

History of The Formation of an Urban Street Under the Effect of Social-Political Events: Voyvoda and Okcu Musa Streets

Toplumsal ve Siyasal Olayların Etkisinde Bir Kentsel Sokağın Oluşum Tarihi:
Voyvoda ve Okçu Musa Caddeleri

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Abstract

This research seeks to reveal the effects of social, political, and even legal sources on the formation of urban streets. For this purpose, the impact on the historical Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets in Istanbul is examined. Although the original character of these streets has been preserved to some extent, their texture, functions, and architectural façades have undergone changes. The research aims to analyze how socio-political transformations and regulatory frameworks have influenced the evolution of the physical and functional features of these historical streets over time. The scope encompasses the period from the 19th century to the present, examining the interplay between urban development, architectural identity, and broader societal shifts. A comprehensive literature review, analysis of historical maps, and on-site observations were used as research methods. The findings reveal that the legal and social transformations from the 19th century to the present have affected the architectural texture of these streets. The study concludes that understanding the historical layering of urban spaces through socio-political and legal lenses is essential for developing preservation strategies that honor Istanbul's rich cultural heritage while accommodating contemporary urban needs.

Keywords: History of the Street, Socio-Political Effect, Voyvoda Street, Okçu Musa Street, Istanbul.

Özet

Bu araştırma; sosyal, politik ve hatta yasal kaynakların, kentsel sokakların oluşumu üzerindeki etkilerini ortaya koymaya çalışmaktadır. Bu amaçla, İstanbul'da bulunan tarihi Voyvoda ve Okçu Musa sokakları üzerindeki etkileri incelenmektedir. Voyvoda ve Okçu Musa sokaklarının özgün karakterleri korunmuş olsa da doku, işlev ve mimari cepheleri dönemler içinde değişime uğramıştır. Araştırma, sosyo-politik dönüşümlerin ve düzenleyici çerçevelerin bu tarihi sokakların fiziksel ve işlevsel özelliklerinin zaman içinde evrimini nasıl etkilediğini analiz etmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Kapsamı 19. yüzyıldan günümüze kadar olan dönemi içererek, bu dönemdeki kentsel gelişim, mimari kimlik ve daha geniş toplumsal değişimler arasındaki etkileşimi incelemektedir. Yöntem olarak; kapsamlı bir literatür taraması, tarihî haritaların incelenmesi ve saha gözlemleri kullanılmaktadır. Bulgular, 19. yüzyıldan günümüze kadar olan yasal ve toplumsal dönüşümlerin bu sokakların mimari dokusunu etkilediğini göstermektedir. Kentsel mekânların tarihsel katmanlarının sosyo-politik ve yasal perspektiflerden anlaşılmasının, İstanbul'un zengin kültürel mirasına saygı gösterirken; çağdaş kentsel ihtiyaçları da karşılayan koruma stratejilerinin geliştirilmesi açısından önemli olduğu sonucuna varılmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sokağın Tarihi, Sosyo-Politik Etki, Voyvoda Caddesi, Okçu Musa Caddesi, İstanbul.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction: This study focuses on the spatial, visual, and physical transformation of two historic Istanbul streets: Voyvoda Street and Okçu Musa Street. These streets, located in the Galata district, represent significant examples of urban evolution shaped by changing socio-political contexts and planning paradigms over more than two centuries.

Purpose: The research aims to analyze the roots of spatial, visual, and physical characteristics of these streets under different socio-political events and planning paradigms from the 19th century to the present day. The study seeks to understand how socio-political characteristics of different periods affected urban legal resources over time, and how street characteristics and architectural features were transformed by these legal frameworks.

Method: The research employs a historical analysis approach, dividing the transformation into three distinct periods: the late Ottoman Empire, the Republican period until 1980, and the contemporary era from 1980 onwards. The study examines the effects of dimensions, use patterns, facade characteristics, and architectural formations of different periods through documentary analysis and urban morphological examination.

