

# Historic Hotel Buildings in Istanbul City

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## ABSTRACT

Heritage hotels and such tourist accommodations are considered important elements of the hospitality industry since they create emotional, cultural, and use values. Istanbul houses some of the most exceptional historic buildings some of which are employed as hotels today. Although the city exhibits epitomes of heritage lodging, the research on the subject is relatively little. Therefore, this paper provides a review of the historical backgrounds of eleven heritage hotels located in Istanbul city. The study revealed that the sample heritage hotels dated back to the nineteenth and the first quarter of the twentieth centuries. In general, these historic buildings referred to the period of Ottoman Westernization. Along with that, the buildings were delineated into four categories in relation to their functions, such as original hotel buildings, royal or imperial estates, houses, and public buildings. The study also revealed that the sample buildings had rich historical backgrounds. It is unfortunate that most of these buildings have been neglected and abandoned sometime and/or used for various purposes. Therefore, it can be inferred that these buildings were exposed to various human-caused damages.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern tourism and hospitality industry, it is all about creating destination and brand images, attractiveness, and high competitiveness. It is a common notion that historic buildings have a critical role in fostering tourism destinations. Holloway & Humphreys (2012) state that one of the first things that spring to mind is the architectural and historical features when a tourist thinks of an urban location. Historic buildings as part of the cultural heritage create emotional, cultural, and use values (see Feilden, 2003). For example, Ye & Tussyadiah (2011) suggest that historic architecture and heritage sites are more than just places of interest, they are living elements that could give tourists a sense of pride. Furthermore, Chang (1997) states that the adaptive reuse of old buildings and rejuvenation projects on the cultural and historical elements of a city aims to increase capital accumulation, raise civic pride and present an attractive image for entrepreneurs, tourists, and residents.

MacCannell (1973) states that the motive behind a pilgrimage and a tour is the quest for authentic experiences. To him, tourists present themselves at places of social, historical, and cultural importance. There is little doubt that historic buildings are some of the places where tourists can find authenticity because of such buildings' architectural, artistic, aesthetic, and some other situational values (e.g., age and period of the building, notable people, and events housed by the building). For example, Hagia Sophia is an epitome of authenticity where one can unequivocally find indications of such values.

Historic buildings unequivocally have a high potential in terms of use-values. Although such potential is a source of debate, i.e., the economic abuses, or 'commoditization' of culture (see Chang, 1997; Cohen, 1988), there is a prevalent use of historic buildings for various purposes. One of the common uses of historic buildings is observed in the hotel/lodging industry where a plethora of historic buildings is employed as tourist accommodations consisting of various segments across the world. Some scholars agree that such accommodations, as part of a country's legacy, have become important venues for introducing cultural and historical backgrounds to modern society (Xie & Shi, 2019; Chhabra, 2015).

For decades there has been growing popularity in the adaptive reuse of historic buildings as tourist accommodations. Many investors, particularly, renowned hotel chains have transformed authentic historic buildings into eye-catching lodging facilities to house their renowned brands. On the demand side, Timothy & Teye (2009) estimated that rejuvenated historic hotel buildings or in broader terms heritage hotels are one of the most demanded types of tourist accommodation. An earlier study by Dincer & Ertugral (2003) indicated that heritage hotels created a high demand and were preferred by relatively high-income and more literate people, and the occupancy rate of such buildings was higher and more stable. A most recent study that examined heritage hotels in relation to tourism consumption revealed that heritage hotels were not a backbone of the lodging industry, yet a niche for consumers who were interested in history, culture, and authenticity (Yabanci, 2022). However, the study also suggested that heritage hotels had a specific potential in attracting guests and were mainly considered positive, i.e., guests were satisfied by the physical features of such buildings.

Steeped in history Istanbul city is probably one of the most prominent cities for cultural heritage across the world. The city's origins date back to the Ancient Greeks. Since the first settlement known as Chalcedon which was founded in around 675 BC, the region has been then inhabited by the Macedonians, the Romans, the Byzantines, the Ottomans, and modern Turkey respectively (Harris, 2017; Bowden, 2007; Tomlinson, 1992). Having such a rich history, Istanbul houses some of the most exceptional historic buildings of different periods some of which are employed as hotels today. The old towns of the city known as Beyoglu—formerly Pera, Fatih, and the banks of the Bosphorus are some noticeable districts for historic hotel buildings.

