from Egypt, he could not pass through the street next to the graveyard

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid, p. 156.

<sup>22</sup> Sadrettin, Mecdi (2009), "Hüseyin Rahmi Bey'de İki Saat" in "*Yeni Kitap*" *Dergisinde On Yazar-On Mülakat*, ed. by Muharrem Dayanç, İstanbul: Dergâh , p. 57.

<sup>23</sup> Es (1964), p. 57.

<sup>24</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 158.



where Hulusi Bey's grave was placed.<sup>25</sup> In 1936, he was elected as a member of the Parliament from Kütahya and left Heybeli Island.<sup>26</sup> He did not come back to the island until 1943.<sup>27</sup>

We can see the traces of his sadness in the letters he wrote to Refik Ahmet Sevengil. These letters demonstrate that the absence of Hulusi Bey affected his life not only emotionally, but also spatially.

In this house of retreat, depressing hours I experienced are purifying my soul like dervishes undergoing a period of suffering... A grave on the island turned the entire world into a graveyard in my eyes. (22th November 1933)<sup>28</sup>

In this house, Hüseyin Rahmi was also together with his domestic servants, cats and a dog.<sup>29</sup> One of the cats, named *Nazlı*, was introduced to Turkish literature by Hüseyin Rahmi who wrote 36 siblings that she gave birth to within 12 years. Another cat lived in the house was *Sarı*. Called by Hüseyin Rahmi "my honey-eyed," *Sarı* accompanied him especially when he was working on his novels at his writing desk and jumped on his lap.<sup>30</sup> Apart from the cats, he also had a poodle dog, named *Fındık*. Hüseyin Rahmi called it rather "Hero Fındık" since when they wandered around the island together, it snarled and barked to everybody as if Hüseyin Rahmi was in danger and it was saving him.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid, p. 159.

<sup>26</sup> Before that time, he worked as an officer, however his official post ended in 1908. Since then, he became a writer. (Farsakoğlu et al., unknown date, p. 10).

<sup>27</sup> Sevinçli (1990), p. 31.

<sup>28</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 174.

<sup>29</sup> Sevinçli (1990), p. 30.

<sup>30</sup> Anonymous Writer (1964), "Bilinmeyen Taraflarıyla Hüseyin Rahmi" in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, ed. by Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 19.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

In this house, Hüseyin Rahmi lived an unpretentious and a simple life. Mostly, he spent time in his study by writing and reading.<sup>32</sup> According to Refik Ahmet Sevengil, in the mornings, he got up early, had a shower, and did Swedish style gymnastic exercises. Then he had his breakfast and he worked in his writings from 9 o'clock till the afternoon. After the lunch, if the weather was good enough, he wandered around the island or he preferred to stay in the house and read books of French literature.<sup>33</sup> For the most part, he sat down for reading until 12 or 1 o'clock late at night.<sup>34</sup>

He could write only in the mornings. Below is his own comment about his writing habit:

Writing in every time in a day is a grace that God begrudged me. I can only write in the mornings. I wake up very early every morning. I wash my face. After I have a light breakfast, I sit down in front of the writing desk and I begin writing. I write on large pages and I always leave the margins of the pages blank since I fill these blanks with the words, sentences I forget to write and any other additional parts. I write down three pages at least and seven at most. When I release the pen, the issue continues to exist in my mind and I record these on the back side of the last page with arbitrary words. The next day when I sit down in front of the desk, I browse these notes for one time and I start to write accordingly. By the time I finish writing, I feel hungry and immediately I sit down for dining. I have written so far my 45 novels like this.<sup>35</sup>

Besides, he described the proper atmosphere and space within which he could write as calm and quite. He stated in an interview that it was intolerable for him to study in a noisy place. He even stopped the clock before he began writing. Furthermore, he could not bear if someone entered the room when he wrote. Therefore, most of the

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<sup>32</sup> Sadrettin (2009), p. 58.

<sup>33</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 22.

<sup>34</sup> Yardımcı (1964), p. 17. Although it contrasts with what Hüseyin Rahmi explained about his writing habit, Safer Hanim proposes that Hüseyin Rahmi went for a walk in the mornings, wandered around the pinery area on the island, and he came back to his house in the afternoons. Afterwards, he had something to eat and took rest for an hour. Then he began his routine of reading and writing (Ibid).

<sup>35</sup> Es (1964), p. 58.

time he preferred to write alone in his study. His tolerance towards loud atmosphere was so weak that he did not even allow anyone to enter and wander in the room located under his study.<sup>36</sup> Likewise, the room and location of the window were significant for him. He required beautiful scenery when he looked out of the window. As he said, “When I stared through the window, the horizon should be visible in front of me.”<sup>37</sup>

In addition, he stated that he could not write during the weather with southwester which made him nervous. Apart from that when he drank even one glass of alcohol, he was not able to write:

Recently someone asked me “What do you use in order to write well? Cocaine or *Raki*? Beer, wine, brandy or liqueur?” I answered, “In my life, I did not use any drugs, even cigarette...”<sup>38</sup>

Hüseyin Rahmi’s preconditions for being able to write were not limited to these. He also mentioned that he could not write if his stomach was upset. After he came back to house from a dinner party, he had to wait for three days to feel healthy for writing.<sup>39</sup>

As Sevengil states, he was very active. He liked walking so much that he always climbed on foot to the one of the highest and the steepest hills on the island where his house was located. Apart from this, he was always busy with his garden.<sup>40</sup> He also liked riding bicycle around the island. He rode it until the age of 50. After he became a “professional” in the riding, he brought his novels’ drafts to printing by riding bicycle. It was not just a leisure time activity or a sportive action, but it was

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, p. 59.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid, p. 60.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. Although he declared that he did not smoke in his lifetime, he smoked for 25 years and he told his quitting period in the essay, “Sigarayı Nasıl Terk Ettim?”(Gürpınar, Hüseyin Rahmi, 2009, *Kitaplık*, no: 125 ).

<sup>39</sup> Es (1964), p. 60.

<sup>40</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 9.

recommended by the doctors as a cure for his chronic kidney disease. Especially, when he had acute aches, he rode bicycle.<sup>41</sup>

He was a man who attributed almost importance to hygiene. This habit was due to his illness he had had in his youth, tuberculosis.<sup>42</sup> The sensibility of the people surrounded him made him also afraid of microbes, excessively obsessive with cleaning and hence he became a hypochondriac.<sup>43</sup> He did not touch anything when he did not wear gloves. When he held money or a door handle, he washed his hands immediately. Therefore, he did not like shaking hands and having his hands kissed. Outside the house in his casual life, he gave importance to orderliness as well.<sup>44</sup>

Although he liked İstanbul's centre, rarely did he go there. He went out of the island for İstanbul two times a month.<sup>45</sup> He also rarely went out of the house in hard winter days, he did not go out for seven or eight days.<sup>46</sup> When he did, he went to the offices of newspapers in order to deliver his articles and met his friends.<sup>47</sup> He liked going to Beyoğlu, particularly stopping by Hachette Bookstore assuredly, browsing the newly arrived books and purchasing some of them.<sup>48</sup> Apart from Beyoğlu, he liked going to recreation areas like Bentler, Kilyos, and Sarıyer.<sup>49</sup> Seldom did he go to the cinema. As an excuse for that, he said that "my cinema and my theatre are my books."<sup>50</sup> He did not like casual rush of life, crowded places and talking to many people as well. This might be the reason why he lived in such a remote and isolated area of the island, which he chose intentionally and fondly.

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<sup>41</sup> Anonymous Writer (1964), pp. 20-21.

<sup>42</sup> Because of his tuberculosis, he could not continue to the school, Mahmudiye Junior High School, to which he attended formerly. He took private lessons of French. By this way, he could follow the French literature (Farsakoğlu, et al., unknown date, p. 10).

<sup>43</sup> Sevinçli (1990), p. 13.

<sup>44</sup> Yardımcı (1964), p. 17.

<sup>45</sup> Sadrettin (2009) p. 66.

<sup>46</sup> Anonymous Writer (1964), p. 22.

<sup>47</sup> Sevinçli (1990), p. 31.

<sup>48</sup> Sevensil (1964) p. 23.

<sup>49</sup> Yardımcı (1964), p. 17.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

In addition to writing, Hüseyin Rahmi often painted pictures, took photographs and also enjoyed doing handiworks such as embroidery, knitting and lacework. Additionally, he was also interested in playing piano and lute.<sup>51</sup> Refik Ahmet Sevengil extracts a memoir about Hüseyin Rahmi:

In the years when we were neighbours on Heybeli Island, one summer day we went to visit the master together with the novelist Reşat Nuri [Güntekin], his wife and my wife. In the room, the library included a good deal of valuable books, on the walls pictures were hung that Hüseyin Rahmi painted himself, on the corners his self-made cushions and embroideries were present, Hüseyin Rahmi played piano as well in order to entertain his guests.<sup>52</sup>

It is emphasized two of the pictures Hüseyin Rahmi painted: depicting two different images of two women, they are a blonde woman about 18 or 19 years old wearing a *ferece*, a kind of topcoat (figure 4.4) and a young brunette woman (figure 4.5). At that time, these pictures drew the attention of friends and guests who visited his manor. It was even thought that these women were the ones Hüseyin Rahmi fell in love with. Although Hüseyin Rahmi disclaimed this, no one believed that the models of these pictures were imaginary.<sup>53</sup>

His engagement with embroidery, lacework and knitting was a leisure activity he inherited from his childhood years. After his death, two bundles were found among his belongings. In one of them, there were knitted gloves,<sup>54</sup> more than one hundred and in the other, there were a lot of caps knitted out of wool and a beret. All of these were made by Hüseyin Rahmi himself by means of an awl. His most favourite free time activity was doing these handiworks. Actually, he knitted these when he had a break of reading or writing. He applied the knitting motifs by following the woman characters in his novels who knitted “leaf”, “peanut” and “katip çimdiği.” He also

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<sup>51</sup> Sadrettin (2009), p. 58.

<sup>52</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 20.

<sup>53</sup> Anonymous Writer (1964), p. 21.

<sup>54</sup> The reason why he had such lots of gloves was because of his “hygiene” habits. (Ibid, p. 20).

worked with embroidery and lacework. Moreover, he was good at housework, especially in the kitchen, and his jams were very famous among the women, living on the island.<sup>55</sup>



**Figure 4.4: Woman figure, painting by Hüseyin Rahmi, unknown date source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum)**



**Figure 4.5: Woman Figure, painting by Hüseyin Rahmi, unknown date source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum)**

Despite the fact that he lived 32 years of his life on Heybeli Island, he did not use the island as a background in his books. Rather, he depicted characters more than spaces, such as houses.<sup>56</sup> Besides, although he did not like going out quite often to make observations, he could illustrate ridiculous sides of the events successfully in his novels. Mecdi Sadrettin asked him in an interview how he could do this. Hüseyin Rahmi explained this ability by referring to his childhood which he spent as surrounded by women:

When I was three years old, my mother passed away. I was at the mercy of maids and servants. Within the years I started the school, my friends went to coffee houses in the evenings. They intended to take me there off. People of the house did not let me out. I stayed with the women, at times I knitted

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Farsakoğlu , unknown date, p.19.

lacework with them ... Look I made these cushions by myself.<sup>57</sup>

These marks left by women in his earlier life can be traced in his novels as well. Gürpınar focuses on women, particularly the issues of the inequality between men and women in the family, in his novels. Although he does not take side on behalf of women, he criticizes the patriarchy to a considerable extent<sup>58</sup> in his *Kokotlar Mektebi*, *Tutuşmuş Gönüller*, and *Billur Kalp*. In some others, such as *Hakka Sığındık*, *Hayattan Sayfalar*, *Meyhanede Hanımlar*, *Ben Deli Miyim* and *Utanmaz Adam*, although he criticizes the male domination, he does not make room for endless freedom of women, he even describes absolute emancipation of women as deviance.<sup>59</sup>

The effects of women on Hüseyin Rahmi's life were not limited to his novels. For Sevinçli, He had the traces of that time reflected in his own everyday life and behaviour. According to Refik Ahmet Sevengil, he carried similar gesture and manner with these women throughout his life. For instance, he sat down mostly by bringing together his hands on his breast or on his knees and he learned how to do lacework and embroidery among these women.<sup>60</sup> In this sense, some writers<sup>61</sup> describe the habits and behaviour of Hüseyin Rahmi as feminine. For instance, Sevinçli states that he was successful in the dialogues between women in his novels since he was grown among women. Furthermore, for him, Hüseyin Rahmi had traces of femininity on his character.<sup>62</sup>

Apart from his attitudes, his marriage status was also a matter of concern among writers. They have searched for the clues in his biographies as to why Hüseyin Rahmi did not marry in his lifetime. Among the reasons, they cite his mother's death

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid, p. 66.

<sup>58</sup> Levend, Agâh Sırrı (1964), *Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, Ankara: TDK Yayınları p. 67.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, p. 41.

<sup>60</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 11.

<sup>61</sup> Levend (1964), Sevinçli (1990), Yardımcı (1964).

<sup>62</sup> Sevinçli (1990), p. 34.

when he was very young, his hygienic obsession and his tuberculosis. When Refik Ahmet Sevengil asked him why he did not get married, he answered:

I do not want another breathe in the room where I sleep, I immediately get angry, that is why I do not stay overnight in another house...my dear, whoever married among the writers became unable to write. Ernst Renan was also a bachelor. They asked him the reason and he said that people were of two kinds, one group of them worked with their minds and another with their bodies. I am in the second group...<sup>63</sup>

Moreover, some people close to him also searched for an appropriate bride candidate whom they make him marry. When he was young and working in the newspaper, *Tercüman-ı Hakikat*, Ahmet Mithat, the owner of the newspaper, tried to marry Hüseyin Rahmi his daughter.<sup>64</sup> Nevertheless, he rejected kindly this marriage attempt.<sup>65</sup> Apart from the efforts of his close friends, he received a good deal of letters including marriage proposals. He did not get angry with these proposals. Rather, he said “These buffoons are joking with me!” He did not answer them, however, he talked about them for some time and derided delightfully.<sup>66</sup>

Throughout his lifetime, he had some problems with the interviewers, and therefore, he accepted interviewers very rarely. Because, as he believed, they wrote differently from what he said.<sup>67</sup> Another reason was that he was hearing-impaired because of a medical operation he had in 1933.<sup>68</sup> Therefore, he got bored of talking with the people with whom he was not acquainted.<sup>69</sup> Furthermore, it is an unfortunate story regarding his death that in February 1944 when his illness was not so serious, an

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<sup>63</sup> Ibid, p. 12.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, p. 13.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>67</sup> Evliyagil, Şevket (1964), “Hüseyin Rahmi ve Jübileler” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, ed. by. Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 69.

<sup>68</sup> At that time, he was attacked by malaria and the doctors gave him kinin. That is why he had difficulty in hearing. (Ibid, p. 69).

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, p. 70.



interviewer came to the house and since Hüseyin Rahmi did not want to accept the interviewer to his room, he invited him in another room which was relatively cold. Because of the cold air temperature, his illness got worse.<sup>70</sup>

Hüseyin Rahmi died on March, 1944 and his last words were “please, feed my cats!”<sup>71</sup> According to Safer Hanım, he was smiling gently when dying. After he died, he was buried into Heybeli Graveyard, to the top side of the grave where Colonel Hulusi Bey had been buried before on March 10, 1933.<sup>72</sup> Hüseyin Rahmi’s grave is organized with marble book figures his photograph adhered on his grave stone, yet, today, the books are disordered and the photograph of the epitaph is broken.<sup>73</sup>

## 4.2 RISING FROM THE ASHES OR THE STORY OF A MUSEUM

*There is a treasure only in the ruined house.*<sup>74</sup>

After 20 years he died, Hüseyin Rahmi’s house was decided to be transformed into a museum by İstanbul Provincial Administration in 1964. There are two newspaper articles on the issue of this transformation written by Sabri Esat Siyavuşgil<sup>75</sup> and Niyazi Ahmet Banoğlu.<sup>76</sup> In the first article, Siyavuşgil criticizes this transformation and states that it is an easy way of commemorating a writer to create a writer museum:

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<sup>70</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. VIII.

<sup>71</sup> Anonymous Writer (1964), p. 19.

<sup>72</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. VIII. However, as Enis Batur also mentions, another body was buried between their graves (Batur, Enis, 200, *Ada Defterleri*, p.146).

<sup>73</sup> Ibid.

<sup>74</sup> Müldür, Lale (2006), “Kriz Zamanında Naat” in *Ultrazone’da Ultrason*, İstanbul: Yapı kredi.

<sup>75</sup> Siyavuşgil, Sabri Esat (1964), “Hüseyin Rahmi Müzesi”, *Yeni Sabah*, 24.02.1964 .

<sup>76</sup> Banoğlu, Niyazi Ahmet (1964), “Hüseyin Rahmi Müzesi Münasebetiyle”, *Yeni İstanbul*, 24.02.1964.

All his belongings are collected, labelled, put into showcases from pencils to drafts, from books to ties, from photographs to letters and then a plaque is hung upon the door, and that is that. Then, everything is forgotten...<sup>77</sup>

He believes that this museum will be forgotten after it was founded; and so, instead of this museum, he recommends the authorities open another museum about İstanbul rather than about Hüseyin Rahmi. Accordingly, he thinks that such a museum will be more helpful to understand İstanbul which Hüseyin Rahmi depicted in his novels.<sup>78</sup>

In the second article, Banoğlu criticizes Siyavuşgil's view and opposes the idea of establishing the museum in another location, because, he explains, this is not any other place but the house where Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar lived, therefore this is the only place which can be his museum.<sup>79</sup>

Despite this early attempt, the transformation of the house into a museum could not take place until 2000. During those 56 years since his death in 1944, the house suffered greatly due to neglect and long and slow bureaucratic procedures. After Hüseyin Rahmi's death, his inheritor, though their line of descent is not known, Emine Muzaffer Gürpınar, her husband Abdullah Tanrıkulu and, as Farsakoğlu explains, their daughter Gülçin Tanrıkulu used the building for some time. In the 1950s, Abdullah Tanrıkulu paid the share of the other inheritors and bought this house.<sup>80</sup> After Emine M. Gürpınar's death in 1964, the building was offered for sale.<sup>81</sup>

İstanbul Provincial Administration bought the house for 153000 liras to transform it into a museum and a library; however, they did not succeed in this attempt since they

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<sup>77</sup> Siyavuşgil, Sabri Esat (1964), "Hüseyin Rahmi Müzesi" in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, ed. by. Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 7.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

<sup>79</sup> Banoğlu, Niyazi Ahmet (1964), "Hüseyin Rahmi Müzesi Münasebetiyle" in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar*, İstanbul: İnkılâp ve Aka, ed. by. Hilmi Yücebaş, p. 7.

<sup>80</sup> Interview with Hatice Farsakoğlu, August 2009.

<sup>81</sup> Bayazoğlu, Ümit (1997), "Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar'ın Evi", *Varlık*, sayı 1080, p. 37.

could only deal with the security of the building by appointing a night porter until 1983<sup>82</sup> when they delivered the house to the Ministry of Culture<sup>83</sup> to found a museum-library which would include Hüseyin Rahmi's books as well. Afterwards, for a period of time, the house was under the responsibility of other institutions, namely, the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Heritage<sup>84</sup> and the Prince Islands Municipality.<sup>85</sup> Yet, the house, together with the furniture and memorabilia of Hüseyin Rahmi, was not protected and renovated as it had been declared.

During that time, people, who intended to see Hüseyin Rahmi's house, found it closed, and some people who insisted to see the house, were not allowed, affronted by the porter and chased by the dogs. Tayfun Dedeoğlu, a visitor in those days, observed that most of the windows of the house were broken, the walls were riddled, the floor were destroyed and the material of the building was changed into another which did not fit to its architectural unity (figures 4.6 and 4.7).<sup>86</sup> Similarly, Çelik Gülersoy, the director of Turing (Institution for Turing and Automobile of Turkey), who received a letter reporting the terrible condition of the house and asking for an institutional help, went to the house and encountered a woman, living there as a keeper, requested to see the house, but he was replied that it was forbidden to visit the house very rudely.<sup>87</sup> Likewise, in 1996,<sup>88</sup> a group of students and reporters wrote

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<sup>82</sup> Tanış, Tolga (2000) "Büyük Yazarın Evini Öğretmenler Kurtardı," *Hürriyet*, August 21.

<sup>83</sup> The Ministry was not able to undertake the entire project, including the search for a suitable night porter, and eventually they declared their need for help (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 22).