Findings: Late Ottoman Period: Galata, originally a Genoese settlement, exhibited typical 14th-century Mediterranean urban characteristics with its grid-planned layout, contrasting sharply with the historical peninsula across the Golden Horn. Following Ottoman conquest, Galata integrated with Istanbul, leading to architectural developments influenced by Western trends while maintaining traditional Ottoman building types such as barracks, madrasahs, inns, and hospitals. The transformation accelerated with the Ebniye Regulation of 1848, which established building height restrictions based on street width and introduced provisions for expropriation, building licensing, and inspection. This regulatory framework reflected broader modernization efforts during the late Ottoman period. In 1857, the Sixth Department Municipality was established as the first Western-style municipal organization in the Ottoman Empire, covering the Galata and Beyoğlu regions. This administration undertook significant urban improvements, including road widening, gas lighting installation, demolition of old Genoese structures, and construction of new buildings. Okçu Musa Street emerged during this period as a strategic connection between Galata and Pera, cutting through an area of old wooden houses west of Galata Tower to reach Şişhane Square. Planned as a wide, modern thoroughfare, it linked the partially widened Voyvoda Street to the new City Hall area. By the 1870s, these streets had become a major commercial center of the Ottoman Empire, with their current urban and architectural character forming through the 1880s and continuing development until the 1910s. Republican Era (1920s-1980): The proclamation of the Republic in 1923 marked a new phase in urban development. Economic difficulties from wartime and changing political attitudes halted the previous development momentum. The new government pursued systematic urban modernization, selecting international urban planners through competitions to rebuild Istanbul. The Construction and Roads Law No. 2290, enacted in 1933, mandated zoning plans to achieve Western urban standards. Hermann Elgötz conducted the first planning study for the Galata District in 1933, designating Voyvoda Street for business and commercial use. The 1950s brought rapid migration to Istanbul, with newcomers settling around the Golden Horn and industrial areas beyond the city walls. Prime Minister Menderes initiated large-scale construction projects in 1956-57 based on the Prost plan, significantly altering the urban landscape. The 1970s witnessed major changes in Galata District streets, with modern buildings replacing small early-century inns in upper street areas. However, this development was largely unplanned and lacked comprehensive urban design consideration. Contemporary Period (1980-Present): The 1980s marked a critical turning point as Istanbul's uncontrolled transformation into a megapolis diminished the relative importance of Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets, creating multi-layered urban structures. Mayor Bedrettin Dalan's appointment in 1986 initiated extensive demolition work in the Galata District, including the widening of Tarlabası Boulevard to Unkapanı Bridge and the creation of Şişhane Square. The 2010 approval of the 1/1000 scale Beyoğlu District Urban Site Protection Implementation Development Plan introduced significant tourism-focused decisions. Voyvoda Street was excluded from protection planning through designations as "privatization," "urban renewal," or "tourism area" (THT). This plan mandated relocation of workshops from small production areas in and around Şişhane District, citing concerns about historical texture damage and odor emissions. These decisions accelerated gentrification in Galata District, rapidly affecting both Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets. While some buildings were acquired by large companies and underwent functional changes with conservation work, most became idle and neglected, with only ground-floor shops remaining active.

Conclusion: The research reveals that street characteristics and architectural features have undergone significant transformations corresponding to socio-political conditions rather than systematic planning approaches. Urban areas have been consistently restructured according to political priorities, fundamentally altering street features, architectural appearance, and urban character. This pattern has intensified since 2000, affecting newly developing neighborhoods where area identity and texture are often disregarded in planning and design processes. The analysis demonstrates that street features face critical turning points dependent on period-specific socio-political conditions, with characteristic features revealing adaptation processes tied to political periods rather than planning continuity. For cities like Istanbul, facing pressure from renewed urban initiatives and fragmented spatial planning approaches, preserving urban identity becomes increasingly challenging due to multiple planning actors and numerous fragmented legal resources. The Galataport project represents another significant parameter and threat, aiming to transform the

region into a tourism, consumption, and retail area. This development has introduced new social contexts while reducing the connection between selected streets and the waterfront. The study concludes that for cities like Istanbul, integrating legal resources and different institutional units while protecting historical areas is essential for creating cities with more attractive and coherent identities. The transformation of Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets illustrates how urban spaces reflect broader socio-political changes, demonstrating the need for comprehensive planning approaches that consider historical continuity alongside contemporary development pressures.

Keywords: History of the Street, Socio-Political Effect, Voyvoda Street, Okçu Musa Street, Istanbul.

INTRODUCTION

The buildings, streets, and areas that make up the urban environment have a visual and structural integrity known as the urban landscape (Gordon, 2003). Urban streets as an architectural asset defined the historical features of urban landscapes. These assets form the settlements on the one hand and are considered as circulation or public aspects on the other hand (Rapoport, 1987). Street networks include different social, spatial, visual, and physical components. They are shaped in different periods under the influence of various interventions, including political, social, cultural, design, and planning paradigms. The physical features of the buildings that shape the streets are primary evidence of these past effects. Economic and political changes are closely linked to spatial production, as Harvey (2008) indicates. In this regard, the 18th and 19th centuries are periods of rapid change in many areas, including economics, social life, military affairs, as well as architecture and urban design, especially in Western European countries. In European states, the income derived from the colonies and the capital accumulated through agricultural production accelerated the industrialization movements of the 19th century. As a result, a modernist movement emerged that challenged and ultimately overturned classical lifestyles. This change was significantly different from the urban processes the world had been accustomed to until that time. With industrialization, production methods evolved into industrial production with mechanization. Rural migration started economically and commercially developing European cities, and the urban population growth also changed the urban structure and housing forms. This has led to the emergence of structures with diverse functions and qualities, including administrative, cultural, military, healthcare, educational, commercial, and industrial buildings (Ertuğrul, 2009). They transformed Europe's urban structures, shaped social structures, and caused sharp changes in the urban institutional systems of other countries, which had relations (Sözen & Tapan, 1973). So, analyzing urban design, street layouts, and architectural styles after the 19th century, countries can be categorized by different periods of the century's features.