Although Istanbul exhibits some of the most exceptional examples of heritage lodging, the literature on the subject is relatively little. One of the aspects that lacks research is the historical background of historic hotel buildings. Therefore, the purpose of this case study is to provide a review of the history of heritage hotels in Istanbul city.

## 2. METHOD

This paper focuses on eleven historic hotel buildings that were originally designed as hotels or subsequently converted into high-segment hotels by some renowned hotel companies. These historic hotels are the Galata Hotel Istanbul-MGALLERY, Ciragan Palace Kempinski Istanbul, Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus, W Istanbul, 10 Karakoy Istanbul-A Morgans Original, Pera Palace Hotel, A'jia Hotel, Tomtom Suites, Legacy Ottoman Hotel, Crowne Plaza Istanbul Old City, and Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet. The samples were derived from Yabanci (2022). Figure 1 exhibits the locations of the sample hotels. The hotels are located in Fatih, Beyoglu, Besiktas, and Beykoz most of which are major historic districts of the old city.

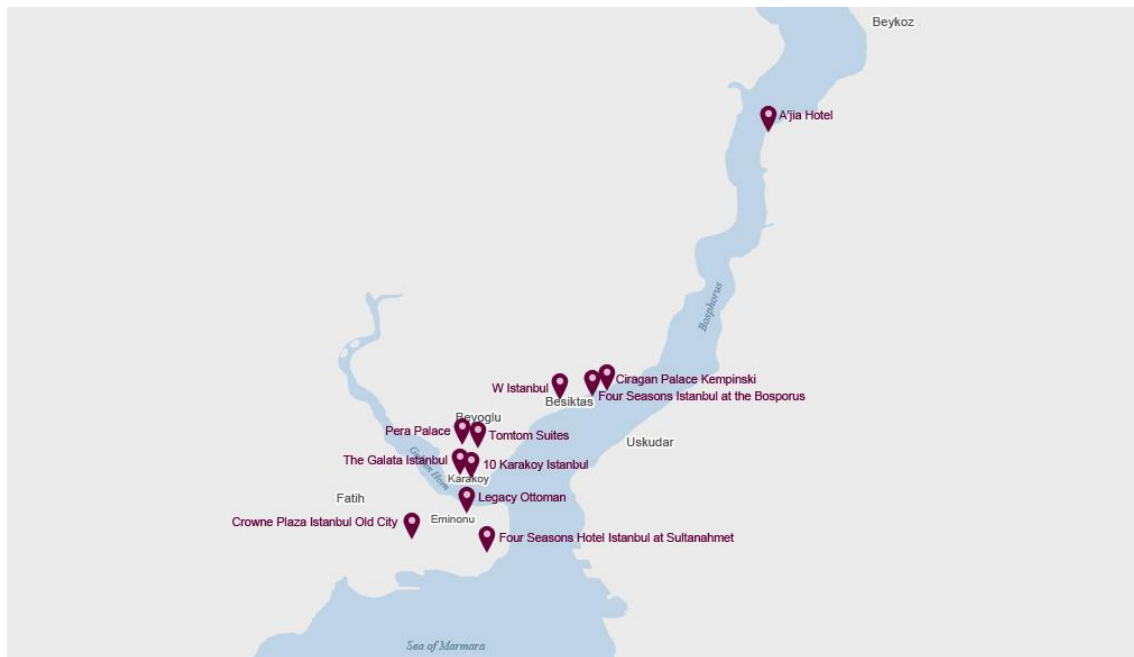


Figure 1: Locations of the sample heritage hotels on the city map

## 3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS OF HERITAGE HOTELS IN ISTANBUL CITY

In what follows, a review was conducted to identify the histories of the sample hotel buildings. These buildings are listed for discussion according to their ages—from the oldest to the newest (Table 1).