<sup>84</sup> The Administration of the Museum of Turkish and Islamic Heritage, which took the responsibility to realize the project, only helped providing a porter to protect the house (Tolga Tanış, 2000) However, during the duty term of the porter, it was realized while examining the inventory that some commodities were stolen (Farsakoğlu, et al., unknown date, p. 24).

<sup>85</sup> Ibid, p. 24.

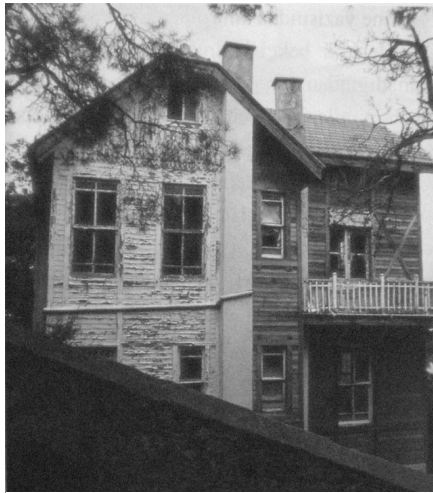
<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> In those days, while the project of International Centre for Writers and Translators was searching for a convenient building, this building was offered to Sezer Duru, the director of the executor committee of the project, and then they applied to the Prince Islands Municipality for the amendment of the house. At the same time, İstek Foundation demanded for undertaking the restoration works of the building. The Municipality replied both institutions that the right of usage was possible if the accession record was made, restoration necessities were determined; the building was ameliorated and delivered to the municipality. However, neither of these institutions returned to the Municipality (Ibid, p. 31).

an official letter to the authorities after their visit, stating that they observed the house in a desperately neglected state.<sup>89</sup>

In those years, the building was robbed several times. Though the supervisors of the Ministry controlled the house regularly, in 1996, inspectors from Topkapı Palace reported the robbery of many pieces of the furniture and most of Hüseyin Rahmi's personal belongings. Because of this, as Tolga Tanış states, many objects exhibited today in the museum are imitation, not real.<sup>90</sup>



**Figure 4.6: Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's house before the restoration, unknown photographer/date source: (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 23)**



**Figure 4.7: Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's house before the restoration, unknown photographer/date source: (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 25)**

It was, the Prince Islands District Governor Mustafa Farsakoğlu, who took office at the end of the year 1996, that undertook the necessary initiative to protect and

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<sup>89</sup> The answer to the letter by the Municipality was fairly unsatisfactory since it explained the situation only with the absence of the caretaker (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 30).

<sup>90</sup> Tanış (2000). Here are some belongings of Hüseyin Rahmi listed as stolen: his piano, bicycle, violin, mandolin, crystal writing set, crystal liqueur set, porcelain dining set consisting of 70 pieces, camera branded Kodak, binoculars branded Göerk Berlin, silver dining set, 6 pieces of candleholders and crystal chandeliers, chinaware brazier, 3 French branded red chinaware stoves, 14 oil paintings, 14 pieces of antique rugs and a gun (Bayazoğlu, 1997, p. 38).

preserve the house by requesting the support and collaboration of the district governorship and the municipality, though most of his attempts left unanswered. Meanwhile, he formed a commission to do accession record within the house under the presidency of Special Town Directorate of Administration.<sup>91</sup> Accordingly, the commission began working after finding the house and the belongings in a desperate condition.<sup>92</sup>



**Figure 4.8: Process of preservation, unknown photographer/ date source: (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 30)**

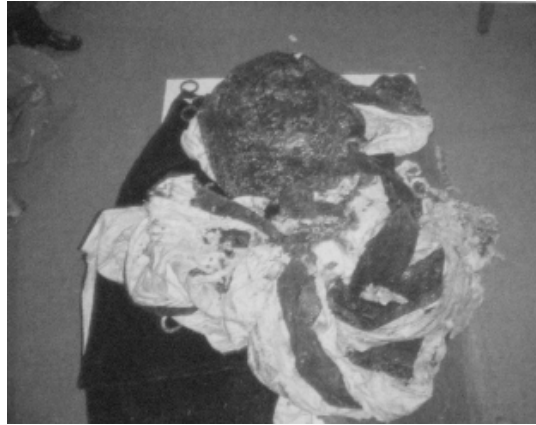
In 1998, the Ministry of Culture cancelled the possession rights of the Municipality and then the Ministry undertook the restoration process under the order by İstemihan

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<sup>91</sup> During this process, correspondences continued among the Prince Islands Municipality, the District Governorship, and Town Directorate of Administration to provide subsidy for the restoration of the building (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 32).

<sup>92</sup> When they entered the house they found books in 32 separate corrugated paper boxes and fragile articles in 5 boxes. Besides, there were also other commodities in 2 sacks and clothing in 15 garbage bags. Since these objects and belongings were extremely dilapidated they were brought directly into the Public Library of Heybeli Island to protect them (Ibid, p. 33). Hatice Farsakoğlu, a member of the administrative board of the Prince Islands Foundation, tells about the condition of the belongings as they were put within large garbage bags on the dusty and dirty basement floor populated with mice. She also states that what they found within these bags did not resemble anything since they were deformed in time. So, as she says, she started to take their photographs and dias of these to document them (Interview with Hatice Farsakoğlu, August 2009).

Talay, minister of culture, and another commission was constituted.<sup>93</sup> The entire transformation process of the house into a museum was initiated through the collaboration and efforts of the Prince Islands Foundation (Adalar Vakfı), The Society of the Friends of the Prince Islands (Ada Dostları Derneği), Turing Manager Çelik Gülersoy, the Prince Islands district governor Mustafa Farsakoğlu, and especially through the crucial endeavour of the teachers of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar High School on Heybeli Island.<sup>94</sup>



**Figure 4.9: Hüseyin Rahmi's clothes before preservation, unknown photographer/ date source: (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 27)**

The commission attempted to collect the belongings of the writer from everywhere with the help of the Prince Island Foundation for one and a half year (figures 4.8, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11). Moreover, they organized Hüseyin Rahmi's books left within cases and crawled by the insects. Then, they handled and cleaned up his dressing, embroideries and laceworks gently.<sup>95</sup> These handiworks were torn to shreds and turned into yellow. Glasses, porcelains and ceramics, broken within the corrugated

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<sup>93</sup> This commission consisted of Can Sayiner, Funda Kurnaz and Mahmut Yerlikaya (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar High School philosophy teachers), Hatice Farsakoğlu (assistant manager of public education centre), Yaser Kayışoğlu (Heybeli Island Private Greek High School assistant manager) and Fevzi Günay (The Prince Islands Public Library manager) (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 37).

<sup>94</sup> Tanış (2000).

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

paper boxes due to arbitrary placement, were repaired as well. For Farsakoğlu, this process resembled connecting “toy block” since it was not known which one was a piece of which object.<sup>96</sup> Besides, they asked for the help of the specialists for the renovation of oil paintings. Certain pieces of Hüseyin Rahmi’s cloths and belongings could not be recovered and recorded as “irrecoverable.”<sup>97</sup>



**Figure 4.10: Hüseyin Rahmi’s Letters Before Preservation, unknown photographer/ date source: (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 26)**

All these were realized by the teachers and students of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar High School.<sup>98</sup> As Hatice Farsakoğlu mentions, these were not done by the help of a professional conservationist, rather, by their own amateurish efforts. For instance, they repaired the worn clothes, carpets, rugs with their hands and sent them to dry cleaning. Furthermore, Farsakoğlu preserved the books through her knowledge, based on her high school education in arts school; and for the wooden furniture; she was trained by an antique specialist and she even imported special pastes from France for their repair.<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Interview with Hatice Farsakoğlu, August 2009.

<sup>97</sup> Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 38.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, p. 40.

<sup>99</sup> After this preservation and repair process, they organized an exhibition of these objects and belongings to bring them to the public attention. During this exhibition, they also received Hüseyin Batuhan’s help for the translation of the texts in Ottoman script to record them, and they even invited Hüseyin Rahmi’s relatives, whom they they heard about, to the event (Interview with Farsakoğlu,



**Figure 4.11: Placement of the furniture, unknown photographer/ date  
source: (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 32)**

During the process of restoration, the rooms of the house were organized as the living space of Hüseyin Rahmi with reference to the photographs, which were found in boxes on the basement floor. As Farsakoğlu states, they matched those photographs with the spaces and with the objects, and tried to find the original layout. In addition to this, they read the memoir of Hüseyin Rahmi and found the most possible matches through scanty descriptions. Therefore, they are still assumed spaces. Although the inheritors confirmed that many rooms of the house looked like as they are today in the museum, they are still not “perfect” representations because, as Farsakoğlu states, they could not reach sufficient information on some rooms, in the cases of two small rooms on the attic floor (figures 4.12 and 4.13).<sup>100</sup>

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August 2009). Then, the subsidy for the restoration work could be allocated in 1999. With this funding, inside and outside repairing was done, electric power, water and central heating connection and landscape work of the garden were provided (Ibid).

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.





**Figure 4.12: Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's house-museum, source: (author, December 2007)**



**Figure 4.13: Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's house-museum, source: (M. Haluk Zelif, September, 2009)**

Together with these works, the restoration of the building, which was done by the Directorship for Relief and Monuments of İstanbul, was completed by the year 2000 and the opening was took place in the 136<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Hüseyin Rahmi's

birthday. Today, it is managed by the Prince Islands Foundation and the District Governorship.<sup>101</sup>

The basic difference of this museum's foundation story from the others is that a committee, composed of non-professional volunteers, saved the house, furniture and Hüseyin Rahmi's memorabilia. Furthermore, they told this story with photographic depictions, used in the book, *Kuyruklu Yıldız Altında Bir Ev: Dört Devrin Yazarı Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar'ın Mirasının ve Evinin Akıllara Durgunluk Veren Serüveni*, published by the Society of the Friends of the Prince Islands, and on the board, placed on the front facade of the house. In this sense, it is a good example of an initiative, belonging to the local society, not to the state. As İsmet Tokgöz, a writer, states in one of his stories:

These photographs, displayed to the visitors at the outset, show the heartbreaking condition of the house and the belongings in the hand of time after years within which no one bestowed hand to restore them: the manor about to be destroyed, dimmed and peeled photographs due to the humidity, dusted furniture. He thought about to turn away without entering the house and without seeing the memoir of the writer, his clothes, handiworks and other belongings which were tried to keep alive inadequately, then he betook himself to the graveyard of the island and visit the grave of the writer without forgetting Colonel Hulusi Bey.<sup>102</sup>

The house-museum of Hüseyin Rahmi, which has such a complicated founding story, can be reached after climbing a slope and its surrounding area is circumscribed by exterior walls. On both sides of the walls are long stairs and at the end of these stairs are entrance doors to the garden, although the one on the right side of the house, the south-eastern front, is not used today. Thus, one can enter the garden by using the door on the left, the north-western front, which is a single iron garden door (figure 4.14). It is kept closed until a visitor comes and rings the door bell.

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<sup>101</sup> Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 43.

<sup>102</sup> Tokgöz, İsmet (2009), "Ada", *Kitaplık*, March, vol. 125.



**Figure 4. 14: Entrance to the garden**  
source: (Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci, August 2009)



**Figure 4.15: Upper part of the garden, source:**  
(author, June 2009)

The garden is made up of two parts: upper and lower (figure 4.15, 4.16 and 4.17). From the upper side, which is relatively small in comparison with the lower, one can see the lower side properly, since it was elevated approximately two meters from the ground. The entrance door of the upper garden, presently used as the main entrance of the museum, opens through the path, passing by the front, the south-western, facade of the house, arriving at the other door of the garden, located on the south-eastern. Standing up here, on the left is the staircase of the house's main entrance and on the right is the staircase, going down to the lower part of the garden. This path is planted by the current museum officer. In the lower side of the garden are trees and flowers as well, and besides, a table and chairs, made of plastic, are observed there.



**Figure 4.16: Lower part of the garden**  
source: (author, June 2009)

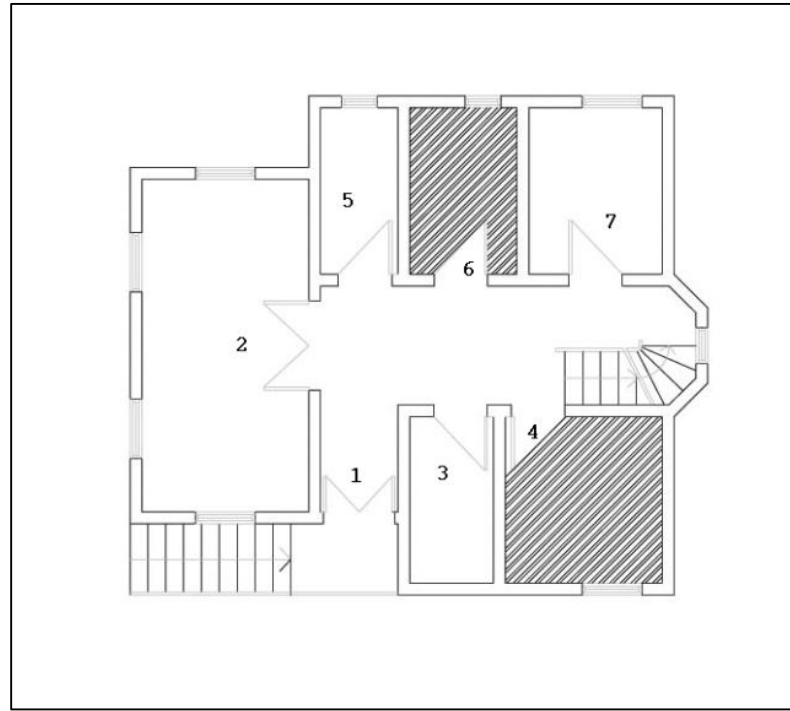
The building has three storeys, whose ground floor has four rooms: a living room, a small room, housing museum archive, a room, used today by the museum officer, and another room, closed to the visitors, as well as a toilet, and a kitchen. The first floor has three rooms: a dining room, a bedroom, a study and a bathroom. The second floor is the attic floor having three rooms: two of them are used to exhibit Hüseyin Rahmi's handiworks and photographs, one of which is designed as a bedroom of Colonel Hulusi Bey, and two storage rooms. Lastly, the basement floor,

formerly used by Hüseyin Rahmi's servants, accommodates the museum officer and her family and it is closed to the visitors today.



**Figure 4.17: two unknown figures in the garden of the house, unknown photographer/date source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum )**

The main entrance of the manor is located on the right side, the south-eastern facade. Apart from this, there are two other doors. One of which is located on the left side, the north-western facade, of the house, directly entering the basement floor, where the caretaker, Nevin Sergül and her sons, present inhabitants, reside and the other, which is relatively smaller in size, is located backside, on the north-eastern facade of the house, opening into the ground floor.



**Figure 4.18: Sketch of the ground floor plan**  
source: (Y. Yeşim Uysal, 2009)

After entering the house (figure 4.18, part 1), on the left is a large room which is designed as the living room (figure 4.18, part 2). Constructed around a green sitting group, consisting of two double and three single armchairs (figure 4.19), the room has a coffee table on the left side and a vase between two single armchairs, and another coffee table in the middle, some copper pots and pans on it. On one of the double armchairs, located at the exact opposite side of the entrance of the room, a carpet is laid and there is a cushion knitted by Hüseyin Rahmi himself with the capital “H” embroidered on it (figure 4.20). Above this armchair, the windows are curtained with rug-figured cloth.

On both sides of the room entrance are two large bookshelves (figure 4.21), which house Hüseyin Rahmi’s library, having mainly rebound books in Ottoman, English, German, French, and Hungarian. According to the official letter the Provincial Administration wrote to deliver the house to the Ministry of Culture, his library was

made up of 1131 books including 539 in Ottoman script, 216 in Turkish, 370 in French, and 36 books given as gifts to Hüseyin Rahmi.<sup>103</sup> Among them, displayed today, are Balzac's, Dickens's, Diderot's, Goethe's and Wagner's books. There is also a group of books, revealing his interest in French language, such as *D'Historie De La Literature Française* and French to Turkish or Turkish to French dictionaries.



**Figure 4.19: View from the living room**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 4.20: Cushion**  
source: (author, June 2009)

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<sup>103</sup> Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 22.

Besides, there is a great number of history books on Turkey, France, Europe, Middle East, and the world. In addition to a copy of Holy there are also seven volumes of Hayat Encyclopaedia, and some books on health such as *Yeni Ev Doktoru*, and *Sihhat Almanaki*, giving clues about his lifelong health problems. Needless to say, in the library, there are books of literature such as the Turkish copies of *Ay Işıđı* (*Claire de Lune*), and *Kalbimiz* (*Notre Coeur*) by *Guy de Maupasant* and *Dorian Gray*'in *Portresi* (*The Portrait of Dorian Gray*) by *Oscar Wilde*.



**Figure 4.21: part of the library**  
**source: (author, December 2007)**

On the walls of the room are some photographs depicting some scenes from a theatre play, *Kadın Erkekleşince*, which is originally a novel written by Hüseyin Rahmi. As Refik Ahmet Sevengil notes, he had not gone out for 25 years until he went to the premiere night of the play in İstanbul City Theatre.<sup>104</sup> These photographs were taken at that night (figures 4.22 and 4.23).

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<sup>104</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 22.





**Figure 4.22: Scene from the play “Kadın Erkekleşince,” unknown photographer, 1944**  
source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar House-museum)



**Figure 4.23: Scene from the play “Kadın Erkekleşince,” unknown photographer, 1944**  
source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar House-museum)

Another photograph displays a group of people, consisting mainly of women. According to the information given by the museum officer, it is a family photograph. Besides, there are two paintings which illustrate two different landscape views, one depicts a river and some small village houses on both sides and the other represents a small village alley. Although there is not any information about these paintings, as in the case of many of the others exhibited in the museum, they were presumably executed by Hüseyin Rahmi.

Even though information on this room is relatively scanty regarding how it was used, depending on the descriptions, written by Sevensil and then Bayazoğlu, it can be proposed that this room was a place for welcoming the guests as well as for dining. As Sevensil explains (figures 4.24 and 4.25):

The reception room was organized in European style. Not so gorgeous but elegant furniture made the environment resemble to a secondary room of a European noble. Dinners were also given there and it is observed that the cupboard is occupied completely with the porcelains which were collected carefully and tastefully in a course of time including precious dinnerware such as Sevres.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>105</sup> Ibid, p. 19.



**Figure 4.24: Hüseyin Rahmi and Aliye hanım in the former living/dining room, photograph, unknown date source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar House-museum)**



**Figure 4.25: Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar and Aliye Hanım in the former living/dining room, photograph, unknown date source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar House-museum )**

After leaving this room, a hall is observed. On the right are two rooms: the first room (figure 4.18, part 3) is not allowed to visit, yet, presumably, it was used formerly as a cellar, and is presently used as a storeroom, and the second room (figure 4.18, part 4) is used today by the son of the museum caretaker, but its former function is not known. It was planned as a room for researchers at the time of the opening of the museum. As Farsakoğlu explains, as a future project, it is intended to call the researchers to stay and study there for long durations.<sup>106</sup> On the left side of the hall

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<sup>106</sup> Interview with Farsakoğlu, August 2009.

are three other rooms: the first room is a bathroom (figure 4.18, part 5), renovated during the restoration period, and the second is a kitchen (figure 4.18, part 6), renovated as well for the caretaker's everyday use; however, presently, it is used as a storeroom, since the caretaker, Nevin Sergül, uses the kitchen on the basement floor.

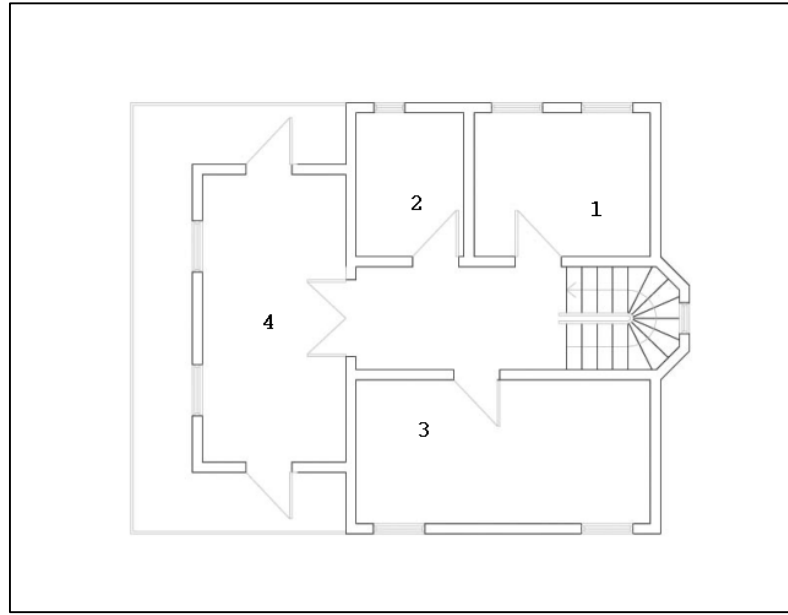


**Figure 4.26: Small room in the ground floor**  
source: (author, December 2007)

The third room on the left (figure 4.18, part 7), which is relatively small in size, exhibits a sofa right across the room entrance, on which laid a rug (figure 4.26), and next to it is a nacre inlaid coffee table, on which is a painting, leaned to the wall, depicting a shepherd with his herd. On the right side of the room is a cabinet, in which the rest of Hüseyin Rahmi's library including *Mai ve Siyah* (1938) and *Aşk-ı Memnu* (1939) by *Halit Ziya Uşaklıgil*, and *Fahim Bey ve Biz* (1941) by *Abdülhak Şinasi Hisar*, printed by Hilmi Publications. In the cabinet, Hüseyin Rahmi's archive, including his correspondences, press clippings of his novels' episodes, stories formerly cut by him, postcards collected by him, his hand-written notebooks, lacework copies and other handicraft patterns, and his novel drafts re-collected in binders, are displayed as well.