Türkiye is among the peripheral countries which had a relationship with Western Europe. Although it had not been industrialized, it was nonetheless affected by the industrial movement of the period, dating back to the 18th century (Tekeli, 2010). Because the Ottoman Empire was significant in terms of its large market, abundant raw materials, and cheap labor, as well as the vastness of its lands, which made it a valuable resource for European states that had completed their industrialization and were economically and militarily developed. Within this scope, until the 18th century, the Ottoman State maintained its traditional management style and structures, such as the Şehremini (Ottoman mayor) (Akpınar, 2003). During the conclusion of Ottoman rule over Turkish politics, attitudes had already shifted in favor of a Westernization of once-loved Ottoman practices and ideals (Gül & Lamb, 2004). So, in the 19th century, European states began providing support to the Ottoman Empire, which catalyzed significant transformations in architectural organizations and accelerated urbanization processes. These political developments manifested in the implementation of Western administrative laws and profound shifts in Ottoman urban planning approaches. The contributions of ambassadors from and to European countries in education accelerated this process (Özbek, 2004).

Research Questions

The research is organized into four sections to address the following questions:

1. What are the socio-political features of different periods, and how did they affect the legal tools that can physically intervene in the features of the city over time?
2. How have these legal tools influenced street and architectural features during these periods?

Purpose of the Research

The article aims to analyze the socio-political and legal influences on the architectural and urban features of Istanbul's historic Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets. The primary purpose of this study is to document and interpret the ways in which external forces have shaped urban heritage. Its specific objective is to identify causal relationships between key factors and the physical transformations of historically significant streets. These key factors include regulatory frameworks and socio-political shifts. The study also examines the complex interplay between governing ideologies, economic systems, cultural values, and power dynamics. These elements reflect the characteristics of specific historical periods that shape institutional priorities and regulatory approaches (Lefebvre, 1991; Harvey, 2008). The research focuses on understanding how these various forces contribute to physical transformations in historically significant streets. By analyzing these relationships, the study aims to provide insights into the mechanisms through which external pressures influence urban heritage sites.

The study addresses the central problem of urban identity erosion in rapidly evolving historic districts by examining how these streets, particularly in the Galata district, have transformed across three significant historical periods. Through a comprehensive literature review, historical records, and on-site observations, the research tests the hypothesis that architectural and urban changes in these streets directly correspond to specific socio-political events and legal regulations rather than organic urban evolution. The article's findings have significant implications for future urban planning, engaging the audience in a discussion on the effects of rapid changes in the urban fabric of Istanbul on the future urban fabric of the region through the effects of social, economic, and political changes on urban planning and the preservation of architectural identity in the urban fabric of the determined region.

Scope of the Research

This study examines three distinct historical periods from the 19th century to the present: the late Ottoman era, the early Republican period until 1980, and the post-1980 contemporary period. Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets in Istanbul were selected as case studies due to their historical significance and distinctive incorporation of Western European architectural influences. The selected periods represent critical junctures in Türkiye's socio-political and urban development trajectory. The late Ottoman era was characterized by significant Westernization efforts and architectural reforms under the Tanzimat period. During this time, European architectural styles and urban planning principles were systematically introduced to Istanbul's urban fabric. The early Republican period, beginning with the foundation of the Republic of Türkiye in 1923, marked a deliberate ideological shift toward nation-building and modernization. During this period, urban spaces were reconceptualized to reflect new national identities as they gradually transitioned from Ottoman institutional frameworks. The post-1980 period represents a watershed moment following Türkiye's economic liberalization policies, characterized by accelerated globalization, dramatic increases in speculative urban development, and the implementation of new heritage conservation frameworks amid rapid urban transformation. These three distinct periods provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing how varying political ideologies, economic systems, and legal structures have systematically transformed Istanbul's architectural heritage and urban character,

particularly visible in historically significant streets like Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets. Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets were selected for this study because they exemplify Istanbul's evolving urban landscape, where Western European architectural influences merged with traditional Ottoman urban patterns through successive periods of modernization (Çelik, 1993). These streets maintain their historical significance as financial and commercial arteries within Galata—a district that Ayataç (2007) identifies as a critical zone of architectural experimentation and cross-cultural exchange. Despite numerous urban interventions, both streets have preserved sufficient original architectural elements to permit meaningful historical analysis of socio-political influences on urban form. The article is structured as follows: Section II presents a chronological analysis of Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets across the three identified periods, examining architectural formations with particular attention to dimensional features and functional transformations (Karaman, 1987). Section III critically evaluates the socio-political and legal impacts specific to each period on the architectural and urban development of these streets. Section IV synthesizes the findings and presents conclusions. This research contributes to the scholarly discourse on urban heritage preservation by documenting historical transformations, evaluating contemporary conditions, and offering projections for future development. The findings from this Turkish case study may provide valuable insights for other regions experiencing similar rapid urban development processes and facing challenges in preserving architectural heritage while accommodating modernization.

METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

The analysis is based on defining the effects of socio-political features on urban legal sources and consequently on the historical urban streets. This methodological approach was selected for its capacity to reveal the complex interplay between policy, regulation, and physical urban form across multiple historical periods. Through historical records, legal documents, and direct observational evidence, the research establishes a comprehensive analytical framework that captures both the tangible and regulatory dimensions of urban change. In this research, archival investigation of historical records provided critical documentation of the evolutionary trajectory of Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets, while on-site observations enabled detailed assessment of the fundamental components of these urban axes, including architectural elements, spatial configurations, and current usage patterns. These complementary analyses illuminate both the architectural transformations of individual buildings and their functional adaptations over time.

In this study, three significant periods are selected for analyzing the changes in the streets. Comprehensive literature review, browsing historical maps, browsing urban legal sources, and observation are the ways in which all the data have been collected (Figure 1).

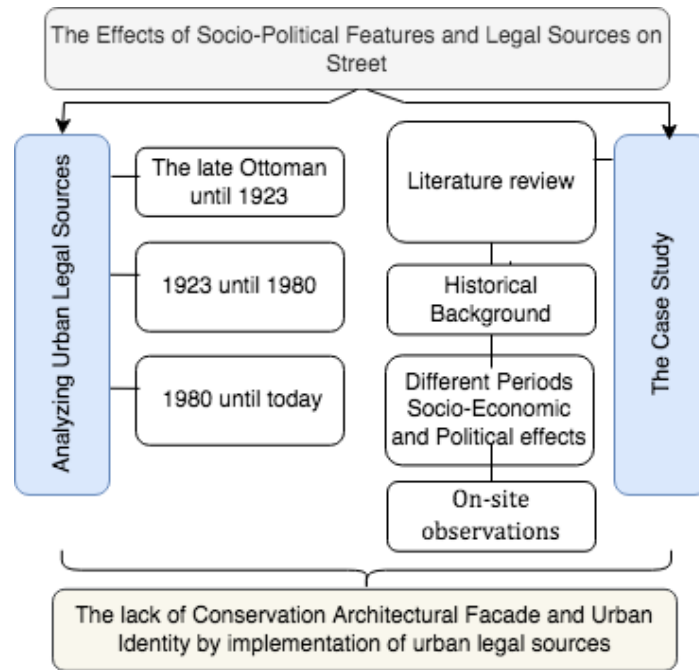


Figure 1. Research process

RESULTS

The Development History of Voyvoda and Okcu Musa Streets

This section examines the historical development of Voyvoda and Okcu Musa streets. These streets are located in the Galata district, which has undergone transformations influenced by various cultures and civilizations throughout history (Figure 2). These streets developed as a road along the inner walls of the Galata district and still play a central role in terms of art and commerce with a distinctive image and considerable location. The importance of the streets is understood from the Genoese Assembly Building and Market Square (Eldem, 2000), whereas transformation is continuing based on the re-use of the buildings by renovation operation (Seçmen & Süyük Makaklı, 2021).

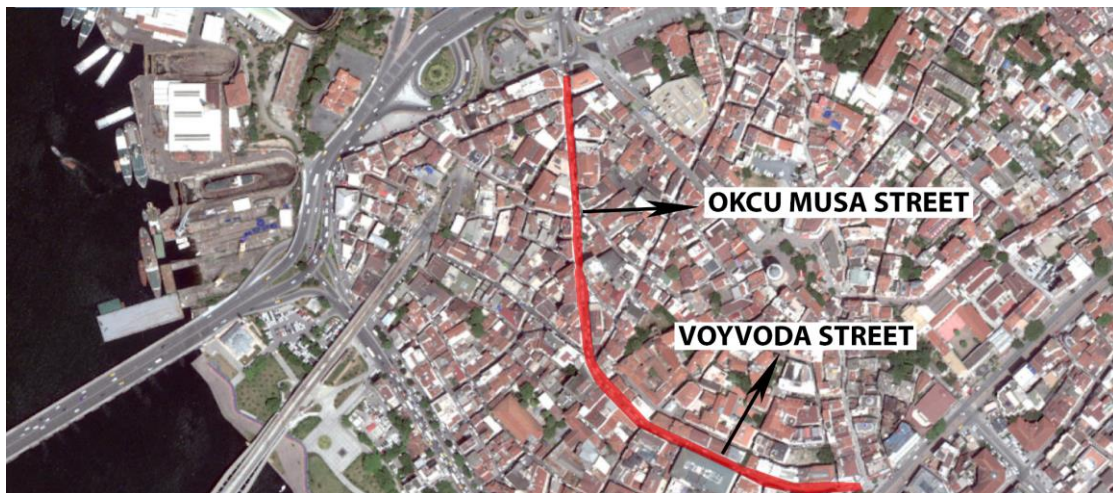


Figure 2. The location of the streets (İstanbul City Map, 2020)