	Segment	Year/Period	Converted into a hotel	Style
<i>The Galata Hotel Istanbul-MGALLERY</i>	<i>Special/Luxury</i>	<i>After 1830, prob. 1836</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>Unidentified</i>
<i>Ciragan Palace Kempinski Istanbul</i>	<i>Five stars</i>	<i>1855 onward, 1871</i>	<i>1986</i>	<i>Eclectic</i>
<i>Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus</i>	<i>Five stars</i>	<i>1855 onward, 1871</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Unidentified</i>
<i>W Istanbul</i>	<i>Special/Luxury</i>	<i>1870, 1874/75</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Eclectic</i>

<i>10 Karakoy Istanbul-A Morgans Original</i>	<i>Special/Luxury</i>	<i>1875</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>Unidentified</i>
<i>Pera Palace Hotel</i>	<i>Special/Luxury</i>	<i>1892-1893</i>		<i>Beaux-Arts/Fin de Siècle</i>
<i>A'jia Hotel</i>	<i>Special/Luxury</i>	<i>1898</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>Empire/Neoclassical</i>
<i>Tomtom Suites</i>	<i>Special/Luxury</i>	<i>1901</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>Unidentified</i>
<i>Legacy Ottoman Hotel</i>	<i>Five stars</i>	<i>1911-1926</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>Neoclassical Turkish</i>
<i>Crowne Plaza Istanbul Old City</i>	<i>Five stars</i>	<i>1919-1922</i>	<i>1987, 2008</i>	<i>Eclectic</i>
<i>Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet</i>	<i>Special/Luxury</i>	<i>1919</i>	<i>1996</i>	<i>Neoclassical Turkish</i>

Table 1: The sample historic hotel buildings

### 3.1. The Galata Hotel Istanbul-MGallery

The Galata Hotel Istanbul by MGallery is a luxury hotel run by the international French hotel chain Accor since 2018 (The Galata Istanbul, 2021). The hotel hosts its clients in the historic Baltazzi Khan which was fully restored in 2017 by the company (The Galata Istanbul, 2021). The khan was built before the 1860s (Altan & Celik, 2000), probably in 1836 (The Galata Istanbul, 2021). It is one of the oldest buildings on Bankalar Street or previously known as Voyvoda Street in the historic Galata in Beyoglu.

The building was named after a wealthy family called Baltazzi. In the first half of the eighteenth century, Istanbul flourished as a banking capital, which caused it to be called “the new California” thanks to the Galata bankers, some of whom were from the Baltazzi family that arrived from Chios circa 1830 (Mansel, 1995). Accommodated by the Baltazzi Khan and a house in Tarabya, bankers and tax farmers became the richest individuals of the day across the Ottoman Empire (Mansel, 1995).

The architect of the building is unfortunately still unknown (Cantay, 1994; Altan & Celik, 2000). The building, originally consisting of three stories, was heightened to five stories allegedly in its first alteration in 1904 (Altan & Celik, 2000). Like many other historic buildings in Istanbul, the khan has survived a disastrous fire in 1931 (Altan & Celik, 2000). It is also presumed that the building had its Western-style-plain facade during the restorations carried out in the 1930s or 1940s (Altan & Celik, 2000). The khan, also known as Baltaci Khan (Cantay, 1994; Akin, 1998), was denominated as the Agopyan Khan from 1890 onward (Altan & Celik, 2000). Some of the prominent brands or businessmen of the day that inhabited the historic khan were bankers, such as Baltazzi, Glavany, Couteaux, Eliasco, and several other banks, such as Deutsche Orientbank, Banca Commerciale Italiana, and Akbank. The building was also occupied by some insurance companies, such as London & Lancashire, Norwich Union, and several other companies, such as Arslan Cimento, Anadolu Cimento, Bomonti Nektar (Altan & Celik, 2000).

### 3.2. Ciragan Palace Kempinski Istanbul

Ciragan Palace, located on the banks of the Bosphorus, is one of the most prominent luxury hotels in Turkey. The historic palace was conceived as a hotel several times in the twentieth century (Hamuloglu, 1988; Evcin, 2016) and was finally contracted and projected to be

converted into a luxury hotel in 1986 (Istanbul Haber Servisi, 1990). The project, including the restoration of the historic palace and the construction of a new facility along with several amenities in the estate, was assumed by Kumagai Gumi Co. Ltd. and Sanbar Development Corp. under the patronage of Ciragan Inc. which was the contractor in charge (Istanbul Haber Servisi, 1990; Hamuloglu, 1988). However, due to the cancellation of the contract by one of the chief contractors in 1998, the right of management was assigned to Kempinski one of the oldest luxury hotel chains in Europe (Istanbul Haber Servisi, 1990; Hamuloglu, 1988). Due to some bureaucratic impediments and thence the prolongation of the process the new hotel building was completed and opened in 1990 or 1991, while the restoration of the historic palace was to be finalized by 1992 (Hamuloglu, 1988; Istanbul Haber Servisi, 1990; Gulersoy, 1992).