On the left side is a glass cabinet, in which some recently re-printed copies of the books written by Hüseyin Rahmi, translated into modern Turkish by Kemal Bek and printed by Özgür Publications, are exhibited. These books are *Mürebbiye* (1997),

*Efsuncu Baba (1995), İki Hodüğün Seyahati/Kesik Baş (1995), Ben Deli Miyim?(1996), Gulyabani/Gönül Ticareti/Melek Sanmıştım Şeytanı (1999), Metres (1998), Şık (1997), Cadı/Toraman (1996), Nimet Şinas/Hakka Sığındık/Meyhanede Kadınlar (1995), Utanmaz Adam (1997), Zamane Eleştirmenlerine Cevap/Cadı Çarpıyor/Şakavet-i Edebiyye/Edebiyat Haydutluğu (1998), Mezardan Kalkan Şehit/Eti Senin Kemiği Benim/Tünelden İlk Çıkış (1995).* Besides, another book, consisting of Hüseyin Rahmi's letters, edited by Abdullah and Gülçin Tanrıkulu, is placed there.



**Figure 4.27: Sketch of the first floor plan**  
(source: Y. Yeşim Uysal, 2009)

After climbing the stairs to the first floor, on the right are the room, designed as Hüseyin Rahmi's study (figure 4.27, part 1), and a toilet (figure 4. 27, part 2), on the left is the bedroom (figure 4. 27, part 3) and the room on the opposite direction is designed as the dining room (figure 4. 27, part 4). The first room, the study, is furnished with a writing desk (figures 4.28 and 4.29), and a rocking chair on the right, a sliding cupboard, a display shelf, and a horizontal showcase on the left, all of which are made of wood. On the sliding cupboard, exhibited as closed, are a camera

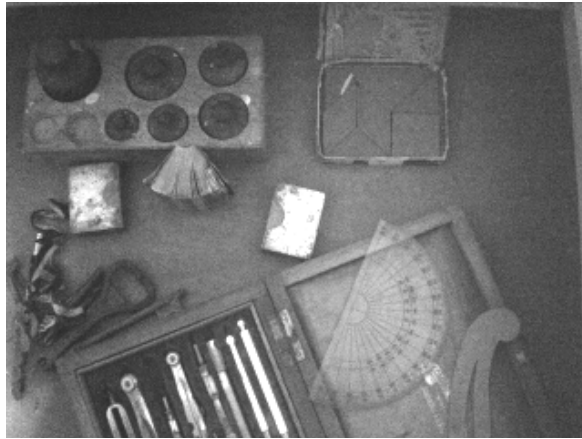
and its case. Besides, the showcase, located next to the cupboard, displays various objects that belong supposedly to Hüseyin Rahmi, including a small silver spoon, a pocket watch, a medal, a compass and ruler set, numerous door keys in various sizes, three miniature books, which are probably Quran, a bottle opener, a play box, a small weighing machine and its weight nuggets, paper clips, and a water level gage (figures 4.30 and 4.31). It should be noted here that it is not known which pieces in the showcase and in particular, in the house in general, belong to Colonel Hulusi Bey.



**Figure 4.28: Writing desk**  
source: (Sevil Enginsoy Ekinci, August 2009)



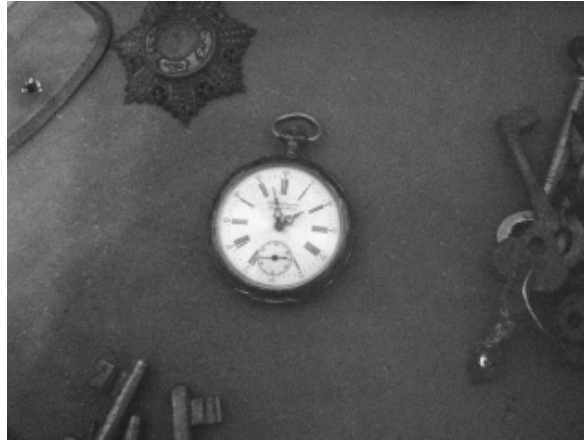
**Figure 4.29: Writing desk**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 4.30: Some of Hüseyin Rahmi's belongings**  
source: (author, June 2009)

The display shelf, located on the far left corner is reserved for personal belongings as well, such as two tabletop globe models, a flask, some office equipment made of glass, a small sized Quran and a souvenir, made out of clay like a miniature relief, depicting a classical building and coming from Russia, various souvenirs, bibelots, small crystal paperweights, a small marble woman torso, a barometer, a silver candleholder, a box of typewriter ink, an outer can for a flask, a tin jewel case painted like flower figures in colour, and various small sized silver plates. Apart

from these, there are some small photographs in sepia colour, put in different shelves, showing Mustafa Kemal and a crowd behind him, a woman holding a cat on her lap, and Hüseyin Rahmi with his friends. Above the shelves is the signature of II. Abdülhamit, framed and hung on the wall.



**Figure 4.31: Some of Hüseyin Rahmi's belongings**  
source: (author, June 2009)

The walls of the room are decorated with many photographs, displaying acquaintances, family and friendship memoir of Hüseyin Rahmi. In a photograph, located on the right wall, a woman who is not known by the museum visitor is depicted. It can be his mother's photograph taken before she died or his aunt-in-law's which is more probable, considering that his mother passed away when she was 22 years old and that the woman in the photograph seems at an older age. On the right side of this frame, we observe Celal Bayar's photograph, the third president of the republic who remained in the office between the years 1950-1960 and on the left side is a pencil drawing which depicts Namık Kemal, a 19<sup>th</sup> century poet of Turkish Literature who lived between 1840 and 1888.

On the writing desk, located on the right side of the room, whose wooden surface is highly eroded probably due to the dampness it was exposed throughout the years, is a book, written in Ottoman script, remained opened as if Hüseyin Rahmi has just left reading it. On the book is a type of bookmark made of tin and mica. Surrounding the

book are his reading glasses and some office equipments, such as pens, crystal bottles for pen ink, a paper knife and a crystal ash tray. Under the ash tray are calendar sheets of *Ebuzziya Takvimi*. The page at the top shows the date of Friday, March 24, 1944. Next to the desk are two small boxes in which there are pens, inkwells, bullets, which were probably used for the gun stolen during museum transformation, small papers and carton pieces written in Ottoman script and a souvenir from Venice. Some of them are former cigarette papers which were put in a cloth bag.

A wall clock made of wood is hung onto the wall, backside of the writing desk. On the right side of the desk is a rocking chair with a khaki and flowery velvet cloth on it. On the wall of the right side, we observe some photographs. These are again family photographs with the exception of the one in which Hüseyin Rahmi himself posed in the living room of the house with its former decoration. Other photographs display three women portraits; however, there is not any information about who is who.

In Hüseyin Rahmi's lifetime, this room looked different than today. As Sevengil describes:

In the large study, situated in the upstairs, a large European writing desk, located at one corner, and bookshelves in another corner, look like an exceptional oriental hall. The couch, cushions, nacre inlaid smoking chairs and various other things here and there are pleasing and easy on the eye.<sup>107</sup>

It seems that Hüseyin Rahmi's library was placed in his study in his lifetime and the writing desk was larger than the one exhibited today. Besides, as Sevengil states, a corner of the former study was designed in oriental style (figures 4.32 and 4.33). In light of these, it can be said that the photograph above was taken in Hüseyin Rahmi's study since it conforms to Sevengil's descriptions. Furthermore, considering that

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<sup>107</sup> Sevengil (1944), pp. 19-20.



Sevengil observed Hüseyin Rahmi's study as the largest room of the first floor, the room exhibited today as the study is not the original one. In addition to Sevengil, Bayazoğlu also supports that the study, decorated in oriental style, was located above the dining room in Hüseyin Rahmi's lifetime:

Upstairs of this room, there was his study where decorated in oriental style. The desk and the library where he wrote his works were ebony and the writing equipment was crystal cut...On the couches were laid specially textured gobelins. Cigarette tables were covered with ivory.<sup>108</sup>



**Figure 4.32: Hüseyin Rahmi in his study while reading, unknown photographer/ date (source: Gürpınar, 2008, p.4)**

The second room on the first floor is designed as Hüseyin Rahmi's bedroom. After entering the room, on the left side is a table, on which the combs, the razors and the bowls as a set Hüseyin Rahmi used for personal care are observed (figure 4.34), together with some bars of soap, probably made of olive oil. It is not certain whether these soaps were there before or they were put with decorative intention. Next to the table, is a stove, and on the far left corner is a wooden chair, onto which a knitted bag

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<sup>108</sup> Bayazoğlu (1997), p.36.

produced by Hüseyin Rahmi is placed. Between the stove and the table is a wooden corner-commode, on which we observe an iron and a Quran whose pages were torn away. To the right, a bed is observed with a bed cover Hüseyin Rahmi embroidered years ago, which is soured, even torn (figure 4.35).



**Figure 4.33: Hüseyin Rahmi in his study  
unknown photographer/ date  
source: (Sevengil, 1944, p. 49)**



**Figure 4.34: Personal care equipment of Hüseyin Rahmi**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 4.35: Bed of Hüseyin Rahmi**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 4.36: Wardrobe of Hüseyin Rahmi**  
source: (author, December 2007)

Next to the bed, on the right, is another commode, on which a gaslight chandelier, a pair of fawn leather gloves, an outer can for a flask, similar to the one we see in his study, a jewel case, and a childhood photograph are displayed, and Hüseyin Rahmi's black dinner coat with a black hat, hung up on a coat-hanger, is located next to the commode. Below is a pair of shoes, which seem relatively new and shiny. On the

right side of the room is a wardrobe, where Hüseyin Rahmi's jackets, night dressing, cushions, bed covers and some other gloves are exhibited (figure 4.36). In addition to all these, in the room, on the walls, Hüseyin Rahmi's two famous oil-paintings, depicting two women with two different styles, are placed.

The third room on the first floor is the dining room, where the visitors are welcomed with a prepared dining table, across the entrance, which seems ready to invite some guests (figure 4.37) by evoking a theatrical scene and/or depicting the everyday life as if the writer invited his friends for dinner. On the left side of the room are a cabinet and a large non-portable radio with cupboard. The cabinet exhibits glass and porcelain tableware, placed gently; yet, a broken porcelain plate placed at the top can also be seen (figure 4.38). It seems that this plate is placed there arbitrarily; yet, it summarizes the condition of the fragile pieces in the house, most of which are broken. On the radio, a small porcelain pitcher, and a leather box, and inside its cupboard part a set of a porcelain tray, a sugar basin and two vases can be observed.



**Figure 4.37: Dining room**  
source: (author, December 2007)

Behind the dining table, is another cabinet, on which a glass tableware and a bottle of unopened *Gordon Rouge*, (figure 4.40) are placed.<sup>109</sup> Inside the cabinet, next to the porcelains, organized smoothly, various broken porcelain plates, crystals and bibelots, all mixed up in a box, are seen (figure 4.41). As the museum caretaker Nevin Sergül states, these pieces are waiting for a professional to repair them.<sup>110</sup> The far right corner of the room, next to the cabinet, is decorated with a coffee table and two chairs. On the table, Turkish coffee cups are displayed. On the right side of the entrance are shelves, exhibiting the glass and the crystal sets. Above the shelves on the wall are three ceramic plates, depicting some views of Golden Horn, İstanbul. On the walls of the room are also some oil paintings, one of which illustrates the coast of Tophane, İstanbul.



**Figure 4.38: porcelains and glasses**  
source: (author, December 2007)

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<sup>109</sup> As I have observed during my later visits, this bottle is not displayed any longer.

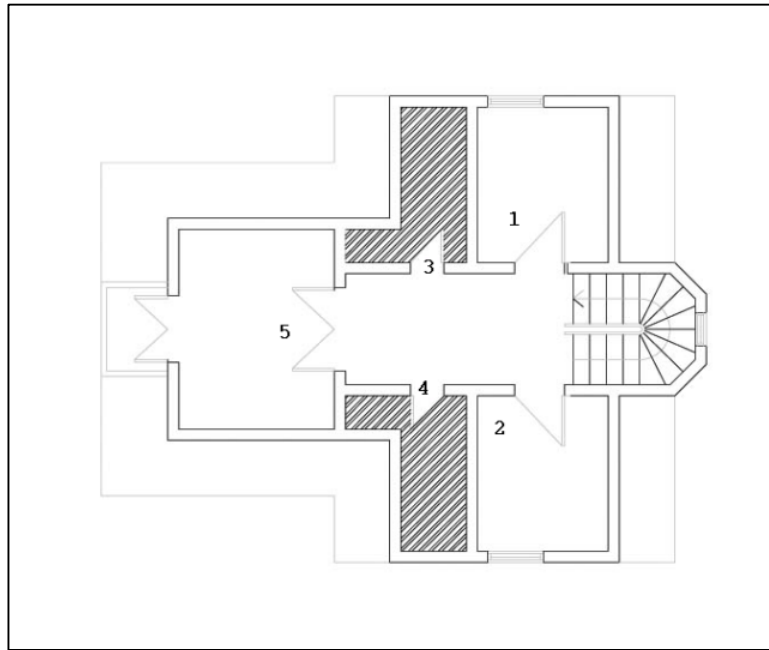
<sup>110</sup> Interview with Nevin Sergül, April 2009.



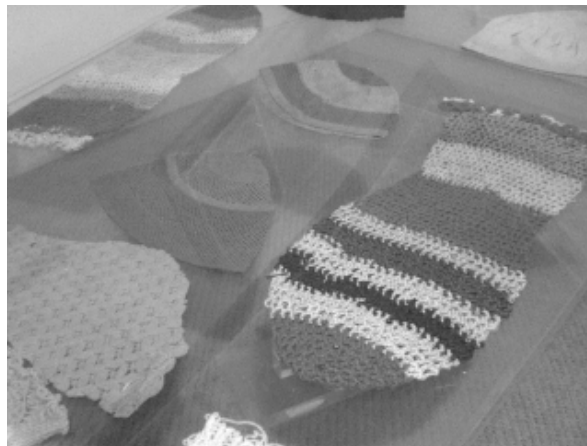
**Figure 4.39: Broken plate**  
source: (author, December 2007)

The attic floor of the house has three rooms. On the left and right sides of the stairs are two small rooms (figure 4.40, parts 1 and 2), equal in size, and reserved for photographs and handiworks of Hüseyin Rahmi, two storage rooms (figure 4.40, parts 3 and 4), again on both sides, designed as built-in closets, and across the staircase is Colonel Hulusi Bey's room (figure 4.40, part 5). After climbing the stairs to the floor, a hall is observed, on both sides of which are two showcases, exhibiting family photographs of Hüseyin Rahmi.

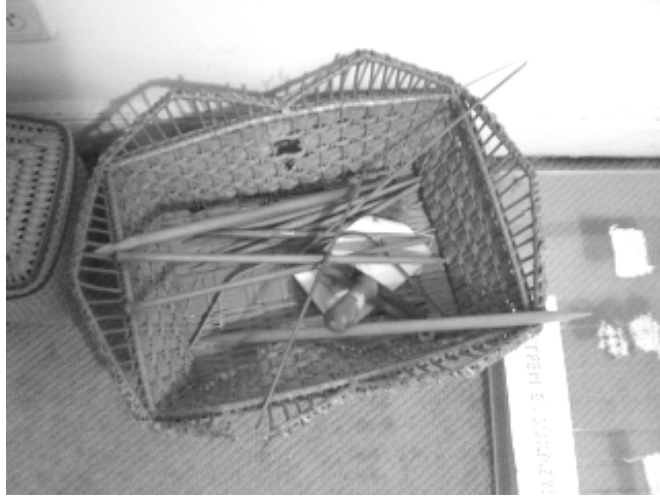
The first room displays Hüseyin Rahmi's knitted handiworks, such as berets and caps in various colours and types, hand towels, some pieces whose function indefinite, a whisket in which we observe his knitting needles, and also his laceworks and embroideries in various shapes, and paper drafts of lacework patterns (figures 4.41 and 4.42). All of these are put between two large sheets of micas with the aim of protecting them, laid on both sides of the room vertically.



**Figure 4.40: Sketch of the attic floor plan**  
source: (Y. Yeşim Uysal, 2009)



**Figure 4.41: Handiworks by Hüseyin Rahmi**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 4.42: Knitting equipment**  
source: (author, December 2007)

In the second room, similar exhibition technique is used as in the room, where Hüseyin Rahmi's handiworks are displayed. Accordingly, many photographs showing Hüseyin Rahmi in his youth times, with his family and friends and collected postcards are placed (figure 4.43) between two sheets of micas and also around the room in the form of catalogues. Furthermore, his ID card, another card his membership of the parliament, some other postcards and photographs are hung on the walls. At the entrance of the room, it is written that he used some of these photographs as a material of his novels.





**Figure 4.43: Photographs**  
source: (author, December 2007)



**Figure 4.44: View from the balcony**  
source: (author, December 2007)

The other room on this floor is designed as the room of Colonel Hulusi Bey. Having a fine view of Heybeli Island Clergy School (figures 4.44 and 4.45), the room is decorated very simply. On the right side is a bed, covered with a yellow bed cover (figure 4.46), At the bearing end of the bed is a white wooden commode, on which a white cloth is placed and next to the commode are shelves consisting of three parts, where a gaslight chandelier, a glass pitcher, a small cloth, embroidered by Hüseyin Rahmi, similar to the ones exhibited in the room on the attic floor, located on the right side of the staircase, and two night lamps.



**Figure 4.45: Aliye hanım and Hüseyin Rahmi in the balcony, unknown photographer/ date  
source: (Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar House-museum)**

Next to this commode, below the roof slope, facing the northwest, on the wall is Hulusi Bey's oil-painted picture, which was rescued just by chance at the time of museum transformation.<sup>111</sup>As Can Sayiner and also Hatice Farsakoğlu state, when they went down to the basement floor and observed the furniture forgotten in a disordered condition, a pair of eye drew their attention from a torn section of the paper with which the painting was covered. After they tore the paper cover completely, they came across this painting. As Sayiner recalls that moment, "his

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<sup>111</sup> Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 40.

looks was appealing for being rescued (figures 4.47 and 4.48).”<sup>112</sup> On the left side of the room are a stove, a table, covered with a beige cloth, a glass pitcher on it, a chair behind the table and a single blue armchair next to the table.



**Figure 4.46: Colonel Hulusi Bey’s bed**  
source: (author, December 2007)

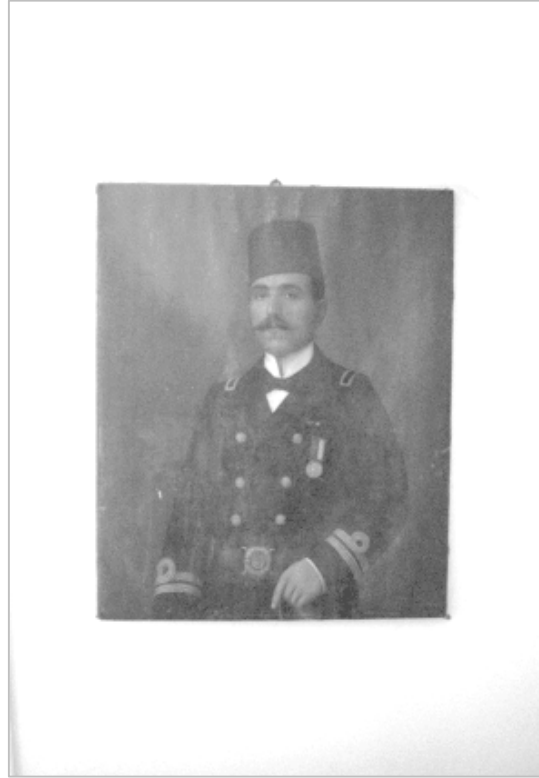


**Figure 4.47: Painting, depicting Colonel Hulusi Bey as found in the basement, unknown photographer/date**  
source: (Farsakoğlu et al, unknown date, p. 31)

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<sup>112</sup> Batur, Enis (2008b), p. 195.

In Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum, the first impression I had as a visitor was the lived and hence exhausted character of the house which can be traced by on its dilapidated façade, broken porcelains, rotten bed covers, worn out carpets and in the smell of humidity and naphthalene. After informed on its long and complicated story, of transformation into a museum, I now believe that what made the house “lived” is actually the trouble experienced during the transformation process, and unsolved even today as we witness the facades still deteriorating and the unorganized objects still remaining in the cupboards. In other words, what rendered the house-museum as “old” and “lived” was not the years themselves but the story of the museum that covered those years.



**Figure 4.48: Painting, depicting Colonel Hulusi Bey**  
source: (author, June 2009)

Enis Batur, as one of the visitors of the museum, points out that “we cannot know to what extent the house reorganized in a way that conforms to the real condition of the house.”<sup>113</sup> Although his observation can also be valid for the other house-museums, what makes this museum a special example is that it denounces itself as a constructed space, as a “set-up.”

Although the museum was initiated in 2000, it did not have a visitor register until the beginning of the year 2009 when Nevin Sergül was appointed as the caretaker of museum.<sup>114</sup> Therefore, we do not witness too many visitor comments. In sporadic ones, we encounter complaints stating that the museum is neglected and that it needs to be repaired and restored. Actually, the museum was closed in 2007 by the Prince Islands Foundation to construct a work place on the basement floor, which would be used to do necessary restoration of the house.<sup>115</sup> Nevertheless, the museum was re-opened at the beginning of 2009 and it was explained by the foundation that the real problem of keeping the museum closed was the absence of a caretaker/officer.<sup>116</sup> For two years, the foundation has contacted with the Ministry of Culture to initiate a series of restoration works on the house and very recently, it reached its aim by receiving a budget from İstanbul Provincial Administration in September, 2009.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid, p. 123.

<sup>114</sup> Before the museum was closed in 2007, in an unknown date, Enis Batur visited the museum and he talked with an elderly man and his wife who watched the house and lived on basement floor, reserved for the officers (Ibid , p. 121).

<sup>115</sup> Ümit Ayaz, Adalar Association, December 2007.

<sup>116</sup> Ümit Ayaz, Adalar Association, April 2009.

<sup>117</sup> After the restoration, they intend to reserve one of the rooms on the ground floor to show educational films (Interview with Hatice Farsakoğlu, August 2009).

## CHAPTER 5

### OTHER LITERARY SPACES: MUSEUMS, EXHIBITIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

After examining the literary house-museums in İstanbul closely, it would be suggestive to look at other examples exhibiting authorship in different spaces other than house-museum settings.<sup>1</sup>

#### 5.1 KEMAL TAHİR FOUNDATION

Kemal Tahir (1910-1973) Foundation is an in-between space since it was used as a house formerly yet it functions as the office of the foundation presently open to visitors. It is a flat, located on the ground floor of Alan apartment building on Alan Street in Şaşkınbakkal. Kemal Tahir lived there five years before he died. In 1975, it was transformed into the office in 1975 through the efforts of Semiha Tahir, Melda Kalyoncu Erduran and Sabire Dostoğlu.<sup>2</sup>

During this transformation, the interior design of the house was preserved as much as possible including the original furnishing. Today, after entering the house from the garden, a large room welcomes the guests, which was used both as the study of Kemal Tahir and the living room of the house. Presently this room is used as the

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<sup>1</sup> It is significant to refer here to “Literary Museum and Literature Archive” in İstanbul, founded by Turkish Union for Writers. This museum exhibits the writers in Turkish literature through documents such as photographs, correspondances as wells as some of the writers’ belongings.

<sup>2</sup> Kalyoncu worked in translation of the documents related to Kemal Tahir and Dostoğlu translated the writings of Tahir in Ottoman script. Information given by Levent Karaköse, officer, Kemal Tahir Foundation, during the interview on April 2009.

office of the foundation. On the left side of the room, a large table is placed in order to do official works. Near this table on the back side, the typewriter of Kemal Tahir is observed (figure 5.1). On the right side of the entrance, there is the writing desk of Kemal Tahir and, behind the table is his library in the form of long bookcases shelving thousands of books (figure 5.2). On the walls of the room, we, as visitors see some photographs depicting him, his family and his friends and we, as guests rather than visitors, are allowed to sit on the armchairs of the living room which stand in front of the writing desk and to even to touch Tahir's cardigan<sup>3</sup> hung on his chair.



**Figure 5.1: Typewriter of Kemal Tahir**  
source: (author, March 2009)



**Figure 5.2: Writing desk of Kemal Tahir**  
Source: (author, March 2009)

After passing through a corridor, where we also observe some other bookcases including a rotating bookshelf, are two rooms, a toilet, a bathroom, and a kitchen. In the room located at the end of the corridor on the left side, there are two beds, a commode on in between of them and a vase of flowers on it, a cabinet still preserving suits, hats, shoes, gloves and some other personal belongings of Semiha and Kemal Tahir, some suitcases near the cabinet and on the cabinet, a sewing machine branded *Minerva*. Besides, there is a bookcase in the room, including some old-dated newspapers, on which Kemal Tahir's bust and two lamps without their shades are present. On the backside of the door, we observe some woman bags, probably

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<sup>3</sup> Anonymous Writer (2005), "Kemal Tahir Vakfi Suadiye'de Çalışıyor", *Gazete Kadıköy*, December 12, [http://www.gazetekadikoy.com/home.asp?id=6&kategori\\_id=3&yazi\\_id=364](http://www.gazetekadikoy.com/home.asp?id=6&kategori_id=3&yazi_id=364), accessed: 06.09.2009.

belonging to Semiha Tahir, as well. On the walls of the room, two photographs of Kemal Tahir are placed depicting him while smoking and thinking. In addition to all of this, the mould of his face and his hand are found within two separate boxes in the cabinet located in this room, however, they are not publicly displayed yet the officers may show them to the visitors on request (figure 5.3).



**Figure 5.3: Mask of Kemal Tahir**  
source: (author, March 2009)

In the second room, the archive of Kemal Tahir and of the foundation is kept well ordered. So it is not only an office room of the foundation but also a place where the drafts and copies of the books written by Kemal Tahir and printed by Ithaki Publications are preserved. While the drafts are placed in cabinets, the copies are shelved in a bookcase.<sup>4</sup>

So, what is remarkable about this apartment is that it is not a museum but a living space used by the officers of the foundation. Yet it is not simply an office since it still keeps the spatial and material characteristics of Kemal Tahir's house. In this sense, it resembles a literary house-museum, "a small Kemal Tahir museum" with his cardigans on his chair, his books, his belongings and his bed, as a visitor/writer

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<sup>4</sup> I had a chance to see one of the drafts since Levent Karaköse showed one of them, the draft of *Yorgun Savaşçı* to me which is written in Ottoman script, April 2009.



points out.<sup>5</sup> So, the only difference is the aim which is not to exhibit the house but to use it in every sense of the word. Accordingly, the bathroom and the kitchen of the house have not been demolished or restored and they are still used by the officers of the foundation. As one of these users of the house/office, Levent Karaköse makes coffee for himself and for the visitors/guests. I felt in my visit that although the house is used for another purpose, that is, office place, and the space is appropriated accordingly, in other words, it is touched every time contrary to a house-museum where touching is forbidden, it still seems “untouched.”

## 5.2 ORHAN KEMAL MUSEUM

Orhan Kemal museum was founded on behalf of Orhan Kemal<sup>6</sup> (1914-1970) in 2000, with the efforts of his family and especially of his son, Işık Öğütçü. The museum is located in an apartment building on Akarsu Street in Cihangir and managed by Orhan Kemal Cultural Centre. Remarkably, however, it was not Orhan Kemal’s house. Actually, he lived in some other houses and in some other districts of İstanbul, namely in Tarlabası, Balat, Unkapanı, Fatih, and Basıncıköy,<sup>7</sup> after he and his family had left Adana and come to İstanbul in 1951.<sup>8</sup> When they arrived in İstanbul, they found a cheap hotel and then they stayed in the house of a friend of Orhan Kemal’s in Kasımpaşa, named İzzet where his family, which was made up of five people including him, lived for three months, together with his friend’s family, consisting of eight people.<sup>9</sup> Afterwards they moved to Fener, yet this house was sold in 1952 and they moved to another house, located behind Cibali Tobacco Factory in Unkapanı<sup>10</sup> on Fırın street, number 20<sup>11</sup> where they lived for twelve years.<sup>12</sup> Today this street is

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<sup>5</sup> Anonymous Writer (2005).

<sup>6</sup> His real name is Raşit Öğütçü. Uğurlu, Nurer (2002), “Hey Koca Nazım” in *Orhan Kemal’in İkbal Kahvesi*, İstanbul: Örgün, p. 243.

<sup>7</sup> Özarslan (2007), p. 8 .

<sup>8</sup> Uğurlu (2002), p. 249. This date is stated as 1950 by Asım Bezirci (1984), *Orhan Kemal*, İstanbul: Tekin, p. 27. To be able to migrate to İstanbul, they sold the furniture of their house (Ibid).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid, p. 28.

<sup>11</sup> Özarslan (2007), p. 8.

named “Orhan Kemal Street” and on the wall of that house, a plaque, stating that “Orhan Kemal inhabited here,” is placed.<sup>13</sup>

Although Işık Öğütçü had initially tried to transform Orhan Kemal’s house in Cibali, (Balat) into a museum, he had to change his mind due to some legal problems,<sup>14</sup> and decided to establish such a museum in Cihangir, a culturally popular district in the city, to attract more people to visit.<sup>15</sup> So, he founded the museum in the building he owns<sup>16</sup> by transferring Orhan Kemal’s some personal belongings to the first floor, he organized a room of this flat like a house-museum space, as if Orhan Kemal had once lived there. According to Öğütçü, Orhan Kemal desired to have a museum during his lifetime. So, through the patience and efforts of his mother in protecting the belongings of Orhan Kemal, he could realize his father’s desire.<sup>17</sup>

After entering the museum, the visitor passes through a narrow corridor and a large hall, where Orhan Kemal’s photographs,<sup>18</sup> paintings given to him as gifts, enlarged and printed copies of his notes and diaries are hung on the walls, and his books, published in Turkish and in foreign languages are placed. Besides, his bust on a corner, together with his and his father’s belongings displayed in showcases such as his beads, a coffee cup, and letters are observed. At the end of the hall, the visitor reaches a room, designed as Orhan Kemal’s study with his writing desk and a typewriter, a table agenda, pens, the draft file of the novel *Vukuat Var* (1958) which was he wrote in 35 days<sup>19</sup> on the table (figure 5.4), and his library in two bookcases

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<sup>12</sup> Özarşlan, Sevinç (2008), “Orhan Kemal’in Oğlu: Babamı Çok Kıskanıyorum”, *Zaman Cumartesi*, June 14.

<sup>13</sup> Özarşlan (2007), p. 8.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Gölbaşı, Oylum (2002) “Edebiyat Seninle Gurur Duyuyor”, *Öküz*, October 2002, <http://www.orhankemal.org/links/93.htm>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> In the museum, 70 photographs of Orhan Kemal are exhibited in total. İncesu, Kadir (2008), “Işık Öğütçü ile Orhan Kemal Müzesi’nde Babası Üzerine Konuştuk”, *Birgün*, June 2, 2008, <http://www.orhankemal.org/links/447.htm>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

on the left and the right of the writing desk, and also as a bedroom (figure 5.5) with his coats exhibited on mannequins (figures 5.6 and 5.7) and with his bed on which his mask, who was moulded in Bulgaria, is displayed.<sup>20</sup>



**Figure 5.4: Writing desk of Orhan Kemal**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 5.5: Bedroom of Orhan Kemal**  
source: (author, August 2007)

In addition to all this, we observe some photographs hung on the walls, a brazier which he used to get warm when firewood or coal was exhausted, a chandelier lamp which he used while writing, a prize given to him, a tray which he used to knead “çiğ köfte”,<sup>21</sup> and on a shelf of the bookcase located on the right, a backgammon which he loved playing,<sup>22</sup> a radio, a record player and a disc of Ruhi Su.

Işık Öğütçü opened “İkbal Kahvesi” (İkbal Coffe House) on the ground floor of the apartments as a café and bookstore where the visitors may have rest, drink a coffee or tea and may buy Orhan Kemal’s books.<sup>23</sup> It is known that Orhan Kemal liked going to coffee houses. He spent his daytime in Beyoğlu, Karaköy, Cibali, Sirkeci, Kumkapı, and Cağaloğlu. Mostly he and his friends got together in his favourite place, “İkbal Kahvesi” (İkbal Coffee House) in Nuruosmaniye to socialize, observe,

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Sansarcı, Sultan (2008), “Umut Etmeyi Onun Kitaplarından Öğrendi İnsanlar...”, *Sergistanbul*, December 2008, <http://www.orhankemal.org/links/509.htm>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

chat with his friends and study on his notes.<sup>24</sup> As Muzaffer Buyrukçu states, when he did not find anyone in the coffee house he got back to the house and began typing. After he finished working, he went outside again to make observations and meet with his friends:

We knew that he would turn back to Cibali, write until the lunch by typing, have a dead sleep on a full stomach and welcome us with a rested manner.<sup>25</sup>



**Figure 5.6: Mannequin representing Orhan Kemal**  
source: (author, August 2007)



**Figure 5.7: Mannequin representing Orhan Kemal**  
source: (author, August 2007)

Later, however, this coffee house, then, was closed and transformed into a carpet shop. After it was closed, Orhan Kemal did not find pleasure in going to any other coffee house and returned to his house in Fatih in the evenings,<sup>26</sup> because that coffee shop had been an indispensable part of his everyday life.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Erişik, Utku (2004), “Kara Gün Kararı Gitmez!”, *Gazete Kadıköy*, March 12-18, <http://www.orhankemal.org/links/123.htm>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>25</sup> Buyrukçu, Muzaffer (1984), *Orhan Kemal*, İstanbul: Milliyet, p. 99.

<sup>26</sup> Uğurlu (2002), p. 244.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 384.

So, it is because of Orhan Kemal's habit of going to İkbâl coffee house in Nuruosmaniye and strolling around Beyoğlu, Işık Öğütçü organized "İkbâl Kahvesi" on the ground floor of the apartment building as a coffee house and established the museum in Cihangir. In a way, he associates his father particularly with Beyoğlu. For him, Orhan Kemal's interest on Beyoğlu as a place in his life to spend time and on which he also wrote in his novels pave the way for this museum to be opened in Cihangir.<sup>28</sup>

Remarkably, the case of Orhan Kemal museum is different from the aforementioned literary house-museums for the simple reason that it was not originally his house. In other words, the house has not been transformed into a museum, but his "authorship" has been "housed" and "materialized" in this space, and especially in the study/bedroom. In this sense, it is a significant example that with the "theme" of this room, this museum is constructed like a "house-museum" through a "stage" design. Furthermore, its location in Cihangir, as has been already noted, plays an active role in this construction. However, it seems that this location falls short of meeting Işık Öğütçü's expectations, since he admits that there is not so much interest in the museum<sup>29</sup>. Moreover, considering that Orhan Kemal suffered economically during his lifetime<sup>30</sup> and also that Cihangir is inhabited today largely by people "distinguished" not only by their cultural capitals but also by their incomes, it is questionable to what extent this location is compatible with the districts where Orhan Kemal actually lived.

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<sup>28</sup> Öğütçü, Işık (2008), "Beyoğlu'nda yaşayan Bir Müze", *Beyoğlu*, April 2008, <http://www.orhankemal.org/links/468.htm>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>29</sup> İncesu, Kadir (2008). "Işık Öğütçü ile Orhan Kemal Müzesi'nde Babası Üzerine Konuştuk", *Birgün*, June 2, accessed: 06.09.2009

<sup>30</sup> Uğurlu (2002), p. 288.

### 5.3 YAHYA KEMAL MUSEUM

Although Yahya Kemal (1884-1958)<sup>31</sup> Museum resembles house-museums in terms of its collection, it is not founded in a house. Rather, it is placed in a two-storey building within Merzifonlu Kara Mustafa Paşa Külliyesi in Bayazıt. This building and the entire space in the Külliye was allotted to Yahya Kemal Institute in 1960 after it was restored.<sup>32</sup> This institute was established as a part of İstanbul Conquest Association, which initiated in 1950 to celebrate the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of İstanbul's conquest. Afterwards, within the body of the association, two institutes were formed: Yahya Kemal Institute and İstanbul Institute. Yahya Kemal was a member of the association, so after he passed away in 1958 it is suggested to constitute such an institute in the name of Yahya Kemal by Nihad Sami Banarlı. The first motive of the institute was to print books of Yahya Kemal, because in Yahya Kemal's lifetime his works were never printed, even some of his writings and poems were in a state of handwriting. Accordingly, Yahya Kemal Institute organized and published these writings and later constituted a museum on behalf of Yahya Kemal. Then in 1961, Yahya Kemal Museum was established.<sup>33</sup>

It is known that Yahya Kemal spent almost his whole life by travelling<sup>34</sup> and also that he never had a house, but lived in guest houses, in the house of his family

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<sup>31</sup> Shortly Yahya Kemal, though it is told that his real name is Mehmet Agah, according to his brother Reşat Beyatlı his real name is Ahmet Agah. Uyguner, Muzaffer (1968), *Yahya Kemal Beyatlı: Hayatı, Sanatı, Eserleri*, İstanbul: Varlık, p. 3.

<sup>32</sup> Tanrıseven, Rümeyza (2008), "Büyük Şairin Dünyasına Açılan Bir Pencere...Yahya Kemal", Tüm Gazeteler Web Site, <http://www.tumgazeteler.com/?a=2506825>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>33</sup> Yahya Kemal Institute web page (2009), "Yahya Kemal Enstitüsü Hakkında", <http://www.yahyakemalenstitusu.org.tr/kurum.asp>, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>34</sup> Uysal, Sermet Sami (2006), *Şiire Adanmış Bir Yaşam*, İstanbul: Bilge p. 97. The years between 1903 and 1912 were spent in Paris where he desired to go to college though he could not finish it and he was in a real financial difficulty. This situation did not change while he returned to İstanbul; he was again jobless and had financial problems. In his memoir, Yakup Kadri Karaosmanoğlu talks about how they provided accommodation for Yahya Kemal in the living room of their house where Yakup Kadri and his mother lived together (Batur, Enis, 1998, "Yahya Kemal'in Bavulu", in *Pek Sevgili Beybabacığım*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 8). From 1913 to 1920, he lived in *Prinkipo* (Büyükkada). Then in 1920, he stayed in the manor house of Hamide Hanım in Bebek as a lodger and he purchased for a room in the house in Fuat Pasha Tomb that Hamdullah Suphi rented (Uysal, 2006, pp. 160, 162). Until

members and friends, rented rooms<sup>35</sup> and hotels.<sup>36</sup> According to Gültekin Emre, he had so many addresses throughout his life that even he could not count them.<sup>37</sup> Even though he felt himself strange when he stayed for the first time in a hotel in Marseilles, he did not own any house and preferred to stay in hotels.

Though, he could not place himself to anywhere, his last return to İstanbul made him feel that “he is at home”.<sup>38</sup> The theme of returning home is used by the critics as a metaphor of Yahya Kemal’s returning to Turkey. Even it is a title of a book written by Beşir Ayvazoğlu: *Eve Dönen Adam* (The Man Who Returns to Home).<sup>39</sup> For Haydar Ergülen, this theme indicates his return to the poetry, indeed, to the source of his poetry, that is, İstanbul. Besides, Ergülen adds that this metaphorical return has been highly discussed in recent years. Some mention that Yahya Kemal should have been “a man who escapes home” to be called than as “a man who returns to home”. This issue is examined in Beşir Ayvazoğlu’s book in detail.<sup>40</sup>

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1926, he went from Istanbul to Ankara since he was chosen as a member of the parliament (Ibid, p. 204). He spent the years between 1923 and 1948 abroad, namely in Lausanne, Warsaw, Geneva, Berlin, Bucharest, Madrid and then again Paris in embassies, hotels, or in his close friends’ houses (Emre, Gültekin, 2002, “Yahya Kemal’de Gurbet”, *Kitap-lık*, vol. 56, November-December p. 142). Between the years 1941-1946, he seldom went to Istanbul and stayed in Park Hotel in Ayazpaşa, Gümüşsuyu, and after his retirement from the embassy of Pakistan in 1949, he began to live in the same hotel (Uçman, Abdullah, 2002, “Mısra Benim Haysiyetimdir”, *Kitaplık*, vol. 56, November-December, p. 132). As Şavkar Altınel (Altınel, Şavkar, 2002, “Aşk ve sadelik: Eskimeyen Yahya kemal”, *Kitap-lık*, vol. 56, November-December, p. 139) and Enis Batur (Batur, 1998, p. 8) suggests, he stayed in the room, numbered 165, though Mehmet Can Doğan proposes that it was room 75 (Doğan, Mehmet Can, 2008, “İfrat ile Tefrit Arasında Yahya kemal”, *Kitap-lık*, vol. 121, November, p. 96). This difference arises from that before he went to the hospital where he died, he stayed lastly in the room numbered 75 (Şentürk, Şennur, 1998, *Cumhuriyet Şairinin Yalnız Adam Olarak Portresi*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 62), yet before this time he rested in his seldom visits in the room numbered 165.