Features of the Streets from the Late Ottoman Period Until 1923

Before the conquest of the Ottoman Empire, Galata, as a Genoese settlement, had the typical characteristics of 14th-century Mediterranean cities. It offered a grid-planned view with its urban layout and structures and displayed a different appearance from the historical peninsula opposite (Kaymak Heinz & Yaşar, 2018). Galata can be found in Istanbul's western Beyoğlu District. Beyoğlu has maintained its reputation as a desirable location for both residential and commercial, as well as entertainment sectors, due to its strategic position, multi-layered social structure, and distinctive architectural pattern (Özbay Kınacı & Zeren Gulersoy, 2021). In addition, the significant physical element of the region was the impressive city walls that defined the borders of Galata against Venetian attacks (Akın, 2002). After the conquest, a part of the population, which was quite dense in Galata, and the main buildings passed under the Ottoman administration. Some of the city walls, which were built in the Genoese Period to protect the neighborhoods, were demolished by Fatih Sultan Mehmet for security reasons. However, the city preserved its main topography in the Genoese Period. Fatih attached importance to the preservation of the port city characteristics of Galata, which is the center of trade with Europe, and agreed with the Genoese, giving them some privileges.

The importance of Voyvoda Street in the Ottoman period can be understood from the time's famous traveler Evliya Çelebi; The floor of this Galata is made of masonry Genoese buildings, one hour uphill, from Lebi-Derya (waterfront) to the northern side and reaching the tower gate. However, outside the castle, the historical determination road in Lebi-derya, the Voivode road inside the castle, the Arab mosque road, the Harbi road, and the tower gate road are confluence roads (SALT Research, 2023).

One of the significant consequences of the conquest was the integration of Galata with Istanbul in all respects (İnalçık, 1996). Thus, constructions emerged under the influence of Western architectural movements (Karaman, 1987). In this period, buildings, which have existed for centuries, such as barracks, madrasahs, hans, and hospitals, maintained their familiar functions, and were built according to Western standards and with techniques suitable for the conditions of the period. Meanwhile, some building types emerged as needed or encountered entirely new statuses that society did not recognize until that time. The newly emerging understanding has shown its effect in the capital city, Istanbul. Other cities followed the capital in terms of new construction methods (Ertuğrul, 2009). Following the foreign trade agreements made with England and France in 1838, Karaköy, which had become an international financial and trade center, was the focal point of new dynamics. With the Western states opening banks one after another, stock market activities in their efforts to modernize, and the intensification of maritime transport and trade, the transformation of the region becomes inevitable to meet these spatial changes (Kafesçioğlu, 2016). Urban affairs continued by enacting major regulations, which covered issues about street width, partially open spaces, building materials, and the like. The 1848 Building Regulation (Ebniye Nizamnamesi) was one of these regulations. According to the regulation, the width of the street is the determinant of the height of the building, and the provision of expropriation in the regulation on the road network (based on the principle of public benefit), there are also provisions regarding the licensing of buildings and construction supervision.

Moreover, as a result of the aforementioned modernization movements, the first Western-style municipal organization within the Ottoman Empire—the Sixth Chamber Municipality, encompassing the Galata and Beyoğlu regions—was established in 1857. This was the first municipality established by European norms but situated within Ottoman Empire boundaries (Özbay Kınacı & Zeren Gulersoy, 2021).

The purpose of the establishment of this municipality is to gather the bourgeoisie's resources at a certain point in the city and develop its own living environment. The Sixth Chamber Municipality, the first municipality of the Ottoman Empire in the Western sense, conducted important works such as widening the roads in Galata, lighting with gas, demolishing the old Genoese buildings, and building new ones. In this

regard, the Turuk and Ebniye Regulation was enacted in this period, as a more comprehensive regulation that covered the whole country. The regulation allowed the roads to be widened to allow the passage of cars and trams. Within the scope of these studies, Voyvoda Street has undergone a complete transformation with the establishment of a number of companies and businesses closely linked to new and emerging sectors of the economy: banking, insurance, law, architecture, inns, offices, warehouses, shops, mining, railways, and imported technology (Eldem, 2000). With the operations that started in 1858, changes began to be made in this system. It can be observed that the environment of Şiřhane is redefined or even newly created (Figures 3 and 4). It is seen that this operation is an application that is created by interventions in partially empty or cemetery areas, partially settled urban fabric, which does not break up urban morphology, but rather unifies it.