The historic Ciragan Palace of the Ottoman dynasty has a compelling story. The palace is located on a historic estate known as Kazancioglu Gardens in the 1600s (Gulersoy, 1992; Gulersoy, 1994; Can, 1999). Known as ‘Çerağan’ derived from the word ‘çerağ’ meaning ‘illuminator’ in the Tulip Age of the early eighteenth century, the historic estate was inhabited by the aristocracy from the 1600s to 1830s (Gulersoy, 1992; Gulersoy, 1994; Can, 1999). Then, the reformist sultan Mahmud II, craving to reside in a Western-style palace, allegedly commissioned the head imperial architect Abdulhalim Bey to build the old Ciragan Palace (Cezar, 1993; Can, 1999). However, the project of the old palace is also attributed to Armenian architect Garabed Balyan (Tuglaci, 1990; Gulersoy, 1992). The construction of the wooden palace was commenced in 1834 and was concluded, two years after the decease of the Sultan, in 1841 (Can, 1999; Arslan, 1995). The palace was then inhabited by his son Sultan Abdulmecit until he moved to his new palace Dolmabahce in 1856 (Gulersoy, 1992; Gulersoy, 1994). Allegedly, it was also during the reign of the sultan that the old palace was decided to be demolished and a new one to be built of masonry (Gulersoy, 1992; Can, 1999). Due to a severe dearth of cash the new palace was barely concluded during the reign of his successor Abdulaziz, in 1871 or 1872 (Gulersoy, 1992; Can, 1999; Yerasimos, 2007). The new palace built in the eclectic style was designed by architect Nigogos Balyan a member of the Balyan family and was built by his brother Serkis Balyan accompanied by Agop Balyan (Can, 1999; Goodwin, 2012). The sumptuous palace was gutted by fire at the beginning of 1910 (Kilic & Koken, 1993; Ulgen, 1996) and was abandoned to decay until it was restored as a hotel building in 1992 (Gulersoy, 1992).

### **3.3. Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus**

Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus is a five-star hotel run by the world-famous Canadian hospitality company Four Seasons (Four Seasons, 2021). Located on the banks of the Bosphorus in the neighborhood of Ciragan Palace the hotel welcomes its guests in a nineteenth-century historic building known as Atik Pashalar Palace or Agalar Apartments that was presumably built as a stewards’ extension in the Ciragan Palace complex (Mizrak, 2015; Arkiv 2021a; Can, 1999). The derelict building, having been abandoned for some time, was projected to be a hotel between 2001 and 2003 (Arkiv 2021a). However, due to some troubles in the financing, and thus the change of shareholders, the building could finally be redeemed between 2006 and 2008 and was inaugurated as a hotel under its current title (Astay, 2021; Arkiv 2021a; Ekonomi Servisi, 2004).

### **3.4. W Istanbul**

A luxury-brand hotel of Marriott International, W Istanbul welcomes its clients down on the slopes of the historic quarter of Akaretler fronting the Bosphorus in Besiktas. The hotel serves in a historic building known as Akaretler or 'Sira evler', i.e., the terraced houses (Marriott, 2021; Arif, 1935). The terraced houses were rehabilitated between 1995 to 1998 and 2006 to 2008 and then inaugurated as a hotel under W Hotels Worldwide (Atelye Mim, 2021a; Marmara Life, 2022).

Akaretler, planned and parceled with cognizance (Pinon, 1998), were designed by the architect Serkis Balyan in 1870 or as to some authors in 1874/1875 during the reign of Abdulaziz (Kuban, 1970; Batur, 1994; Sey, 1994; Deleon, 1996; Gorgulu, 2003; Kuruyazici, 2010; Sezer & Ozyalciner, 2010). Projected as public housing on an estate owned by Hazine-i Hassa in other words the Royal Treasury, the terraced houses were built to lodge the servants of Dolmabahce Palace (Sey, 1994; Gorgulu, 2003; Ozcan, 2006; Sezer & Ozyalciner, 2010). However, it is also suggested that the houses were built to be leased in order to subsidize the construction of the Aziziye Mosque (Batur, 1994).