<sup>35</sup> Yahya Kemal Beyatlı came from Skopje, where he was born, to Istanbul when he was in eighteen years old. There he stayed in a guest house together with his aunt’s husband (Emre, 2002, p. 142).<sup>35</sup> Then he spent that summer in a manor house of his enate. Afterwards, he went into another manor owned by Ibrahim Bey in Sarıyer (Uysal, 2006, p. 91). Before he travelled to Paris, he stayed in another guest house of a German owner located in Kadıköy (Emre, 2002, p. 142).

<sup>36</sup> Tanyol, Cahit (2002) “Yahya Kemal’de Yalnızlık” in *Kitap-lık*, vol. 56, November-December, p. 124.

<sup>37</sup> Emre (2002), p. 143.

<sup>38</sup> Ayvaz, Emre (2002), “Yahya Kemal’in Meleği”, *Kitap-lık*, vol. 56, November-December, p. 146.

<sup>39</sup> Ayvazoğlu, Beşir (1985), *Yahya Kemal: Eve Dönen Adam*, Ankara: Birlik.

<sup>40</sup> Ergülen, Haydar (2008), “Yahya Kemal’in Beş İstanbul’u”, *Kitap-lık*, vol: 121, November 2008, p. 87.

As Emre Gültekin proposes, Yahya Kemal was a man who every time felt and thought himself away from home. Leaving his country gave him pain because he sensed himself as homeless. Although he did not collect so many memoir in İstanbul and Skopje had an extensive coverage in his mind, he always missed İstanbul. According to Emre, why he missed İstanbul, rather than Skopje is that he realized the importance of İstanbul's history through the historical consciousness he developed and through which he found İstanbul fascinating.<sup>41</sup>

Cahit Tanyol states that solitude is a very evident theme in Yahya Kemal's biography. According to him, Yahya Kemal was in absolute solitude. For this reason, he attributed particular importance to the gatherings and meetings with his friends.<sup>42</sup> Once Yahya Kemal recommended Tanyol:

“Tanyol, before becoming a great poet, writer or thinker, I will recommend you three things that I could not realize. First, marry to someone, second, buy a house and the third, have sufficient money that will not be in need of the despicable. When I leave you, my friends, and turn back to my room in the Park Hotel, I feel that I fell into the dungeon of the solitude.”<sup>43</sup>

Tanyol is not the only reference pointing out Yahya Kemal's solitude in the life story of Yahya Kemal. In the introduction of the catalogue of the exhibition, titled “The Portrait of a Republican Poet As a Lonely Man” and organized by Yapı Kredi Culture, Art Publication Inc. in 1998, in the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death<sup>44</sup>, it is mentioned that what Yahya Kemal left, such as manuscripts, letters, drafts,

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<sup>41</sup> Emre (2002), p. 142.

<sup>42</sup> Tanyol (2002), p. 124.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

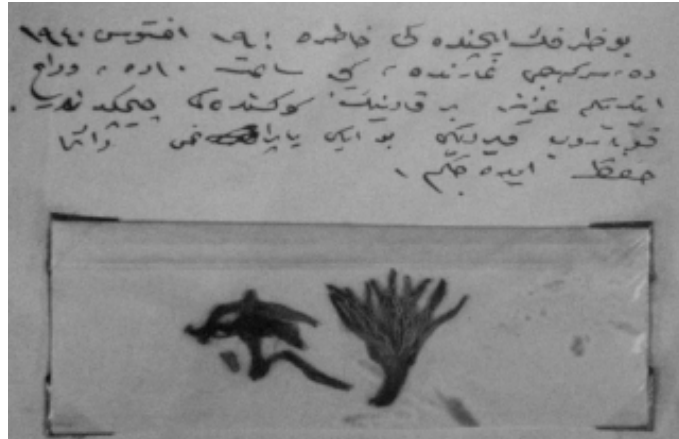
<sup>44</sup> For a discussion of this exhibition, see also “5.4 Exhibition Hall of Yapı Kredi Culture and Arts Corporation” in this thesis.



photographs and other personal belongings reflect how lonely he was. In this sense, his loneliness and his “homelessness” all complement each other<sup>45</sup>.

In Yahya Kemal Museum, on the ground floor of the museum, the books written by and for Yahya Kemal and printed by İstanbul Conquest Society, his correspondences, manuscripts and drafts, his ID and passport, member of parliament documents, notebooks, a bag on which his name is written, his certificate of graduation from İstanbul High Teacher Training Institute are exhibited within horizontal showcases.

Furthermore, in cabinets we also see a radio, some plaques and prizes Yahya Kemal won, two different perfume bottles and shaving set, two lighters and three cigarette boxes, his drafts, put in folders, two nail clippers, two pill boxes, a pocketknife, a cloth brush, and two bullets. On the walls, there are photographs, taken in Spain, and in Pakistan, during his post as ambassador. Apart from these, we come across with his bust on a corner as well.



**Figure 5.8: Piece of dried flower with a note given to Yahya Kemal, Uğur Ataç and Aydın Coşkun, 1998**  
source: (Şentürk, 1998, p. 59)

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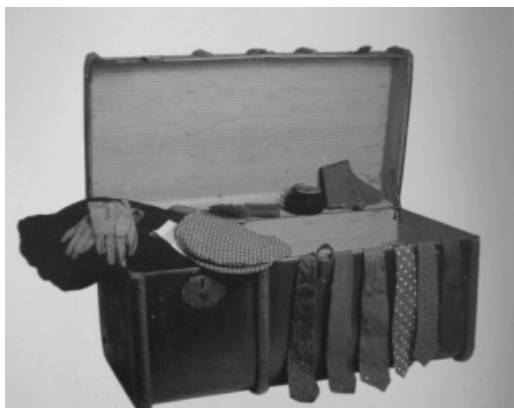
<sup>45</sup> Şentürk (1998), p. 5.

On the first floor, we find again some showcases within which the rubber stamp of Yahya Kemal, some coins from different places of the world, a pocket watch, a piece of dried flower with a note in Ottoman script (figure 5.8): “the keepsake in this envelope is the flower that was hanging on the bosom of the dress of a dearest lady I bade Farewell to on the nineteenth of august 1930, at 10 p.m. at Sirkeci railway station. I will always keep these two leaves she plucked for me”<sup>46</sup>, a tuft of hazel hair of an unknown woman within a silver box and a tuft of blonde hair of another unknown woman within a mica box bound with a rose ribbon, a Qoran which belongs to his mother on which Yahya Kemal’s birthday is written, a paperknife, a medallion, sunglasses, and two pen are exhibited. Besides, there is another bust in the room which is bronze. On the walls, various photographs are placed which depict Yahya Kemal with a child; in his last days in Cerrahpaşa Hospital; with Nihad Sami Banarlı; during his ambassadorship in Pakistan and Warsaw; playing golf in Warsaw, within a crowd in front of Türk Ocağı building, from his youth times, in his full length, and various others. In addition to these photographs, the document of İnönü Prize is also on the wall, as well as his shoe-suitcase and two other suitcases are observed in a corner of the room.

In addition to all these objects and belongings, in the middle of the room, there is a glass cabinet which dominates the entire space on the first floor metaphorically since it is the most eye-catching section of the room. Within the cabinet we observe the suitcases of Yahya Kemal and his belongings, such as a frock coat suit hanged on a hanger, ties in many different colours, golf sticks, four types of hats, jackets, gloves, leather shoes in black and dark brown, and a wardrobe suitcase within which a black-white jacket suit, various ties, and shoes are exhibited. Besides, the writing desk with drawers which he used in the times when he stayed in Park Hotel and on which a notebook, a glasses case on it, a paperweight next to them with some other details and a bamboo chair are put and are displayed and his walking stick is leaned to the side of the table.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 59.



**Figure 5.9: One of the suitcases of Yahya Kemal, Uğur Ataç and Aydın Coşkun, 1998 source: (Şentürk, 1998, p.70)**

Throughout his trips, Yahya Kemal went and returned together with one suitcase from Skopje to İstanbul in 1902, from İstanbul to Paris in 1903, from Paris to İstanbul in 1912. However, the last stop of his life was concluded with three suitcases (figure 5.9).<sup>47</sup> These suitcases in general are like the proof of having not any property. More than this, especially his wardrobe-suitcase implies that his house is indeed constructed within the miniature world of drawers and commodes of this suitcase. Thus, his wardrobe-suitcase (figure 5.10) with its connotations of both settling and moving has the potential of “constructing” any place as a Yahya Kemal’s house-museum.

Enis Batur also suggests that his portable suitcase represents a summary of not owning a home. As he explains, when Yahya Kemal moved from Park Hotel to Cerrahpaşa Hospital as his illness got worse, at the end of 19 years he spent in the hotel room he left three suitcases, five pairs of shoes and five hats there. According to the report, written at the time of his death, it was found three unfilled checks, 4,5 liras, a pocket watch branded as Cyma, a pair of silver and a pair of golden cuff links, a glasses case, a shaving brush and a shaving set, a lighter, nail clippers, two notebooks, three suits of pyjamas, a bag, a luggage, a walking stick, a complete

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<sup>47</sup> Batur (1998), p. 8.

prosthesis, a pair of pantoffles, three pairs of underwear, two shirts, a pair of shoes, two ties, a dressing gown, five pairs of sockets, a belt, a pair of suit, a topcoat, a hat, a pencil, two keys, three pockets of *Birinci* cigarette and a history magazine.<sup>48</sup> These were the only things he had in his lifetime. According to Batur, he was a typical anti-bourgeoisie for he rejected to have property, finish the school, marry to someone, though he fell in love, and even publish his works. With his preferences, he was, for Batur, a perfect mystery.<sup>49</sup>



**Figure 5.10: Wardrobe-suitcase of Yahya Kemal, Uğur Ataç and Aydın Coşkun, 1998**  
source: (Şentürk, 1998, p. 72)

So, what complement this “perfect mystery” is a piece of dried flower and two tufts of hairs of two different unknown women in the museum. The biographical information that he never married to yet he fell in love many times makes him a man of unrequited loves. This representation implies the portrait of a man as a lonely poet with memoir in his pocket (or in his wardrobe-suitcase), but he was never happy since he never materialized his dreams: as he never owned a house, he never “had” any love.

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 8.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

#### 5.4 EXHIBITION HALL OF YAPI KREDİ CULTURE & ARTS CORPORATION

Yapı Kredi Culture and Art Publication & Corporation has been organizing exhibitions in Sermet Çifter Hall located in Galatasaray, Beyoğlu since the mid of 1990s. Most of these exhibitions have been about writers. Under the title of “One Master, One World” and with other particular themes as in the cases of Nazım Hikmet and Yahya Kemal, writers have been represented in an exhibition space<sup>50</sup>. Though this exhibition hall is neither a house-museum even nor a museum, it is suggestive to examine the content of these exhibitions to see how and through which objects and belongings they display these writers and how similar and different these representations are in comparison with literary house-museums.

These exhibitions have been organized by the institutional archive of Yapı Kredi Culture and Art Publication & Corporation, some museum archives (i.e. Yahya Kemal Museum) and private archives of inheritors or collectors. Thus, the representation is limited to the material acquired and supplied from these archives. Despite the fact that this makes difference in terms of the contents of the display and the representations among the exhibitions, some common methods and material can be found.

The materials displayed depict a part of the life story or everyday life of the writers by rendering clues about how these writers studied or wrote. To do this, the medium of photography is used as a pathfinder. In these exhibitions, photographic display is mostly merged with anecdotes or pieces of the writers’ products such as poem, story

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<sup>50</sup> These exhibitions are “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Behçet Necatigil” in 1993, “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Adalet Ağaoğlu” and “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Oktay Rıfat” in 1994, “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:İlhan Berk” and “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Salah Bırsel” in 1995, “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Tezer Özlü” in 1996, “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Sabahattin Ali” in 1997, “Yahya Kemal: Cumhuriyet Şairinin Yalnız Adam Olarak Portresi” , and “Pek Sevgili Beybabacığım: Yahya Kemal’den Babasına Kartpostallar” in 1998, “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Sait Faik Abasıyanık” in 2003, “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Sevim Burak” in 2004, “Bir Usta Bir Dünya:Vüs’at O. Bener” in 2006, “Şehrime Ulaşmadan Bitirirken Yolumu...: Nazım ve Vera, Moskova’dan İstanbul’a”, and “Gemi Elli Yıldır Sessiz: Özel Mektupları ve Yazışmalarıyla Ölümünün 50. Yılında Yahya Kemal” in 2008.

or novel. For instance, we see this kind of photographic documentation in Salah Birsel exhibition quite often. Next to the photographs taken mostly by Ara Güler in which Salah Birsel posing to the camera, the poems of Salah Birsel are written and the photographic description seems to imitate what is written in Birsel's verses. So, when he is seen in an amusement park standing in front of a ferris wheel (figure 5.11), a piece of his poem including the word "amusement park" accompanies the photograph.<sup>51</sup> In the other frame, we see Birsel walking on the railway alone and a poem mentioning about "railway" and "station".<sup>52</sup> Similarly, in another photographic display, Birsel is observed as standing in front of a coffee house and people sitting there. This time the content of the poem attached to the photograph is "coffee houses".<sup>53</sup> This method gives the impression that we search for clues or traces of everyday life or social life of the writer in what he or she has written. A similar situation is valid for İlhan Berk as well. He is depicted in *Commando Staircase* in Karaköy and a piece of his writings about staircases is attached next to the photograph.<sup>54</sup>

Among these photographs, we see childhood and youthhood of these writers, their family members, friends, acquaintances, and particular moments of their lives as well as spatial displacement of some writers can be observed. For instance, as we understand from photographic details that Yahya Kemal went into various countries due to his job as ambassador or to the hospital (figure 5.12) for treatment like Sevim Burak (figure 5.13) or Sabahattin Ali to Konya for teaching (figure 5.14). Apart from these, we perceive some other types of photographs which are exactly the people mentioned in the writings of novels. For instance, the fundamental characters of Tezer Özlü, namely Günk and Bunni are materialized in this exhibition.<sup>55</sup>

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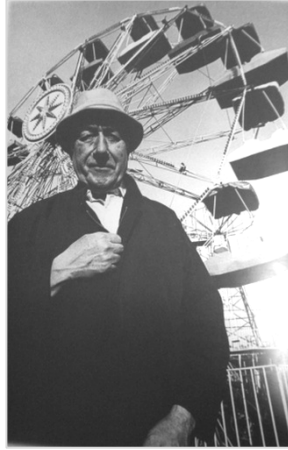
<sup>51</sup> Türe, Fatma (1995a), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Salah Birsel*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 25.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 27.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid, p. 29.

<sup>54</sup> Türe, Fatma (1995b), *Bir Usta, Bir Dünya: İlhan Berk*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 28.

<sup>55</sup> Türe, Fatma (1996), *Bir Usta, Bir Dünya: Tezer Özlü*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi,, pp. 24 and 26.



**Figure 5.11 Salah Bırsel in the amusement park, photograph by Ara Güler  
source: (Türe, 1995a, p. 24)**



**Figure 5.12 Yahya Kemal in the hospital, Uğur Ataç and Aydın Coşkun, 1998  
source: (Şentürk, 1998, p. 64)**



**Figure 5.13 Sevim Burak in the hospital, unknown photographer/ date  
source: (Özdem, 2004, p. 69)**



**Figure 5.14 Sabahattin Ali in his room in Konya,  
unknown photographer/ date  
source: (Türe, 1997, p. 20)**



**Figure 5.15 İlhan Berk  
while studying, photograph  
by Cengiz Cıva, 1985  
source: (Türe, 1995b, p. 8)**



**Figure 5.16 Sabahattin Ali while studying,  
unknown photographer/ date  
source: (Türe, 1997, p. 44)**

Another type of photographic description used in these exhibition and exhibition catalogues is to depict the writer either in front of her/his bookcases (figure 5.15) or while sitting at her/his writing desk (figure 5.16). In their studies, it is not necessarily a position sitting at the writing desk, they can also be depicted anywhere while studying/reading/writing. For example, we observe Adalet Ağaoğlu outside her study



in a summer day and writing with a typewriter (figure 5.17). Apart from displaying the figures at their desks, the desks themselves can also be exhibited through photography without its owner.

In addition to their views of studying and of their writing desks, their writing equipment, such as pen, pencil, etc. are also displayed photographically. When writing equipment is not found, then, the things, standing on their desks are shown.



**Figure 5.17 Adalet Ağaoğlu  
while studying, unknown  
photographer/ date  
source: (Türe, 1994a, p. 31**

Similarly, searching clues in the photographs from what the writer has written is also valid for the exhibition of personal belongings of the writers. Pieces of writing and things exhibited are associated with each other. We see this in Salah Birsal again. His coffee cup, hat and Hacivat-Karagöz bibelot is accompanied with writings narrating drinking coffee, his clothes, and the story of Hacivat and Karagöz, respectively.<sup>56</sup> In the exhibition of İlhan Berk, the objects of his habits are described photographically and supported by the pieces of his writings, such as the ones on his collection of

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<sup>56</sup> Türe (1995a), pp. 33,35,39.

stones, drinking the herb of sage tea, and smoking pipe.<sup>57</sup> Besides, in the case of Adalet Ağaoğlu, some objects are exhibited because of their special importance for they are particularly subject of her novels such as silver souvenirs given to her as gifts by her mother, and by her father,<sup>58</sup> the stamp of his father<sup>59</sup> and a butterfly bibelot.<sup>60</sup> In the exhibition of Sait Faik, the famous object, the pitcher gifted by Bedri Rahmi Eyüboğlu to him can also be seen (see figure 3.40). Apart from this gift, Sait Faik is represented with his glasses case, fishing basket, shoes and hat<sup>61</sup> with the accompanying photo of Ara Güler (see figure 3.20). Some of the belongings of the writers are seen as their main representations and they are particularly printed on the first pages of the exhibition catalogues, such as Behçet Necatigil with a pen and an inkpot,<sup>62</sup> Vüs'at O Bener with a cap,<sup>63</sup> and Sevim Burak with her typewriter.<sup>64</sup>

Actually, typewriters take an important place among the exhibited objects, since they are regarded as the fundamental representation of the act of writing. For instance, we observe the typewriters of Salah Birsal,<sup>65</sup> Tezer Özlü,<sup>66</sup> Adalet Ağaoğlu,<sup>67</sup> and Sabahattin Ali,<sup>68</sup> İlhan Berk,<sup>69</sup> Vüs'at O. Bener,<sup>70</sup> and of Nazım Hikmet with Russian and Turkish keyboards.<sup>71</sup> Beyond this, it is possible to see which brand of

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<sup>57</sup> Türe (1995b), p. 31, 35.

<sup>58</sup> Türe (1994a), *Bir Usta, Bir Dünya: Adalet Ağaoğlu*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 16.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, p. 20.

<sup>61</sup> Tapınç & Sönmez (2003), p. 17, 30, 35, 44.

<sup>62</sup> Türe, Fatma (1993), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Behçet Necatigil*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, Introductory page.

<sup>63</sup> Yalçın, Murat (2006), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Vüs'at O. Bener*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, Introductory page.

<sup>64</sup> Özdem, Filiz (2004), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Sevim Burak*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, Introductory page.

<sup>65</sup> Türe (1995a).

<sup>66</sup> Türe (1996).

<sup>67</sup> Türe (1994a).

<sup>68</sup> Türe (1997), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Sabahattin Ali*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi.

<sup>69</sup> Türe (1995b).

<sup>70</sup> Yalçın (2006).