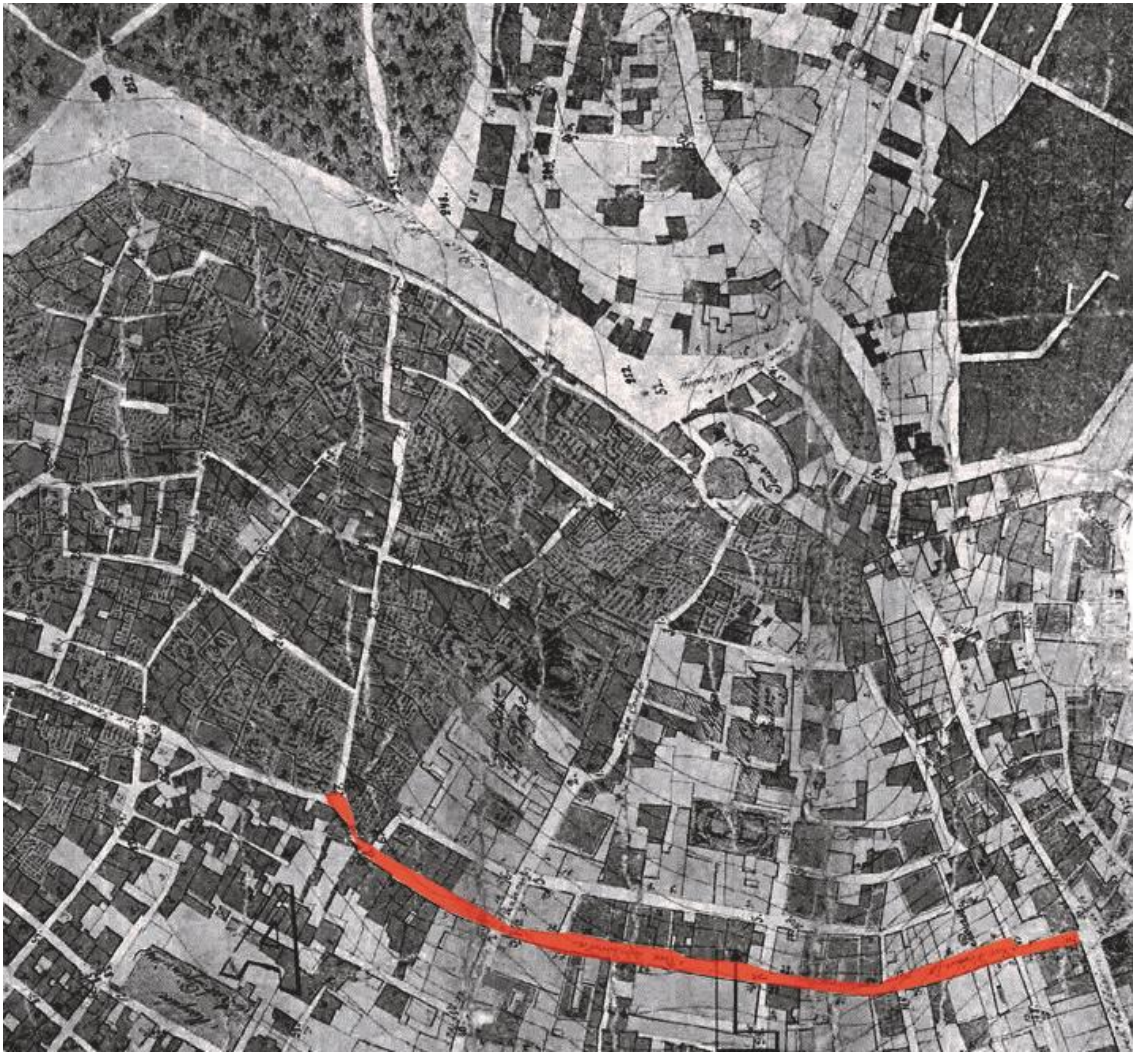


Figure 3. Dostoya Map 1858-1860 (Atatürk Library Map Archive)



Figure 4. Voyvoda Street from Ottoman times to today (Voyvoda Street from Ottoman Times to Today, 2023)

In 1861, the Sixth Chamber carried out significant works such as widening the roads, lighting with gas, demolishing old Genoese buildings, and building new ones in Galata. In addition to the arrangement of places damaged by fires, the work performed by the Sixth Chamber had important effects on the change of the Galata region. It is understood that the Genoese Walls seen on the map of D'Ostoya dated 1858 (Figure 3) were destroyed, and new roads were opened instead. The lands obtained from the demolition of the walls were opened for development. The planning of Okçu Musa Street, which is a connection project between Galata and Pera and opened to the Şişhane Region, was also a project developed in this period (Yeğenağa & Say Özer, 2020). In 1873, the construction work on Okçu Musa Street was completed, and the tram rides on this road can now be conducted without interruption (Öncel, 2010). Okçu Musa Street is planned as a completely new street that runs over the old urban pattern. In the Huber Map dated 1887, the old architectural pattern and street connections still exist to a certain extent despite the new road passing over them (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Huber Map 1887-1891 (Özyurt, 2007, p.76); Voyvoda Street from Ottoman Times to today (Voyvoda Street from Ottoman Times to Today, 2023)