### **3.5. 10 Karakoy Istanbul-A Morgans Original**

10 Karakoy Istanbul, currently operated by SBE Morgans Hotel Group, is one of the luxury hotels of the city, serving in a historic building at Kemeralti Ave, down at the Bosphorus side of Beyoglu. The historic building, known as Buyuk Balikli Khan, was restored and then opened as a hotel in 2014 (Arkiv, 2021b). Originally known as Hastahane Khan, the historic building was erected in the place of Buyuk Balikli Hospital or Balikli Rum Hospital which had been serving since the 1450s (Gulenaz, 2011; Akay & Ardicoglu, 2012). The Patriarch Joachim II assigned architect Aristidi Ratzi to design the building the project of which was subsidized by some wealthy Greek men, such as Zagforos, Zarifi, Rali, Koronos, Hacopulo, and Kazonova (Gulenaz, 2011; Akay & Ardicoglu, 2012; Kocu, 1946; Senyurt, 2012). It was constructed in 1875 to endow the hospital that was moved to the suburbia of the city, intending to prevent the spread of infectious diseases (Gulenaz, 2011; Akay & Ardicoglu, 2012). The building was frequently referred to as Buyuk Millet Khan from the 1930s onward (Akay & Ardicoglu, 2012; Balmumcu, 1948). The historic khan revamps the typical ground plan of the Ottoman-age khans as opposed to its roofed atrium, Western-style-plain facade, and multi-story construction (Gulenaz, 2011; Akay & Ardicoglu, 2012).

### **3.6. Pera Palace Hotel**

Pera Palace is one of the oldest original hotel buildings, if not the oldest one, in Istanbul city that is still in use. The hotel was initially designed for lodging clients arriving on the Orient Express and constructed between 1892 and 1893 in the district of Tepebasi at Beyoglu (Freely, 2011; King, 2014). Pera is renowned for its modern hotels—mainly in the second half of the nineteenth century (Akin, 1998; Guncuoglu, 2010).

It is claimed that Pera Palace was built by Compagnie Internationale des Grand Hotels that is a subsidiary of the Wagons-Lits Company (Deleon, 1991), the entrepreneur of the legendary Orient Express (Quinzio, 2014). The hotel building was designed by celebrated

architect Alexandre Vallaury (Deleon, 1991; Freely, 2011), which has a 'Fin de Siècle' facade referring to the Beaux-Arts style architecture. However, Akin (1998) and Gulersoy (2003) state that Vallaury collaborated with architect Henri Duray on the construction project of the International Grand Hotel which was first mentioned as Pera Palace in 1895. The two authors also note that the six-story hotel, with the first electric lift in Istanbul (Stamp, 2011; King, 2014), was inaugurated in the aforementioned year. Having changed proprietorship (either ownership or management) a couple of times, such as Petros Bodosaki in 1915, Haci Toma Anastasiadis in 1919, Misbah Muhayyes in 1923, and Hasan Suzer in 1978 (Ayan, 1991), the hotel has, heretofore, hosted several world-famous celebrities. Some of them are Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, King VIII. Edward, Queen II. Elizabeth, Emperor Franz Joseph, British author Agatha Christie, and film director Alfred Hitchcock (Deleon, 1991; Ayan, 1991; Freely, 2011; Pera Palace, 2021).

### 3.7. A'jia Hotel

Seated on a protruding terrace at the brink of Bosphorus in the historic district of Kanlica in Beykoz, A'jia Hotel hosts its clients in a historic mansion known as (Ahmet) Rasim Pasha Yali. The crafted wooden mansion was built in 1898 in the place of a previous one that was burned to ashes in 1897 (Onel, 1994; Erdenen, 2006). Built for Rasim Pasha, who was the governor of Ottoman Tripoli, the historic building is supposed to be designed by one of the architects of the Balyan Family (Onel, 1994). The building, with its exterior design in neoclassical style, or as to some authors, in empire or neo-renaissance style (Onel, 1994; Agir, 1998), was restored for a second time in 2004, after a long-run first renovation that began in 1988 (Belge, 2004; Sezgin, 2002; Erdenen, 2006). The sumptuous mansion was employed as a school building for a while in the modern-republican period and then abandoned in the 1970s (Serhadoglu, 1955; Onel, 1994). The historic building was registered as cultural property under protection in 1970 (Guvemli, 2022). It was hired by a company in 2000 (its restoration project was permitted in 2001 by the Board of Cultural Heritage Preservation) and converted into a hotel in 2004 (Guvemli, 2022).