<sup>71</sup> Çakır, Devrim (2008), *Şehrime Ulaşmadan Bitirirken Yolumu...: Nazım ve Vera, Moskova'dan İstanbul'a*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 68.

typewriter that a writer uses, such as Remington of Tezer Özlü and Adalet Ağaoğlu, and Hermes of Sabahattin Ali. Apart from the one Nazım Hikmet used, all these typewriters are printed on the last page of the hardback of the catalogues.

In the case of İlhan Berk, a piece of writing is attached, concerning his typewriter. It is a text, mentioning the dilemma of the writer between typing and handwriting:

On the other hand, there is nothing making my blood boil in the world other than typing the texts written beforehand. I mean that it is enough that they have been written, typing them seems to me close to the insanity! Though I have been using typewriter for years, I cannot complete typing any poem or prose correctly until I write them two or three times. The text I affirm as correct, after all, cannot avoid mistakes as well.<sup>72</sup>



**Figure 5.18: pen of Oktay Rıfat, unknown photographer/ date source: (Türe , 1994b, p. 42)**

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<sup>72</sup> Berk, İlhan (1995), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: İlhan Berk*, Haz. Fatma Türe, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 41.

So, although some writers' typewriters are not exhibited or even they might not have any typewriter as in the case of Sait Faik Abasıyanık, their writing equipment and objects are displayed (figure 5.18). As an indication of how these writers studied, the drafts of their writings are displayed mostly. They are either in the form of handwriting or typed, and in both cases, they have corrections of the writers on them. Among these drafts, the ones of Sevim Burak are different than the others since she worked with them by attaching one to the other by means of pins.<sup>73</sup>

In some cases, their representations as writers, are exhibited together with their other activities such as the representation of Oktay Rıfat as a painter through his painting equipment,<sup>74</sup> and of Sevim Burak as a fashion designer and a model through her photographs belonging to the time when she performed that job,<sup>75</sup> and the photographs of her powder compact<sup>76</sup> and the clothes she designed and sewed for herself.<sup>77</sup>

As in the case of Sevim Burak, in the exhibition of Nazım Hikmet together with his wife Vera, clothes have an extensive place. For instance, we observe their pyjamas,<sup>78</sup> hats,<sup>79</sup> suits,<sup>80</sup> as well as many other private objects. It seems that grasping the private/ everyday life of such a political figure demystifies the grandiose feeling that we fed in ourselves towards him and it goes beyond this political image by transforming him into an ordinary human being. Besides, among these all private belongings, the white shoes of Vera with the accompanying story of they were bought in France<sup>81</sup> supports this demystifying process by having a place in a different narrative than the political contemplation of Nazım Hikmet.

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<sup>73</sup> Özdem (2004), p. 85.

<sup>74</sup> Türe, Fatma (1994b), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Oktay Rıfat*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 36.

<sup>75</sup> Özdem (2004), p. 40.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, p. 44.

<sup>77</sup> Özdem (2004), pp. 80,81.

<sup>78</sup> Çakır (2008), p. 17.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, p. 26.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p. 22.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid, p. 37.

Since I had a chance to see this exhibition, I observed the installed room where all the personal belongings of Nazım and Vera were organized within a place located at the entrance. This construction which had the feature of making the objects more visible drew the attention of visitors very much because they spent most of their time by examining this room. Besides, this installation (figure 5.19) was supported by an enlarged photograph of a room of their house (figure 5.20) in Moscow, depicting some of these belongings, yet the installation was not a one-to-one copy of the original room.



**Figure 5.19 the installation of Nazım and Vera’s belongings**  
**source: (author, March 2008)**

Apart from the belongings, the writers are also represented through some other documents, such as their letters and postcards. Especially, the writers who spent most of their lifetime outside Turkey, such as Nazım Hikmet and Yahya Kemal seem to have more to display. In fact, the postcards that Yahya Kemal written to his father is the topic of another two exhibitions in itself organized again by Yapı Kredi Culture and Arts Corporation.<sup>82</sup> Actually, this institution organized three exhibitions on

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<sup>82</sup> “Pek Sevgili Beybabacığım: Yahya Kemal’den Babasına Kartpostallar” in 1998 and “Gemi Elli Yıldır Sessiz: Özel Mektupları ve Yazışmalarıyla Ölümünün 50. Yılında Yahya Kemal” in 2008.

behalf of Yahya Kemal in total.<sup>83</sup> Because they have sufficient material to present since a great deal of Yahya Kemal's archive is owned by Yapı Kredi.<sup>84</sup>

Other than postcards, personal documents, such as the ID, the official letter of military service as in the case of Sabahattin Ali,<sup>85</sup> and Behçet Necatigil,<sup>86</sup> the marriage licence of Vüs'at O. Bener,<sup>87</sup> the university graduation diploma of Adalet Aġaoġlu,<sup>88</sup> the retirement card of Vüs'at O. Bener<sup>89</sup> and their passports. In the case of Sait Faik, passport and a flight ticket are the documents of his flight to France in order to be treated.<sup>90</sup> Similarly, Sevim Burak received her passport for treatment in Germany, too.<sup>91</sup> In the case of Yahya Kemal, the Member of Parliament card is added to these documents.<sup>92</sup> Another important detail in Yahya Kemal exhibition in terms of documentary representation is the record of his belongings listed after his death and the receipt of Park Hotel.<sup>93</sup> In the case of Nazım Hikmet, the variety of the documents range from an account book,<sup>94</sup> many phone books,<sup>95</sup> to a bus ticket<sup>96</sup> and calendar pages.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> In addition to the ones mentioned in footnote 82, there is also another exhibition organized in 1998 and titled "Cumhuriyet Şairinin Yalnız Adam Olarak Portresi."

<sup>84</sup> Rado, Şevket (1998), "Yahya Kemal'in Paris'ten Babasına Gönderdiği Kartpostallar", *Pek Sevgili Beybabacığım*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 15.

<sup>85</sup> Türe (1997), p.23.

<sup>86</sup> Türe (1993), p. 23.

<sup>87</sup> Yalçın (2006), p. 19.

<sup>88</sup> Türe (1994a), p. 28.

<sup>89</sup> Yalçın (2006), p. 18.

<sup>90</sup> Tapınç & Sönmez (2003),p. 77.

<sup>91</sup> Özdem (2004), p. 51.

<sup>92</sup> Çavuş, Raşit & Demirel, Yücel (2008), *Gemi Elli Yıldır Sessiz: Özel Mektupları ve Yazışmalarıyla Ölümünün 50. Yılında Yahya Kemal*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, p. 3.

<sup>93</sup> Şentürk (1998), p. 62.

<sup>94</sup> Çakır (2008), p. 48.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid, pp. 40-42

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, p. 44.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid, p. 60-61.



**Figure 5.20** a room in Nazım and Vera's house in Moscow,  
photograph by Melih Güneş, unknown date  
source: (Çakır, 2008, p. 66)



**Figure 5.21** Sevim Burak's house  
in Kuzguncuk, unknown  
photographer/ date  
source: (Özdem, 2004, p. 23)



**Figure 5.22** Tezer Özlü's house in Zürich,  
unknown photographer/ date  
source: (Türe, 1996, p. 44)

Like the example of Nazım Hikmet and Vera's house,<sup>98</sup> whose interior and exterior photographs are displayed in the exhibition and in its catalogue, photographs of some other writers' houses are also exhibited, such as Sevim Burak's house in Kuzguncuk (figure 5.21), and Tezer Özlü's house in Zurich (figure 5.22). Beyond these, there are some other writers who cannot be associated with certain house or place, namely

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<sup>98</sup> Çakır (2008), p. 10.

Sabahattin Ali and Yahya Kemal.<sup>99</sup> Both of them left belongings which are fit in one or two suitcases (figure 5.23)



**Figure 5.23 Sabahattin Ali's Belongings, unknown photographer, 1949**  
source: (Türe, 1997, p. 12)

## 5.5 SAFIYE BEHAR HOUSE

*“Verity is a dream my sir”<sup>100</sup>*

While dealing with how writers are re-constructed in spaces other than museums, it would be suggestive to cite a room installation, titled “A Tribute to Safiye Behar,” produced by Michael Blum, and exhibited at the 9<sup>th</sup> International İstanbul Biennial in 2005. The installation was constructed as the house, or rather the house-museum of Safiye Behar where its owner was presented as a Jewish, Marxist, and feminist writer. As explained at the exhibition, she had lived in İstanbul in the early 1900s,

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<sup>99</sup> The former is because of his occupation as a teacher in different cities and because of his years spent in the prison and the latter is, as explained in the section “5.3: Yahya Kemal Museum”, because of his choice of not having a specific permanent place to stay.

<sup>100</sup> Burak, Sevim (2004), *Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Sevim Burak*, İstanbul: Yapı Kredi, ed. Filiz Özdem, p. 142.



contributed to the constitution of the Turkish Republic, and had a romantic affair with Mustafa Kemal.<sup>101</sup> Blum describes her as:

Safiye Behar was born in Pera, İstanbul, in 1890. She was the single daughter of a Jewish bar-keeper and grew up between the “Zeuve Birahanesi” bar and the apartment above it. An intelligent and willing child, she was eager to read, write and learn, and was encouraged by her parents who hoped a better life than theirs for their daughter. Probably influenced by the conversations she overheard in the “Zeuve Birahanesi”, which were fairly politicized, she started to study Marx, Proudhon and other socialist and anarchist writers with 17, reading and re-reading with passion. As a young adult, she married (Günay), had two sons (Aaron, Aziz) and yet continued to emancipate herself and others. A self-taught woman, she became a teacher in İstanbul and later, in Chicago, a well-respected labour organizer and public speaker, supporter of the Free-Thinking movement and advocate of women’s rights. Eventually, she became the first English translator of Nazim Hikmet. There have been other women who developed similar interests in the last decades of the Sultanate and the first ones of the Republic, but they were mostly from educated families. What makes Safiye’s position unique is the double emancipation that she operated: from class and from gender. In addition, she had a relationship with Mustapha Kemal over a period of three decades. Even though her role has never been acknowledged publicly, she was the inspiration of many of Mustapha Kemal’s reforms in the 1920’s. Not only did she confront Kemal on a certain number of central issues, but she managed to influence him strongly.<sup>102</sup>

The project of Blum in the biennial was installed a flat of Deniz Palace Apartments in Şişhane, which was one of the places used in the biennial. In the catalogue of the biennial, this project is presented as the reconstructed version of the house of Safiye Behar<sup>103</sup> and it is said that the original house was located in Hammalbaşı, No 18,

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<sup>101</sup> Öktem, Esra Sarıgedik (2005), “Michael Blum” in *9th International Istanbul Biennial Guide* İstanbul: İstanbul Foundation for Culture and Arts, p. 43.

<sup>102</sup> Blum, Michael (2005), “A Tribute to Safiye Behar: Mixed Media Installation, 2005”, <http://www.blumology.net/safiyebehar.html>, accessed: 27.07.2009.

<sup>103</sup> Öktem (2005), p. 43.

Beyoğlu.<sup>104</sup> It was organized through a comprehensive display of documents, photographs, letters, books, etc, and a video-interview with Melik Tütüncü who is Safiye Behar's grand-son and one of the main figures of Chicago architectural scene.<sup>105</sup> Within the installation, the living room, bedroom and study of the original Behar house was reconstructed together with family photographs and letters in showcases (figures 5.24 and 5.25). Besides, wall texts, presenting parts of her biography and her family tree, were placed on the walls around the flat, and in the smallest room, the 20 minute video interview with Melik Tütüncü was displayed.<sup>106</sup> In the video, he was sitting at the back seat of a limousine and telling about the life of Safiye Behar and her affair with Mustafa Kemal.<sup>107</sup>



**Figure 5.24: View from Safiye Behar House, unknown photographer/ date source: (Blum, 2005)**



**Figure 5.25: View from Safiye Behar House, unknown photographer/ date source: (Blum, 2005)**

According to Blum, though there is not very explicit traces from this relationship, the only source is what Melik Tütüncü still has such as the letters, written in French, Mustafa Kemal sent to Behar. The reason of why they wrote these letters in French was, probably, to keep this affair as a secret because of both personal and political

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<sup>104</sup> Blum (2005).

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

<sup>106</sup> Crippa, Elena (2006), "Michael Blum, A Tribute to Safiye Behar, 2005, 9<sup>th</sup> Istanbul Biennial", *Contemporary Art Magazine:e-cart*, 7<sup>th</sup> issue 2006, [http://www.e-cart.ro/7/elena/uk/g/elena\\_uk.html](http://www.e-cart.ro/7/elena/uk/g/elena_uk.html), accessed: 27.07.2009.

<sup>107</sup> A., Nur Çintay (2007), "Yeni Dönem", *Radikal*, August 31.

reasons or it was a private sharing between them to speak French. Blum sees himself undertaking a mission by demystifying this affair through an installation and states that the biennial was time to pay a tribute to Behar after 70 years of Mustafa Kemal's and 40 years of Safiye Behar's deaths.<sup>108</sup>

Even though Michael Blum tells about the biography of Behar deliberately and her affair with Mustafa Kemal quite provocatively, such a person had actually never lived, and accordingly, such a "house" had never existed. He constructed this house and associated a history to the space and to the "imaginary" owner through furniture and belongings of the time. For Esra Sarıgedik Öktem, this installation resembles the house-museums of Trotsky in Mexico, Freud in Wien and Marx in Trier. In this way, historical construction of Blum gives the impression as if it is a real museum.<sup>109</sup> Journalist Nur Çintay proposes that in the work of Blum construction was transformed into reality and even "fiction" and "biography" were "dancing together" while puzzling the minds.<sup>110</sup> It was persuasive with its display organization, appropriated historical facts and simultaneous video interview. Thus, visitors who came to view the installation were taking notes while they were watching the video.<sup>111</sup>

According to Elena Crippa, Blum's installation constructs the history of a person, "a ghost" which has the potential to challenge the historical perception of people living in Turkey.<sup>112</sup> Many think similar to Crippa since this installation created discussions<sup>113</sup> as to how we perceive our history and how it would be if it was

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<sup>108</sup> Blum (2005).

<sup>109</sup> Öktem, Esra Sarıgedik (2005), p. 43.

<sup>110</sup> Çintay A. (2007).

<sup>111</sup> Çintay A. (2005), "Atatürk'ün Bienal Aşkı", *Radikal*, 25 September 2005.

<sup>112</sup> Crippa (2006).

<sup>113</sup> Hamsici, Mahmut (2005), "Atatürk'ün Sevgilisi Safiye", *Radikal*, 28 August 2005, Yıldırım, Ayşegül (2005), "Bienalde Bir Aşk Hikayesi", *Hürriyet*, 21 September 2005, Akdeniz, Volkan (2005), "Bienalde Aşk", 2 October 2005, Bumin, Kürşat (2005), "Safiye Behar Niçin Kimsenin İlgisini Çekmedi", *Yeni Şafak*, 13 September 2005, Karahan, Jülide (2005), "Bienal'den Sonra Tarih Yeniden yazılabilir!", *Zaman*, 30 September 2005, Aköz, Emre (2005), "Atatürk'ün Sevgilisi Safiye Behar Hanım", *Sabah*, September 26.

different than we know. In this sense, as Jülide Karahan proposes, he encouraged to question preconfigured facts in the official history and to go beyond the ordinary.<sup>114</sup> This helps us question writer representations as well since he uses “house-museum” as the setting of this constructed life history. By playing with history, rewriting and modifying it, and furthermore by doing this within a house-museum representation, he suggests that this spatial and material representation is open to inclusion and exclusion.

## 5.6 “MASUMİYET MÜZESİ”/MUSEUM OF INNOCENCE

Similar to the project of Safiye Behar showing that how history can be constructed as a thin line between reality and dream, the most recent novel of Orhan Pamuk, titled *Masumiyet Müzesi/Museum of Innocence*, narrates the story of constructing a museum. It is remarkable that Pamuk intends to organize this museum as a real space as well. Nur Çintay states that she heard about this particular project of Orhan Pamuk when Safiye Behar installation was exhibited at the 9<sup>th</sup> İstanbul biennial.<sup>115</sup> Although it is not known whether Orhan Pamuk decided to construct a museum in relation to his novel and as a result of his visit to the biennial or not, what the installation produces and hence criticizes is materialized somehow through his project as a reconstruction (the museum) of a construction (the novel).

The main story of the novel develops around a love story and a man collecting particular ordinary or invaluable objects representing this love, and then founding a museum housing this love through these objects. The narrator in the novel as one of the main characters of the love story tells about this idea of establishing such a museum to Orhan Pamuk as the writer who is present towards the last pages. The narrator as the reference point of the “Museum of Innocence” visited numerous museums to have an idea and to “feel” the stories of the objects exhibited in these museums. Thus, he gives directions to Orhan Pamuk about how he will construct the museum in the house in Çukurcuma which is the former family house of the woman

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<sup>114</sup> Karahan (2005).

<sup>115</sup> A., Nur Çintay (2008), “Masumiyet Müzesi’ne Giriş”, *Radikal*, 31 August 2008.

with whom the narrator fell in love with.<sup>116</sup> So, at the end of the novel, Orhan Pamuk is presented as the person who is in charge of realizing this museum project.

Throughout the novel, the reader is directed to “see” some particular objects by placing the reader in the position of a camera or a “visitor” which provides basis for the exhibited materials in the museum<sup>117</sup> and the narrator states that “my story will pass through these phases like these objects I exhibit.”<sup>118</sup> This statement suggests that the narrative of the novel is exactly the narrative of the museum, like ‘the museum of the novel, or the novel of the museum.’<sup>119</sup> Thus, the structure of the novel is intertwined with the organization of the museum and the novel is transformed into a guideline to trace the possible narrative in the museum. In this sense, the novel tells a story of a museum transformation.



**Figure 5.26** Brukner apartment building: before and after, unknown photographer/ date  
Source: (Anonymous Writer, 2008)

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<sup>116</sup> Pamuk, Orhan (2008), *Masumiyet Müzesi*, İstanbul: İletişim, p. 322.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, pp. 547-549.

<sup>118</sup> Pamuk (2008), p. 55.

<sup>119</sup> Anonymous Writer (2008), “Masumiyet Müzesi Cumaya Açılıyor”, *Radikal*, August 26.

So, to be able to “realize” what he is in charge of in the novel, Pamuk bought Brukner Apartment building in Çukurcuma (figure 5.26) in 1999 and he has collaborated with the architect İhsan Bilgin since that date.<sup>120</sup> In fact, “architect İhsan” is also a character mentioned in the novel.<sup>121</sup> As a result of this collaboration, the restoration of the facade and the interior of the building have been completed recently and currently the organization of the exhibition space is at issue.<sup>122</sup> What Bilgin suggested as an exhibition space design at the beginning, in which the building is covered with glass and the objects are hung up by means of transparent strings inside, was not accepted by Orhan Pamuk, however other design alternatives has not been mentioned yet publicly.<sup>123</sup>



**Figure 5.27** objects of “Museum of Innocence,” unknown photographer/date  
source: (Gümüş , 2009)

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<sup>120</sup> Anonymous Writer (2008), “Mimarından Masumiyet Müzesi”, *Radikal*, October 3.

<sup>121</sup> Pamuk (2008), p. 561.

<sup>122</sup> Anonymous Writer (2008), “İşte Pamuk’un Masumiyet Müzesi”, *Milliyet*, October 3.

<sup>123</sup> Anonymous Writer (2008).

The museum is being constructed with the support of “the Agency of İstanbul 2010 European Cultural Capital”<sup>124</sup> and planned to open in the same date with the project. Accordingly, the museum will consist of 83 sections abiding by the novel and approximately 1000 objects (figure 5.27) will be displayed in these sections as well as other attachments, such as photographs, films and everyday life objects, reflecting the cultural life of İstanbul between 1950 and 2000 with the contribution of “the Agency of İstanbul 2010 European Cultural Capital.” Besides, in the project, he has worked together with some artists who are designing the imaginary objects, placed in the novel. Pamuk, who previously provided the entrance tickets of the “Museum of Innocence” to the “readers” by printing it in 574<sup>th</sup> page of the novel, states that it will take 12 hours for a visitor to finish observing the objects exhibited in the museum.<sup>125</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> Anonymous Writer (2009), “Masumiyet Müzesi Çukurcuma’da Kurulacak”, Arkitera Web Page, <http://www.arkitera.com/h41870-masumiyet-muzesi-cukurcumada-kurulacak.html>, June 9, accessed: 06.09.2009.

<sup>125</sup> Anonymous Writer (2009), “Masumiyet Müzesine 2010 Desteği”, *Radikal*, August 24.