This district also had newly arranged building blocks in this planning. With the new building specification announced in 1882 as Ebniye Law, a great construction movement was initiated by increasing the building heights. The important factor affecting urban morphology in this specification is the ratio of building heights not only to the building material but also to the width of the street. The 2-3 story wooden texture transformed in this short period and gave its place to 5-6 story masonry buildings (Öncel, 2010). The urban and architectural texture of the street started to form in the 1880s. Eight of the large buildings that still stand today were built during these years. Most of the new buildings replaced the pre-existing structures - wooden houses and larger mansions, some old hans. However, some of the buildings were built on the last empty plots on the street (Yeğenağa & Say Özer, 2020). The street, which was re-expanded by taking advantage of the demolition of old buildings, has become a sign of Galata's modern-looking streets. The Camondo Stairs were probably built by the Camondo family in the 1880s to properly connect its residence on Camondo Street to Voyvoda Street, where the family bank's offices are located (Eldem, 2000). The urban and architectural texture of the street continued to develop until the 1910s and has remained almost untouched until today. Following the commissioning of the Silahtarağa Power Plant in 1914, with the works of the Sixth Chamber, electricity was supplied to the streets and residences, so there was a need for lighting furniture. The use of chandeliers as lighting furniture in mosques and palaces during these periods gave the masters skilled (usta) an idea to close the market gap. Thus, the craft of chandelier making was born in the workshops producing steamship parts. Production workshops and sales offices are located in the upper parts of Voyvoda Street and on Okçu Musa Street (Yeğenağa & Say Özer, 2020).

Comparing the Goad Map dated to the beginning of the 20th century (Figure 6 and Figure 7) with the 1858–1860 D'Ostoya Map (Figure 3), observed that Voyvoda Street has been expanded and corrected. The dead-end streets leading to it have been largely eliminated, Okcu Musa Street was opened, and the parceling on the building blocks was completed.

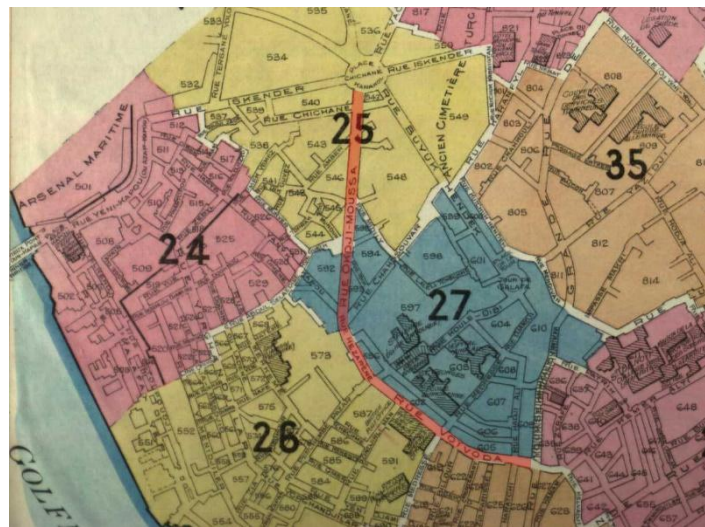


Figure 6. Goad Map 1905 (Salt Galata Archives, 2023)



Figure 7. Goad Map- detailed 1905 (Salt Galata Archives, 2023)

The maps reveal that despite the variety of functions that emerged in the 19th century, there is no functional variability in planning. In general, the volumes lined up along the corridor and mass arrangements emphasize the corners of the building with a symmetrical planning approach. Despite the differentiation in building types, the same planning approach was repeated. Under the influence of Neo-Classicism, which is a repetition of past architectural styles, the facades of the buildings are decorated with the elements of antiquity. Besides, the forms symbolized by the East and Islam and the classical form patterns of Western architectural products were mixed with architectural motifs such as Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque (Sözen & Tapan, 1973). As a result, while quite smooth parcels are planned in the region, a certain degree of continuity of the old texture is tried to be maintained. Towards the end of the 19th century, the old texture on both sides of these streets was joined with neighboring parcels to form large building areas suitable for constructing wider buildings (Öncel, 2010).

Features of the Streets from 1923 Until 1980

As a result of the economic difficulties during and after the war and the political attitudes of the changing regime in 1923, these selected streets, which did not reach the limits of their normal development, have entered a period of stagnation with obvious consequences. With the collapse of the Ottoman Empire and the declaration of the Republic, Türkiye's modernization, which started at the end of the Ottoman Empire, entered a new era. The aim was to create a top-to-bottom transformation program in order to change the institutional structure of Turkish society. The founding of the Republic had as its goals the creation of a new nation-state and the beginning of new modernization efforts and projects (Sınacı, 2009). The transformation model was based on Western modern civilization as well as the other modernization processes that took place elsewhere during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. All dimensions of Western society such as lifestyle, eating habits, clothing, and women's participation in daily social life as well as cultural modernization of architecture and urban design in macro and micro scales, and transforming the radical Muslim Ottoman region into a secular nationalist region were major tools of Turkish modernizers in the late 1920s and early 1930s (Gül, and Lamb, 2004). At the same time, the transition to the one-party regime that prevailed until 1944 and a statist approach instead of the populist approach, which led to the central government's authorization over the local municipalities' authorization, was another feature (Tekeli, 2010). Following these changes, investments in the old capital Istanbul shifted towards Ankara, which was declared the new capital of the young republic (Sözen & Tapan, 1973). Establishment of Ankara, which is called the 'heart of the nation', was among the primary concerns of the government (Gül & Lamb, 2004). As well, the Kemalist ideology turned the government's attention to rebuilding Istanbul by selecting an urban planner through international competitions. In this scope, with the

Law of Building and Roads (no.2290 enacted in 1933), it became a necessity to prepare zoning plans in order to create standards of western cities (Duygulu, 1989). This law was effective in creating modern, planned cities for the Republic, introducing detailed, rigid regulations in two parts: plans and buildings (Durhan, 2009). There were significant articles regarding the management of buildings in the law, such as sidewalks, fences, building colors, and balcony heights, which aligned with construction requirements.