### 3.8. Tomtom Suites

Tomtom Suites-The Old Franciscan House is a luxury hotel located on Tomtom Kaptan Street in the historic quarter of Tomtom, in Beyoglu, where the first embassies of the city appeared (Dorsay, 1993; Akin, 1998). The hotel serves in historic apartments that were restored as a hotel building between 2004 and 2008 (Mars Architects, 2021; Arkiv, 2021c). Historically known as Sœurs Garde-malades (Sisters-nurses) apartments, the building is estimated to be built in 1901 for the residence of French nurses (Senol, 2005; Ozulu, 2011; Alioglu, 2015). Its architect is presumed to be the Italian architect Giovanni Battista Barborini, who also designed or rehabilitated some other buildings in the city, such as the first town hall of Beyoglu known as the Altinci Daire-i Belediye or 'the sixth town hall' (Senol, 2005; Ozulu, 2011; Alioglu, 2015; Akin, 1998; Girardelli & Cengiz, 1995; Duhani, 1984; Cadoni & Masetto, 2009). The building, with its subtly garnished facade, was used as a dwelling, bank, and warehouse throughout its long history (Senol, 2005; Ozulu, 2011; Alioglu, 2015).

### **3.9. Legacy Ottoman Hotel**

Legacy Ottoman is a five-star hotel that serves in a historic building known as the Fourth Vakif Khan that is located on Hamidiye Street in the historic district of Sirkeci. The waqf khan was commissioned by Urguplu Mustafa Hayri Bey who was the minister of Evkaf-i Humayun Nezareti (in 1910) that was responsible for governing the waqfs of its time (Hakyemez & Gonul, 2014).

The building is a seven-story building that was built between 1911 and 1926 (Yavuz, 2009; Freely, 2011; Girardelli, 2012; Bohle & Dimog, 2016). It was constructed in place of a former building complex named Hamidiye Kulliyesi that was built between 1775-1777 during the reign of Sultan Abdulhamid I (Bulbul, 2012). The historic khan was designed in neoclassical Turkish style by the prominent architect Kemalettin Bey (Yavuz, 1976; Yavuz, 2009; Freely, 2011; Girardelli, 2012). The building, before its finalization, was used as a military quarter by the French army during World War I and subsequently as an office building (Hakyemez & Gonul, 2014). Being abandoned for a long time, it was redeemed upon legal permission by some entrepreneurs between the years 2005 and 2007 and inaugurated as a hotel thereupon (Hakyemez & Gonul, 2014).

Neoclassical Turkish architecture or more commonly the first national architectural movement is an architectural movement that prevailed roughly between the late 1900s and the early 1930s (Yabanci, 2015). This pastiche movement has engendered a series of remarkable creations of Turkish architecture throughout the country by referring to classical Ottoman and Western-European architectural traditions. It is an eclectic style composed of decorations and architectural elements derived from Ottoman architecture and the Western-style ground plan and multi-story structure.

### **3.10. Crowne Plaza Istanbul Old City**

Crowne Plaza Istanbul Old City, a brand of world-famous British hospitality company InterContinental Hotels Group, is a five-star hotel located in the district of Laleli in Fatih, in the skirts of the old city. The hotel welcomes its guests in the historic buildings known as Tayyare (airplane) Houses or Harikzedegan (fire victims) Apartments that were built between 1919 and 1922 during the years of the War of Independence as low-income housing for the families who were afflicted by the devastating fire in 1918 (Yavuz, 2009; Yavuz & Ozkan, 2005; Akin et al., 2007; Sozen, 1984). The historic apartments were commissioned by Damat Serif Pasha the minister of Dahiliye Nezareti which was responsible for interior or internal governmental affairs in the late Ottoman period and were constructed in place of a former building known as Koska Madrassa a structure of extant Laleli Kulliyesi (Kartal & Kartal, 2020).