## CHAPTER 6

### READING SPATIAL/LITERARY NARRATIVES: THEMES OF LITERARY SPACES

#### 6.1 “A ROOM WITH A VIEW”

“Beautiful scenery,” viewed through a window or a balcony is one of the central themes in these literary house-museums in İstanbul, examined in this study. It is both seen as a source of inspiration, and a prerequisite for the literary production of the writer, and also, as an experience forming an indispensable part of the visiting activity.

The scene observed from a window is perceived as inspirational in the case of Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum. It is not certain which window it is, however, as can be understood from the visitors’ comments in the registers, emphasizing “the view of the church and the sea,” scenery is regarded as playing central role in Sait Faik's literary production. Actually, the sea can be viewed from the window of the room located on the first floor, where his library is placed, and from the attic floor, which is closed to the visitors today. Yet, the room, designed as Sait Faik’s bedroom has only the view of the church, not the sea and the room, designed as his study, has neither of them. By following the narrative of the museum, if we accept that Sait Faik studied in one of these rooms, then this means that Sait Faik did not view the sea where he wrote. Thus, the association the visitors construct between Sait Faik and his source of literary inspiration is an imaginary one which does not conform to the spatial narrative of the museum today.



In Aşıyan, the scenery of the Bosphorus (see chapter 2 figure 2.54), viewed through the window of Tevfik Fikret's bedroom on the first floor, becomes a symbol of the house-museum. The visitors are directed immediately towards the window mostly by themselves instinctively, and also by the manager, and/or the officers who guide the tours. In my visit to Aşıyan in December 2008, the museum manager, Ata Yersü, opened the window of Tevfik Fikret's bedroom by saying that "this is the place where the Bosphorus can be viewed best!"

The importance attributed to this scenery can be seen clearly in the visitors' comments in the registers of the museum. It seems that for some visitors, the main reason for visiting the museum is to watch this view. Accordingly, this interest, directed towards what lies outside rather than inside the house-museum, reveals itself as: "viewing the Bosphorus from here makes the human psyche boozy," "especially the scenery viewed from the bedroom is great"; "we are in the drunkenness of viewing İstanbul from the best direction on the hillsides of Bebek"; and "I had extreme difficulty in climbing the slope of Aşıyan, however, when you see the landscape from above, you will forget everything."

In the biographies of Tevfik Fikret, this particular window plays a significant role as well. Imagined in front of the window looking at the beautiful scenery of the Bosphorus, Tevfik Fikret is identified with this particular activity. What should also be noted here is that the photomontage, executed by Rıdvan Evrenosoğlu, showing him performing this activity (see chapter 2, figure 2.67), is an indispensable part of this identification. In this depiction, Tevfik Fikret's posture is extracted from a famous photo of him, taken probably in one of the rooms downstairs (see chapter 2, figure 2.13), reversed and then attached in front of the particular scenery, a painting displaying Göksu, viewed from the bedroom window. This is also valid for the biographical note, given by Rıza Tevfik when he tells the last night before Tevfik Fikret died. He emphasizes that Tevfik Fikret was lying "near the window looking towards the Bosphorus."<sup>1</sup> It is significant to note here that today in the museum; all

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<sup>1</sup> Paradi Stüdyosu (1959), p. 75.

the windows are closed by means of white shutters except this one. Such feature of the house, making the window as the only place where the Bosphorus scenery can be observed, also gives it a central position, promoted by the museum administration, too.

Different than these, in Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum, the scenery to which particular importance is attributed is not the one viewed from a room, associated directly with Hüseyin Rahmi's use. It is the scenery, viewed from the balcony of Colonel Hulusi Bey's room on the attic floor. Presenting a view towards Heybeli Island Clergy School and dominating the room both visually and spatially, the balcony has the capacity to draw the visitors' attention as well. But it is usually the caretaker of the museum who directs this attention to the scenery by opening the doors of the balcony immediately after a visitor enters into the room. Thus, the visitor is, in a sense, forced to view the scenery, whether he/she intends to do it or not.

Regarding the other literary spaces, mentioned in study, it can be observed that the theme of the window and its associated scenery does not play such a role. For instance, in the example of Kemal Tahir Foundation, since the house is located on the ground floor and the front facade has a series of large windows, and not a central one, the view is provided on street level and also from different angles. In Orhan Kemal museum, on the other hand, the curtains are kept drawn, and therefore, the visitors' attention is drawn only to the inside of this constructed space. Similarly, in Safiye Behar's constructed house, the spatial narrative derived its force from this kind of interiority; even so, the visitors of the biennial could not help but glimpse around the scene of Golden Horn from the window.

## **6.2 SECLUSION**

In these museums the house is conceptualized as a place of retreat or withdrawal from the outside world. Yet, to what extent the writers are presented as secluded in

these house-museums and to what extent they are portrayed as secluded in the biographies changes from case to case.

Tevfik Fikret's biographies revolve only around his secluded life in his house. However, this emphasis overlooks the fact that he did not live in Aşşıyan in absolute seclusion. The most important spatial indication of this feature can be seen in his study which extends by means of the bridge towards the garden and in the direction of the Robert College. Considering that Tevfik Fikret taught at the Robert College between 1896 and 1915, such an extension always reminds the visitor of his connection to the Robert College, and accordingly, to the outside world. In this sense, Tevfik Fikret's seclusion should be "read" critically by neither denying nor exaggerating it. Yet, it should be also noted here that Tevfik Fikret's link with the college in the form of this bridge cannot be read from the inside of the museum space since the doors and the windows are kept closed by white shutters which obstruct to observe outside.

Similarly, in his biographies, Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar is depicted as a writer who had a protected life in this house as can be deduced from his seldom visits to the centre of İstanbul, his standing away from people, mostly because of his hygienic obsessions, and also from the location of the house on the hillside. According to this depiction, Hüseyin Rahmi's protected life turned into an intensive seclusion after Colonel Hulusi Bey's death as revealed in his letters to Refik Ahmet Sevengil too, in which he described his life in his house as: "in the summit monastery, remote from the public, where I have been living the life of a secluded clergyman, I am always facing my apprehensive state..."<sup>2</sup> Quite remarkably, however, the spatial narrative in Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum does not subscribe to this biographical and autobiographical description and does not present any clue about how protected/secluded life he had in his house. On the contrary, the spatial narrative in the dining room as the table, set carefully, for example, is written as if Hüseyin Rahmi is about to welcome his guests.

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<sup>2</sup> Sevengil (1944), p. 182.

Regarding Sait Faik's case, on the other hand, although his biographies point out the "in-between" position of his life between Burgaz Island and Beyoğlu, or the time he spent on the island and in his house there as temporary retreats, Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum narrates only one side of his life, i.e. the island, completely disregarding the other side, his life in the city, i.e. Beyoğlu. The museum exhibits only the photographs which show him together with the inhabitants of the island. In other words, there is not any single photograph which depicts him socializing together with his friends in Beyoğlu restaurants?

### **6.3 "DEATH OF THE AUTHOR"**

Death can be counted as an indispensable theme of these literary house-museums as well as other literary spaces, where spatial narratives, oscillating between commemoration and mythologizing, are constructed in relation to the writers' biographies. Thus, here, attributing to "the death of the author" in the title, what I intend to do is not to refer to the post-structuralist literary criticism of the "Author" but to see how the authorship is narrated after the writer's death. Accordingly, in these museums, the beds of the writers are mostly associated with the theme of the death of the writer. In some cases, this theme is further emphasized by means of face-masks, reproducing the deaths of the writers each time the visitors see them. In addition to these objects, there are also spatial and literary narratives which revolve around this theme.

In Tevfik Fikret house-museum, the theme of death seemed as intertwined with the museum, beginning from the slope, around which Aşyan cemetery is located, moving to the garden of the house, where the grave of Tevfik Fikret is placed, and then into the house, up till the bedroom where the death is materialized and narrated by means of his mask and his photograph, reminding the visitor of the moment he died. The face mask is a remarkable detail as a proof and a genuine reproducer of this death with its ability to freeze the latest gesture of Tevfik Fikret. With this face mask, the death story of Tevfik Fikret intersects with Mihri (Müşfik) Hanım since the mould of his face mask was taken by her. When he passed away, it is told that his

face was still smiling. This can be explained with facial muscular contraction; however, Serol Teber relates it to his melancholic personality.<sup>3</sup>

That moment is further emphasized by means of the clock, placed at the bottom shelf of the cabinet on the opposite side of the bed. The clock is stopped at 7:20, and accordingly, it is presented as if it stopped by itself at the moment of Tevfik Fikret's death. Thus, the circle of the narrative is completed. In other words, this time Tevfik Fikret really died. The clock in the room was stopped in order to elevate the effectiveness of the representation of his death although in some sources, it is constructed mythically as if it stopped itself rather than someone did it.<sup>4</sup> In this sense, when Tevfik Fikret died, *Aşiyân* died as well.

*Aşiyân* intersects with Tevfik Fikret's biography directly since it has a central role in his life as he designed it, lived and died there. It is told that when Tevfik Fikret's health became worse in the house they hired on Burgaz Island, he was carried to *Aşiyân*.<sup>5</sup> In the last several hours before he died, his wife and his close friends Rıza Tevfik and Mihri Hanım were with him in his bedroom. As Rıza Tevfik mentions in his memoir, that night he was lying on the bed and ill. His head turned towards the Bosphorus side and his eyes were closed. When Rıza Tevfik asked him "how are you?" Tevfik Fikret replied him "I am falling." These were the last words he said and these can be treated as both literal and metaphorical, since he saw himself falling from his political opposition or falling psychologically as well when he died.<sup>6</sup>

Sait Faik Abasıyanık contemplates on the spatiality of death within *Aşiyân*. He draws attention to the window located in the bedroom of Tevfik Fikret and its in-between position as a borderline of the contradiction between inside and outside. He says "It is exactly the time for sunset. All the beauties are right at the outside of the window.

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<sup>3</sup> Teber (2002), p. 221.

<sup>4</sup> Paradi Stüdyosu (1959), p. 75 and Olcayto (1959), p. 81.

<sup>5</sup> Sevengil (1959), p. 23.

<sup>6</sup> Paradi Stüdyosu (1959), p. 75.

Death is inside.”<sup>7</sup> It seems that he also finds Tevfik Fikret’s bedroom as a dark place which evokes death.<sup>8</sup> A similar comment on the contradiction between inside and outside is mentioned by another visitor, Cansu Yılmazçelik. She talks about her observations on the outside of the museum. She emphasizes on the contradiction between the inside and outside she encountered with when she visited the museum. In the garden of the house, she found young people laughing at something and this contrasts with the ongoing sorrowful theme of “death” inside the house, carried on throughout the path of the slope.<sup>9</sup>

İsmail Hikmet Ertaylan explains in one of his writings that Tevfik Fikret died with a slow death. By associating what Fikret said at the moment he was dying with the events that made him upset, he declares that Tevfik Fikret was preparing himself to death and he was dying everyday a bit more. Namely, Aşiyân hosted the death for a long time, and functioned as a graveyard, in fact, in the lifetime of Tevfik Fikret. This did not change after he died, either. Even before his grave was transported into Aşiyân in 1961, commemoration days were organized in Aşiyân, not in Eyüp cemetery where he was buried previously.<sup>10</sup> This indicates that independent from the existence of a graveyard in its garden, Aşiyân always included death, the story of death and the idea of death.

Actually, it can also be suggested that Tevfik Fikret constructed his own grave with his own hands.<sup>11</sup> Aşiyân, which has already been transformed into a commemoration place, has also turned into a “mausoleum.” In relation to this point, Aziz Nesin asks a provocative question: “if Tevfik Fikret had not designed this house, like a museum,

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<sup>7</sup> Abasıyanık (1970), p. 197.

<sup>8</sup> Actually for Sait Faik, the museum in a general sense, is “the place of the dead and the gone,” reminding death with what it exhibits as objects and belongings (Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1999), “Belediye Müzesi” in Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1999), ed. By M. Uyguner, *Bütün Eserleri 10: Açık Hava Oteli: Konuşmalar-Mektuplar*, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 26.).

<sup>9</sup> Yılmazçelik, Cansu (2006), “Tevfik Fikret”, *K Dergisi*, Sayı 1, 2006, 4-9, p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Ragıp, Hüseyin (1959), “Ölümünden Sonra” in *Bütün Cepheleriyle Tevfik Fikret: Hayatı, Hatıraları, Şiirleri*, İstanbul: Ahmet Halit Yaşaroğlu Kitapçılık, p. 14.

<sup>11</sup> As Batur states, when he could not realize his utopia of running away from his city or country, he constructed his ultimate utopia, “ultimate house,” to get ready for death (Batur, 2009, p. 57).

and had not given its name, would there have been organized such meetings after all, would have we come to these meetings?”<sup>12</sup> As an answer to this question, it is possible to suggest that probably, these meetings would have been organized in any case but not in Aşıyan, in somewhere else. Since these commemoration meetings happen in every August, the month when Tevfik Fikret died, in Aşıyan, it is a place reminding of death, but it is still “alive” in the sense that it is transformed into a living space by means of these commemoration days.

In Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum, we also observe a mask, as an object reminding death, but significantly, its location in the house is different. It is displayed in a showcase at the entrance of the museum, not on his bed, in his bedroom on the first floor. Though it is still related to the death of the writer, it weakens the theme of death, constructed intentionally by means of the bed and the bedroom.

In Orhan Kemal museum, it is possible to see the theme of death as well. In the room, designed both as his bedroom and his study, his mask, moulded in Bulgaria, is displayed on his bed, as in the case of Tevfik Fikret’s bedroom. In addition to this bed and mask combination, two mannequins, wearing Orhan Kemal’s suits and looking like his ghosts, contribute to the theme, even though they may not be exhibited with this intention. In Kemal Tahir Foundation, it is also possible to see his mask. However, it is protected together with a mould of Kemal Tahir’s right hand, rather than exhibited, in a cabinet, and shown only to the curious visitor.

Regarding Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum, it is important to note that, in contrast to Aşıyan Museum, there is not any indication of the theme of death at all, though it is known that he died in his house.

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<sup>12</sup> Nesin, Aziz (1975), “Törensiz Bir Anma”, *Milliyet Sanat Dergisi*, vol. 145, August 15, p.17.

#### **6.4 THE STUDY/THE WRITING DESK/THE TYPEWRITER**

The representation of the writing practices of the writers, who once lived or who are presented as if they once lived in the literary spaces, examined in this study, through studies, writing desks and typewriters, is another theme, shared commonly in these spaces.

In Tevfik Fikret's study, the only object, directly related to his writing activity, is the writing desk, found in the cellar of Bosphorus University and placed in its supposedly original location. However, there are not any books exhibited in the room, since they were donated to Galatasaray High School's library after his death. Then, remarkably, what characterizes this room as Tevfik Fikret's study is his activity of drawing/painting. His sketches, documenting the design process of *Aşyan*, are displayed on the writing desk, and his paintings are exhibited on the walls of the room. Thus, looking like a gallery, the study constructs Tevfik Fikret as an architect and painter, rather than as a writer.

Sait Faik's study is made up of only a writing desk, a chair, and two paintings on the walls. Rather surprisingly, his books are placed in the room on the first floor, where the first printed copies of his books are exhibited, too. In addition to some writing equipment, such as inkpots, a pencil, and a paperweight as well as a flag of Bursa Male High School and some other materials related to this school are displayed on the desk which are barely incorporated into the space after Sait Faik's death. Actually, there is not any clue, indicating that it was originally Sait Faik's study. The ashtray, displayed on the desk probably with the intention of showing that smoking accompanied Sait Faik's writing activity, seems to be an irrelevant detail, since it is known that conforming to his mother's wish, Sait Faik did not smoke in the house. Besides, there is only one photograph, the one taken by Ara Güler (see Chapter 3, figure 3.33), which depicts Faik while sitting and writing in his house and in front of the bamboo desk placed in his bedroom. Today the place of this desk which receives light properly is not changed. It is probably because of this quality of light that Faik liked studying there. Conversely, the room designed as his study today does not



receive proper light, sufficient to read or write. Thus, what is presented as his study in the house-museum has actually nothing to do with Sait Faik's study if there was any. In this sense, the design of the room, today, is nothing more than a superficial "exhibition."

Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's study, designed in the museum, is composed of the objects which seem to be directly or indirectly related to his identity as a writer. While his books are displayed in the living room on the ground floor, as different from their original location in his study, various memorabilia are eclectically collected in a showcase and in a shelving cabinet together with what he had in relation to his writing activity. All these objects participate in the narrative of this room constructed as his study. However, it seems that this room was not Hüseyin Rahmi's original study. The study was most probably the room which is designed as the dining room today. As Hatice Farsakoğlu explains, arranging the rooms in this house by means of what they found in the basement was like collecting the pieces of an unknown place.<sup>13</sup> Thus, this room can be perceived as a part of this "puzzle."

In Yahya Kemal Museum, objects or pieces of furniture implying Yahya Kemal's identity as a writer is very few, consisting of what he left in his room in Park Hotel, where he stayed until his death. These objects constitute a study-like space in the museum. Installed within a wide glass cabinet, the writing desk with drawers he used in his hotel room, a notebook, a glasses case and a paperweight on the desk are exhibited together with a bamboo chair. This display does not include, for instance, the books he collected since he did not have a huge library. After his death, no book was found among his personal belongings except for a history magazine.

Different from these, in the room designed partly as Orhan Kemal's study, the typewriter, placed on his writing desk, plays a central role in representing his writing activity together with his library around the room. Similarly, in Kemal Tahir's study, still preserving its original characteristics, his typewriter commemorates him as a

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<sup>13</sup> Interview with Hatice Farsakoğlu, August 2009.

writer and, at the same time, seems to be a part of the “after-life” of the room. Placed close to the other office equipment used by the foundation members, such as a fax machine, it becomes part of this living space. Likewise, Michael Blum’s installation, “a tribute to Safiye Behar,” uses typewriter as a means of constructing its figure, Behar, as a writer.

In the other writer representations, exhibited by Yapı Kredi Arts and Culture Corporation, typewriters and various other writing tools, including pen or pencils, as well as photographs, taken in writers’ studies or while they were studying, are commonly seen as well. For instance, the exhibition, organized in 1994, under the name of “Bir Usta Bir Dünya: Adalet Ağaoğlu/One Master One World: Adalet Ağaoğlu,” a photograph is displayed in which Ağaoğlu is seen outside her study in a summer day and writing with a typewriter (see chapter 5, figure 5.17).

## **6.5 A MUSEUM OF HIS OWN**

In these house-museums, it is very rare to see the places belonging to the other inhabitants of the houses who lived together with the writers or even to observe any trace indicating their existence. In other words, since the museums are constructed almost exclusively around the lives of the writers, these “other” inhabitants are represented insufficiently and even ignored. However, as we are informed by the biographies of these writers, they were not alone in these houses. Particularly, what these museums omit or delete are the stories of the women. Yet, these stories reveal that women played very important roles in the transformations of some of the houses into museums.

In the biographies of Tevfik Fikret, Nazime Fikret is depicted as a woman who accompanied him in his lifetime. Regarding specifically the story of Aşıyan museum, we are told that she intended to put up the house for sale. Actually, her intention initiated the transformation process of Aşıyan into a museum. But in the museum, today, she is represented only through a painting, a marriage photograph and another photograph depicting her together with Haluk Fikret and his wife. Probably the

reason for this is that she left the house after it was sold and took her belongings with her. However, there is not any trace connecting her spatially to the museum, except for the exhibition, organized by the museum in 2001, which can be seen as an attempt to connect her to the museum, although it was temporary. In addition, there is not any information in which room she lived in the house before Tevfik Fikret's death and the extension of the house. Similarly, Tevfik Fikret's son, Haluk is not found in the house either. It is unknown in which room he stayed until he went to Scotland and after he came back.

In addition to the lack of Nazime and Haluk Fikret's representations in the museum, what should be noted here is the over-representation of Tevfik Fikret which is related to his self-representation through photography. In his lifetime, he had his photographs, taken in various places of Aşıyan, which depict him while sitting down in the living room or in any other room of the house, thinking and looking through the window in deep thoughts. Indeed, these photographs play a crucial role in identifying him with Aşıyan spatially, or in other words, in transforming Aşıyan into his autobiographical space since he designed the house as well.

Insufficient representation is also at issue in Makbule Abasıyanık case in Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum. Although the house was the living space of Makbule Abasıyanık more than Sait Faik's, today, the museum's narrative, constructed around Sait Faik, does not include any detail about Makbule Abasıyanık. Although Darüşşafaka Association claims that the house and its interior design were not changed during the transformation; however, the entire house seems to be designed as if Sait Faik lived there alone. We, as visitors, may feel that trace of Makbule Abasıyanık's trace in the living room or in the dining room; yet, the museum does not give any particular clue about her personal belongings or even about her room.