Initiated as a social housing project inspired by exemplars in Europe, allegedly, by the Familistere de Guise in France (Akin et al., 2007), the historic buildings were designed by Kemallettin Bey. The six-story historic buildings, the architect's last building complex project in Istanbul, are recognized as the earliest examples of reinforced concrete constructions in the country (Yavuz, 2009; Yavuz & Ozkan, 2005; Akin et al., 2007).



The building complex was known as Tayyare Apartments in the modern-republican period as it was allocated to the Turkish Aeronautical Association (Yavuz, 2009). Left neglected for a while, the historic buildings were renovated between 1985 and 1987 and opened as a hotel by Ramada (Aydinlik, 2022; Turkiye Turizm, 2022; Atelye Mim, 2021b). The buildings were re-engaged by Crowne Plaza in 2008 after having been closed for three years (Aydinlik, 2022; Turkiye Turizm, 2021).

### **3.11. Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet**

Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul is one of the two hotels (one of which was described above) in Istanbul run by the company Four Seasons. This luxury-segment hotel, so to speak, is located in the heart of the historic district of Sultanahmet of old Istanbul with a view of the Hagia Sophia, the Blue Mosque, and the Bosphorus. The hotel welcomes its guests in a historic building that was originally intended to be a prison which was known as Sultanahmet Cezaevi (Buyukdigan & Cavus, 2016; Bohle & Dimog, 2016). The prison had confined several famous writers, some of whom were Aziz Nesin, Nazim Hikmet, and Rifat Ilgaz (Durbas, 1989; Gungor, 1996).

According to the original marble inscription on the pediment of the entry, the historic building, a quaint instance of the first national architectural movement, was built in 1919 (Arli, 1994; Buyukdigan & Cavus, 2016). The designer of the historic building is still unknown. However, he is supposedly one of the students of the architects Kemalettin Bey and Vedat Tek who were the founding fathers of the style/movement (Buyukdigan & Cavus, 2016; Bohle & Dimog, 2016). Having been occupied as a prison till the 1980s, and derelict for a while thereupon, the building was rehabilitated by Sultanahmet Turizm Incorporation and finally inaugurated as a hotel by Four Seasons in 1996 (Durbas, 1989; Ozkocak, 1990; Demirkaya, 1995; Gungor, 1996; Cityscope, 1996).

## **4. CONCLUSION**

Heritage hotels and such tourist accommodations are a phenomenon in the twenty-first-century hospitality industry. These establishments are generally considered important elements of the industry since they create emotional, cultural, and use values. Heritage hotels will probably remain one of the popular and demanded genres of tourist accommodations.

This study investigated the historical backgrounds of eleven historic hotel buildings located in Istanbul city. Historic buildings, such as the Galata Hotel Istanbul-MGallery, Ciragan Palace Kempinski Istanbul, Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus, W Istanbul, 10 Karakoy Istanbul-A Morgans Original, Pera Palace Hotel, and A'jia Hotel originated in the nineteenth century. Some others, such as Tomtom Suites and Crowne Plaza Istanbul Old City dated back to the first quarter of the twentieth century. These historic buildings refer to the period of Ottoman Westernization in common (the period beginning in the early eighteenth century, see Hamadeh, 2007). Some of those were also artifacts that emerged in the French and European beautiful era—La Belle Epoque (1890-1914, see Conyers, 2003, or more extensively 1871-1914, see W&L, 2022). These buildings, some of which were unidentifiable, referred to styles, such as eclectic, Beaux-Arts, and empire or neoclassical

styles. The buildings are fine examples of Ottoman Westernization in architecture and represent the movement toward reinterpreting and using oriental and western architectural elements together. Buildings, such as Legacy Ottoman Hotel and Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet are epitomes of the neoclassical Turkish style which appeared in the early twentieth century. Although this style is construed as a dissident act against Ottoman Westernization, it is self-explanatory that the style was constructed on western architectural tradition as well.

Heritage hotels investigated in this work are today located in Fatih, Beyoglu, Besiktas, and Beykoz most of which are major historic districts of the old city. These buildings could be delineated into four categories in relation to their functions a) original hotel buildings, b) royal or imperial estates, c) houses, d) and public buildings. For instance, Pera Palace refers to the first group, the Ciragan Palace to the second, Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus, and W Istanbul to the second also to the third group. In a similar vein, A'jia Hotel, Tomtom Suites, and Crowne Plaza Istanbul Old City are grouped as houses. The Galata Hotel, 10 Karakoy Istanbul, Legacy Ottoman, and Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet are classified as public buildings. There are many heritage hotels across the world (see *Historic Hotels of the World*, 2022) that can be categorized in such a way and could be some counterparts of the samples in this study. For instance, The Raffles Hotel in Singapore, The Midland Hotel in Manchester, The Plaza Hotel in New York, The Westin Palace in Madrid, and Hotel Washington in Washington, D.C. are some selected historic examples that originated as hotels (Raffles Singapore, 2022; Peleggi, 2005; The Midland Hotel, 2022; The Plaza, 2022; Brown, 1980; The Westin Palace, 2022; Hotel Washington, 2022). Moreover, Villa D'Este in Cernobbio, Tivoli Palacio De Seteais Sintra Hotel in Sintra, Taj Lake Palace Udaipur in Rajasthan, and The Winter Palace Hotel in Luxor are some genuine royal residences turned into heritage hotels (Villa D'Este, 2022; Tivoli Hotels, 2022; The Telegraph, 2022; Elsayed, 2019). Chateau St. Gerlach Oostwegel Collection a manor house in Maastricht, Hotel Des Indes The Hague a stately mansion on the Lange Voorhout avenue in Hague, Hotel Continental Palacete a historic mansion or palace in Barcelona, The Mena House Hotel originally a house in Giza, and Belmond Hotel Monasterio a former monastery in Cusco, Peru (Belmond, 2022) are today welcoming their guests as heritage hotels as well (Chateau St. Gerlach, 2022; Freund de Klumbis & Musters, 2004; Hotel Des Indes The Hague, 2022; Hotel Continental Palacete, 2022; Ahmed, 2016). Similarly, The Lloyd Hotel in Amsterdam is an intriguing heritage hotel that originated as a transshipment hotel, and later, functioned as a refugee camp, prison, and juvenile detention facility (Lloyd Hotel, 2022; Ong, Minca & Felder, 2015). One also can observe several other exemplars that originated as hotels or were subsequently turned into hotels in South-East Asia, e.g., Singapore, Melaka, and George Town in Malaysia (see ab Wahab, Mohd-Hamdan, Lop & Mohd-Kamar, 2016; Nasution, 2014; and Peleggi, 2005).

Apart from that, the sample heritage hotels can be grouped by inaugural ownership, such as state properties and private properties. For instance, the historic Ciragan Palace and its extension Four Seasons Istanbul at the Bosphorus, W Istanbul, Legacy Ottoman, Crowne Plaza Istanbul Old City, and Four Seasons Hotel Istanbul at Sultanahmet were properties retained by the state. On the contrary, the Galata Hotel Istanbul, 10 Karakoy Istanbul, Pera Palace, A'jia Hotel, and Tomtom Suites were properties of private ownership. Furthermore, this study reveals that the major of the sample heritage hotels were rejuvenated as hotels

from the Millennium (2000) onwards. Only two of the buildings were converted into a hotel in the 80s, and one of the buildings in the 90s (see table 1).

This study also reveals that most of the sample historic buildings, other than Pera Palace, have been neglected and abandoned sometime and/or used for various purposes heretofore. Therefore, it can be inferred that these buildings were much affected by the threats of humans that degraded their authenticity along with the inevitable threats of nature that resulted in corrosion. This study corroborates that the sample hotels have rich historical backgrounds and strong authenticity thereof. Yabancı (2022) found that heritage hotels create special moments of truth among hotel guests, and the impact of such hotels could be increased when these buildings are introduced with the historical backgrounds that would distinguish them from their modern counterparts and would create value in the eyes of hotel guests.

Probably, the main limitation of this study is that it has investigated a limited number of historic buildings that were originally designed as or subsequently transformed into hotels. Future studies should seek to discuss the historical backgrounds of many other exemplars. It is essential to keep a record of such a heritage and track their historical changes for future evaluation since historic buildings are quite fragile, highly prone to collapse, and disappear over time.

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