In both cases, namely Tevfik Fikret and Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museums, though speculatively, it is possible to suggest that such a lack is due to the decision of Nazime Fikret in the former case and of Makbule Abasıyanık in the latter. As Hande Kökten, an expert in conservation, explains, if the initiator or the decision

maker of the museum transformation is a member of the family, this can provide a more reliable representation since the information is first hand, however, sometimes the reverse is the case because of the aim of protecting the private data and keeping them out of sight, which is self-censorship.<sup>14</sup> However, even if this happened, museum organizers should have included their stories more properly in the museum narrative, in other words, they should have been more attentive to represent these women in these museum spaces.

Regarding Hüseyin Rahmi's house, we are informed by his biographies that he lived together with his aunt-in-law Aliye Hanım and her daughter Safer Hanım. As Farsakoğlu explains, the reason why we cannot reach any clue about these women in the museum today can be that the previous inhabitants, who were the inheritors of Hüseyin Rahmi, cleared off all of their belongings.<sup>15</sup> In my research, I have come across some photographs signed as "to my dear sister Safer" and "dear Safer Hanım" as a trace from Safer Hanım. Nevertheless, these photographs are not exhibited, but placed in the files of the archive of Hüseyin Rahmi in the small room on the ground floor. Besides, there are some other photographs depicting Hüseyin Rahmi and an unnamed woman displayed in the room located on the attic floor. This woman is seemingly Aliye Hanım in respect of her age, who accompanies Gürpınar in these photographs, taken in various corners of the house.

In contrast to these women, the other member of the household, Colonel Hulusi Bey is present in the museum with his room located on the attic floor. Unfortunately, the only information, read in the museum, is that there is a plain, casual room consisting of a bed, and some other furniture located at the upstairs and that he is a friend of Hüseyin Rahmi. However, as Enis Batur proposes, we do not know, in spatial terms, "how they shared the day, what the division of labour was."<sup>16</sup> In other words, this

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<sup>14</sup> Interview with Hande Kökten, July 2009.

<sup>15</sup> Interview with Hatice Farsakoğlu, August 2009

<sup>16</sup> Batur (2008b), p.123.

room is the only obvious trace of Colonel Hulusi Bey, with whom Hüseyin Rahmi lived 22 years in the house.

In Heybeli Island, there were inhabitants who observed how deep their affair was. After Colonel Hulusi Bey passed away, Hüseyin Rahmi was seen by those inhabitants of the island frequently in the graveyard of Hulusi Bey, watering the grave where Colonel was buried.<sup>17</sup>

Without any exception, Hüseyin Rahmi's biographies mention this friendship. Furthermore, Sevengil particularly states that he witnessed "how great his friendship with Hulusi was."<sup>18</sup> Only Enis Batur, and partially, Yıldırım Türker<sup>19</sup> describe their relationship as a love affair. By pointing out how this relationship is suppressed, Batur criticizes the society: "Hüseyin Rahmi lived a great love with his friend Colonel for forty years, however, we, as the society, are not strong enough to name and crown this."<sup>20</sup>

So, although it may be not be sufficient, Hulusi Bey's representation in the museum makes a very significant difference in comparison to the other literary house-museums, since it deviates from the mainstream narrative, constructed exclusively on the figure of the writer. In this sense, a person other than the primary inhabitant, i.e. the writer, has a place in the spatial narrative of a literary house-museum.

Regarding the examples of other literary spaces, in Kemal Tahir Foundation we see that, as in the case of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum, Semiha Tahir contributes to the afterlife of the house through her bed, dressing and personal belongings. Similarly, in the exhibition, organized under the name of "Şehrime Ulaşmadan Bitirirken Yolumu...: Nazım ve Vera, Moskova'dan İstanbul'a" (Coming to the End Before Reaching the Beloved City...: Nazım and Vera from

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<sup>17</sup> Sevengil (1944), pp. 159-160.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, p. 16

<sup>19</sup> Türker, Yıldırım (2008), "Bir Cihan Kaynanası", *Radikal*, 6th December 2008

<sup>20</sup> Batur, Enis (2008a), *Suya Seng*, İstanbul: Sel, p. 247.

Moscow to İstanbul) in the year 2008, Nazım Hikmet is not narrated alone, but together with Vera Tulyakova, his wife, through personal belongings, photographs, and other memorabilia that both of them had in their lifetime. Similarly, the house, located in Moscow, is commemorated in the exhibition together with Vera and Nazım and their everyday life in it.

## **6.6 FAITHFUL REPRESENTATION VS. CONSERVATION**

In relation to literary house-museums, in particular, and house-museums, in general, conservation is an issue which contradicts faithful representation. As Hande Kökten, an expert on the conservation of house-museums, explains, house-museums are different from any other type of museums since the context is more important than individual objects. Thus, conservation should be done in situ and with minimum intervention to the original condition. Because of this feature of house-museums, the balance between conservation and exhibition is a very sensitive topic. On the one hand, showcases and other means of protection save the objects from dust, humidity, sunshine and even fingerprints, but on the other hand, they put up a wall between the exhibited object and the visitor.

In Aşiyân museum, the windows are closed with curtains to protect especially the paintings from sunshine; yet, such a protection makes it impossible to feel the space as a house. In the cases of Sait Faik and Hüseyin Rahmi house-museums, there is no such protection, and the sunshine is reflected on the walls by revealing the natural condition of the space, but at the same time, by potentially damaging the objects. This means that there is always a tension between representation and conservation in the house-museums. For this reason, most of the time the rules of conservation play a secondary role, since it is considered that applying these rules would destroy the authenticity of the space.

The aim of these museums is both to be faithful to the biography of the writer and to protect the materials. To do this, placing replicas would be helpful, as Kökten suggests. In Sait Faik house-museum, the first impression is that the house is frozen

at a certain time which preserves its original condition without any later intervention. However, Sait Faik's blue striped pyjamas in his bedroom, covered with a plastic bag and put on his bed, interrupt this "untouched" image of the house and destroy its "authenticity." In other words, although his ties, towel and shoes are exhibited casually without any protection, the pyjamas in a plastic bag contradict this casualty. Therefore, to display their replicas would be a better solution.

As Kökten also explains, the first rule of conservation and restoration is to save the existing material. In Aşıyan museum, although it seems that the necessary precautions are taken to protect its collection, mainly the paintings, by controlling sunshine, temperature and humidity, it is a shocking experience to see that the people who were in charge of its restoration in the 1980s disregarded this very basic rule and demolished the originality of the mosaics, ceilings, walls, carton-pierres and even furniture by painting them irresponsibly and ignorantly with white paint.

In this regard, Hüseyin Rahmi house-museum is more respectful to this rule because of its effort to protect its damaged past by bringing together patiently what is left from it.

## **6.7 TO TOUCH OR NOT TO TOUCH**

In these house-museums, the everyday objects are exhibited in showcases and/or protected by means of ropes, and the signs of "do not touch." This way of exhibition and protection turns these objects into "artworks" as well in the sense of making them "untouchable."

For instance, in Tevfik Fikret house-museum, his everyday objects are exhibited mainly in showcases, as in the case of some pieces of dinnerware. These pieces are detached from their contexts, and hence from their places in the house's spatial narrative, and displayed in his bedroom in a cabinet. So, these pieces of dinnerware lose their realities as used objects and gain the status of "untouchable" objects.

However, regarding the objects protected by “do not touch” signs, it seems that their “untouchable” quality create a desire to touch them, as can be understood in visitors’ comments in the registers. Quite remarkably, these registers bear witness to the confessions of many visitors who have disregarded those signs and touched the objects.

This is especially the case in Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum where the visitors’ desire to touch and/or to caress Sait Faik’s clothes, and other objects and pieces of furniture belonging to him is closely related to the supposition that they were touched by him and/or that they had a contact with his skin. Thus, to touch the trace of the writer’s touch implies to touch him, as can be deduced from the visitors’ own words: “I touched nearly everywhere in your house”; “When I come to your house every time, I feel sad and I touch most of your belongings ignoring the sign, stating ‘do not touch the furniture!’ and I feel getting closer to you.”

It seems that these performances of touching are usually carried out in the absence of Şadiye Yıldırım, the caretaker of the museum, since, sometimes, she cannot climb the stairs to the first floor because of health problems. Occasionally, this may result in a lost object if a visitor wishes to keep it to herself/himself. So, in the final analysis, it is the “conscience of the visitor” which makes possible or impossible the protection of an object.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Interview with Hande Kökten, July 2009.



## CHAPTER 7

### CONCLUSION

In this study, it is intended to understand how writers' biographies are spatialized in the literary house-museums in İstanbul as well as in some other literary spaces, such as museums/exhibitions/installations. This chapter aims to review and conclude this discussion by comparing these spatializations with the ones in some examples of literary house-museums and house-museums located outside Turkey on the basis of the themes, examined in the previous chapter.

When we start with the theme of seclusion, we can see that as in the case of Tevfik Fikret and partially of Hüseyin Rahmi, in her biographies Emily Dickinson is also considered that she was secluded in her house, located in Amherst, Massachusetts, and that she constructed a particular connection with her house, by making the space "home," rather than a house, and by developing a sense of belonging or perceiving it as an emotional shelter.<sup>1</sup>

However, not every house is home to its household.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, while the spatial narrative of Dickinson house-museum can revolve around the idea of home, that of Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum cannot. Because it is not certain to what extent Sait Faik Abasıyanık appropriated his house as home. What is known, however, is

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<sup>1</sup> Fuss, Diana (2004), "Dickinson's Eye," in *The Sense of Interior: Four Writers and The Four Rooms That Shaped Them*, Britain: Routledge, pp. 23-24.

<sup>2</sup> Blunt, Alison & Dowling, Robyn (2006), "Representing Home" in *Home*, ed. by Alison Blunt & Robyn Dowling, New York: Routledge, p. 4.

that he was not in search of a permanent space; rather, he was in a perpetual state of going away and coming back. Therefore, to put it into words by borrowing from John Berger, “home is represented not by a house, but by a set of practices.”<sup>3</sup>

Regarding the theme of death, Diana Fuss states by referring to some international examples of literary house-museums that these houses are the places reminding death and, indeed, visiting these houses is like having conversation with death. So, even if a writer designed her/his place for not to be forgotten, in the afterlife of the house, i.e. museum, everything might be a part of the death narrative.<sup>4</sup>

Similarly, Sait Faik Abasıyanık perceives the museum as “the place of the dead and the gone.”<sup>5</sup> According to him, the objects and belongings exhibited in museums remind him of death:

Nearly everything becomes ramshackle by the time a hundred year is realized: author, poet, utensils...Museum is, after all, something pathetic. Always it is a grave of the dead and the gone, one belonging to the past days!<sup>6</sup>

The objects, directly related to the theme of death, are found in the international examples as well. Especially, face masks, whether they are life masks or death masks, both as the remainders and reminders of death, are largely exhibited in, for instance, Beethoven house-museum in Bonn and Balzac house-museum in Paris. In the former, two face-masks are displayed within two separate small glass cabinets, located in close proximity in the room where Beethoven was born. One of the face-mask’s moulds was taken by Franz Klein in 1812, surprisingly in Beethoven’s lifetime, by anointing his face and covering with liquid gypsum.<sup>7</sup> The other mask

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<sup>3</sup> Berger, John (1984), “ And Our Faces, My heart, Brief as Photos,” London: Bloomsbury, p. 64

<sup>4</sup> Fuss (2009), pp. 213-214.

<sup>5</sup> Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1999), “Belediye Müzesi” in Abasıyanık, Sait Faik (1999), ed. By M. Uyguner, *Bütün Eserleri 10: Açık Hava Oteli: Konuşmalar-Mektuplar*, Ankara: Bilgi, p. 26

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Beethoven Haus-Bonn (2009), “Digital Archives,” [http://www.beethoven-haus-bonn.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=15338&template=dokseite\\_digiales\\_archiv\\_en&\\_eid=1511&\\_ug=Mas](http://www.beethoven-haus-bonn.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=15338&template=dokseite_digiales_archiv_en&_eid=1511&_ug=Mas)

was taken after his death by Josef Danhauser in 1827.<sup>8</sup> In the latter example, in Balzac's house, we also see his face-mask, exhibited in a glass cabinet, which is located in a room other than his bedroom.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to the existence of a death or a life face mask in a house-museum, its location in the context of the house also changes the narrative. Its proximity to the beds and bedrooms strengthens the idea and/or the sense of death, as in the case of Tevfik Fikret house-museum. Therefore, we may suggest here that in the museums where masks are located in places other than in bedrooms and on beds, the spatial emphasis on death decreases as in the case of Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum, in which his face mask is located across the house's entrance door.

Yet, it should be noted here that these masks are not the only reproducers of death. As observed in the case of Orhan Kemal Museum, his suits are exhibited on two separate mannequins, looking like his ghosts. Likewise, in Jane Austen's house in Hampshire, her dressings are displayed on coat hangers on various corners by documenting the historical context and also by reminding Austen's existence in many places of the house.<sup>10</sup> In the same way, in Rembrandt house-museum in Amsterdam on his writing desk, located in the room designed as his bedroom, some pieces of stale bread left, implying a loss of someone.<sup>11</sup>

When we consider the inhabitants of these houses other than the writers and look at the examples in different places of the world, we can see that people, who lived in these houses together with the writers, are mostly represented in the afterlives of

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ks&\_mid=Pictures%20and%20objects&\_eid=1511&\_dokid=i1580&\_eid=1511&\_seite=1, accessed: 17.10.2009

<sup>8</sup> Beethoven Haus-Bonn (2009), "Digital Archives," [http://www.beethoven-haus-bonn.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=&template=dokseite\\_digiales\\_archiv\\_en&\\_dokid=i2793&\\_seite=1](http://www.beethoven-haus-bonn.de/sixcms/detail.php?id=&template=dokseite_digiales_archiv_en&_dokid=i2793&_seite=1), accessed: 17.10.2009

<sup>9</sup> Paris Walking Tours (2009), <http://www.paris-walking-tours.com/maisondebaltac.html>, accessed: 17.10.2009

<sup>10</sup> Jane Austen's House-museum (2007), <http://www.jane-austens-house-museum.org.uk/>, accessed: 17.10.2009

<sup>11</sup> Amsterdam Sights (2009), "Rembrandt Huis," <http://www.amsterdamsights.com/museums/rembrandthuis.html>, accessed: 17.10.2009

these houses. For instance, in Goethe's house-museum in Frankfurt, where he was born, his mother's and sister's rooms are present.<sup>12</sup> Similarly, in Charles Dickens's house-museum in London, the former bedroom of Mary Hogarth, Dickens's sister in law, is exhibited, though the original design and furnishing are eliminated.<sup>13</sup> In this regard, it is only Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum that conforms to these examples by displaying a room belonging to another member of the household, Colonel Hulusi Bey.

Regarding the spatial narrative of the studies of the writers, and other spaces and objects, related to the activity of writing, we can observe a great variety worldwide. For instance, Dostoyevsky's desk, exhibited in his house-museum in St. Petersburg, displaying some pieces of writing equipment, several books and also some papers, slightly piled, disseminated over the desk, gives the impression that he was there just a few minutes ago.<sup>14</sup> Accordingly, it looks like Hüseyin Rahmi's smaller desk on which a book and some calendar pages are left as well.

In Goethe house-museum in Frankfurt, reconstructed after World War II when the house was destroyed, more than one room are reserved for studying, although only one of them is called his study in the museum today. Besides, the reading room, the library and also the fireplace room are observed. In the room, designed as his study today, where he wrote his early works, are a writing desk and a bust on it, a chair, a small dining table and a couch; and on the walls, there are drawings such as sketches of his room and some portraits. The other room, the fireplace room, was used by Goethe, presumably in his youth, as the lawyer's office after having his licence in 1771.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Goethe-Haus (2009), "Goethe House," <http://www.goethehaus-frankfurt.de/goethe-house/first-floor/kaminzimmer>, accessed: 17.10.2009

<sup>13</sup> The Charles Dickens Museum (2005), "Mary Hogarth Room" <http://dickensmuseum.com/vtour/secondfloor/hogarth.php>, accessed: 17.10.2009

<sup>14</sup> Fyodor Dostoyevsky Literary Memorial Museum (2007), "Museum" <http://eng.md.spb.ru/museum/>, accessed: 17.10.2009

<sup>15</sup> Goethe-Haus (2009), *ibid.*

Sometimes, a study is not strictly necessary. As exhibited in Bronte sisters' house-museum in Haworth, Charlotte, Emily and Anne, quite surprisingly, wrote most of their books in the dining room of their house, including *Jane Eyre*, *Wuthering Heights*, and *Agnes Grey*. They found this room convenient to write since they read and discussed their writings, plans and projects until late evening.<sup>16</sup> Emily Dickinson is another figure who selected the dining room as her study in winters, when the first floor of the house was rearranged and the dining room located there was converted into a sitting room.<sup>17</sup> These examples remind us of Sait Faik Abasıyanık who performed his writing and reading activity not in a single space in his house, and therefore not only in the room, designed as his study today.

In Charles Dickens house-museum in London, his reading desk is displayed separately in a room other than his study, in the dressing room, as part of an installation. What is interesting about this desk is that it does not give any clue about Dickens's writing activity, but about his special diet through some bottles and a jug, and accordingly, about his health.<sup>18</sup>

As a well-known example, Sigmund Freud's study, located in his house-museum in London, reveals his collector identity by displaying a great variety of Egyptian and Roman sculptures and miniatures. Retaining its original design, and in a sense, its "untouched" character, this room was also his consulting room, and therefore, the couch, where his patients laid down, has a central position in his study.<sup>19</sup>

Similar to the centrality of the couch in Freud house-museum, in Jane Austen house-museum, the fundamental narrative is constructed around her bedroom where her

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<sup>16</sup> Bronte Parsonage Museum & Bronte Society (2009), "Museum Tour," [http://www.bronte.info/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=19&Itemid=42](http://www.bronte.info/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=19&Itemid=42), accessed: 17. 10. 2009

<sup>17</sup> Fuss (2009), p. 35

<sup>18</sup> The Charles Dickens Museum (2005), "The Dressing Room" <http://dickensmuseum.com/vtour/secondfloor/dressingroom.php>, accessed: 17. 10. 2009

<sup>19</sup> Freud Museum London (2009), "Photo Library" <http://www.freud.org.uk/photo-library/category/10046/house-couch-study/>, accessed: 17. 10. 2009

patchwork bed cover she made herself is displayed.<sup>20</sup> Likewise, in Turkey, Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar's handiworks, seen nearly everywhere in the museum, is the distinguished feature of this house-museum as well as Tevfik Fikret's paintings and also his drawings of the house documenting the design process of Aşyan are the particularities of the museum.

Regarding the issue of faithful representation, Edgar Allan Poe house-museum in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, has a significant place. What differentiates it from other examples is its strict faithfulness to the "real." For instance, the basement floor of the museum was not restored and even the spider webs on the floor were not cleared off, furthermore, the floorboards of the house still peel off, the fireplace seems destroyed. Remarkably, the word "death," etched on the wall was not flattened. Accordingly, the rooms in the house are not furnished; rather, their former designs are represented through drawings, enlarged and hung on the walls. For instance, Poe's writing desk is not exhibited; yet, a drawing depicts him while studying, together with his cat. As Han A. Salzman states, the house is characterized by its lack of reference to material culture and its insufficient restoration.<sup>21</sup> He also adds that the house was emptied in order to be authentic, in other words, to say more through absence.<sup>22</sup> Though Salzman does not seem to credit the house, it is still a remarkable example because of the choice made against restoration and exhibiting the replicas of the original objects. In a way, it resembles the example of Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum, where damaged objects are displayed as they are, as representations of its damaged past. The only difference between these two examples is that whereas the first is a conscious choice, the second is a necessity.

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<sup>20</sup> Jane Austen's House-museum (2007), *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> Salzman, Han A. (2004), "Reading Historic Sites: Interpretive Strategies at Literary House Museums", M. A. Thesis in Graduate Program in Historic Preservation, University of Pennsylvania, p. 27

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33

As this final comparison indicates, to establish a literary house-museum in Turkey is a difficult task. This is valid for all cases whether they are founded by individual initiatives of the relatives or inheritors (e.g. Sait Faik Abasıyanık house-museum), by local communities (e.g. Hüseyin Rahmi Gürpınar house-museum), or by official authorities (e.g. Tevfik Fikret house-museum).

Despite this difficulty, however, this study underlines the importance of the preservation of the houses of literary figures and their transformation into museums as spaces contributing to the public memory not only of these figures but also the historical context of their lives in its materiality. Therefore, it is an attempt to draw attention to the necessity of comprehensive biographies written on literary figures, individual and local initiatives, and professional and technical expertise in the transformation of these houses into museums.

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