The first planning study for the Galata Region was carried out by Hermann Elgötz in 1933. Improving hygiene, preserving monuments, and creating an effective urban transport network were the main goals of the plan, with the least demolition of the historic core (Gül & Lamb, 2004). In this plan, the two sides of Perşembe Pazarı and Voyvoda Street on the Beyoğlu side, and the part from Azapkapı to Kasımpaşa (including the Şişhane Region) were determined as business and commercial areas (Duranay et al, 1972). As a result, this sector took over the street, pushing the last examples of less specialized businesses into the back streets. Barbershops, coffee shops, small restaurants, tobacconists, grocers, and artisans moved out, opening space for electricians, appliance shops, and other small-scale technology-based businesses. This process spilled over towards Şişhane along Okçu Musa Street (Yeğenağa & Say Özer, 2020). The need and uses for electrical and mechanical technologies increased rapidly and created a substantial expansion of their market. At the same time, from 1936 to 1951, the northern part of the Golden Horn, as part of the Galata-Pera plan, was formed by Henri Prost within the scope of the Master Plan for the European Side of Istanbul. Prost's historical peninsula plan was viewed with a pragmatic approach to Haussmann's plan for Paris, with the aim of creating a modern and beautiful city (Pinon, 2010). The plan features were to open new roads and squares (transportation), to take into account the urban silhouette and natural assets (aesthetic), to harmonize the historical sites, and to implement the zoning system and hygiene (Bilsel & Zelef, 2011). Some legal resources have been enacted to justify these transformations and modernization projects. The Municipal Law No. 1580 and Concerning the Appearance of Engineering and Architectural Profession Law were among these laws (Tekeli, 2006).

While significant planning efforts in the 1930s focused on building blocks and street layouts (Öztürk & Çıracı, 2010), there were no developments on the avenues mentioned, except for minor façade renovations between 1918 and 1960.



Figure 8. Demolitions in Karaköy Square, 1958 (Ara Guler's archive, Mimdap, 2023)

With the announcement of the Republic, non-Muslim people living and working on these streets started to immigrate. In the 1950s, there was a rapid migration flow towards Istanbul from Anatolia, and the arrivals

settled around the Golden Horn and industrial areas outside the city wall. Squatter houses on public or private lands far from municipal control were the solution that immigrants in Türkiye developed, and that has been the issue of contemporary urbanization as a result of rapid urbanization and migration (Sınacı, 2009).

In order to meet the needs of the population that had increased, the urban transformation movements initiated by the Menderes government in 1956-57 (Figure 8). The prime minister of the time, Adnan Menderes, described his idea of a modern city in this context: "Essential to the requirements of the citizens, the roads and avenues are crucially important." For this reason, important intersections and public spaces that carry the bulk of the traffic need to be redesigned and rebuilt. We need to design, construct, and open big streets and expansive squares. We must have first-rate highways to welcome travelers arriving by air or land, and we must adorn the city with statues that honor its history (Ayataç, 2010).

Menderes' urban operations have been inspired by Prost's Master Plan. However, these projects lacked the sensitivity characteristic of Prost's elaborate urban design proposals and were carried out without the necessary precautions to relocate residents from expropriated areas—measures on which Prost had insisted (Bilsel & Zelef, 2011). The legitimization of these constructions was under the Reconstruction Law No.6785, which was enacted in 1956 and contained principles of planning, control, and building (Turk, 2005). The subject matter states that the drafted regulations and guidelines must specify the size of the lot, the floor height, the arrangement of the garden, the total number, depth, overhangs, and materials of the structures or outhouses that will be developed (Rezafar, 2019). With the establishment of the Ministry of Construction and Housing in 1958, the government played a central role in planning issues. Following it, the State Planning Institute was established in 1960 (Ayataç, 2010). Major changes occurred in the urban fabric of Istanbul. Voyvoda and Okcu Musa Streets were slightly transformed, losing Nur Han and a whole block of buildings behind it during the extension of Karaköy Square (Figure 9) (Esmer, 2013). Whereas some new articles were added to the Reconstruction Law in 1972 about the necessity of protecting architectural values such as inns, hamam, caravanserai, and similar structures.

The Condominium Law No. 634 has enabled the creation of independent ownership rights for completed or under-construction buildings such as residences, shops, stores, and business offices. According to Yenice (2014), this regulation resulted in the demolition of less dense licensed housing stock inside cities, particularly in the city centers, that had sparse and highly fragmented ownership patterns, and its replacement with multi-story apartment buildings that were typically built next to one another. According to this regulation, buildings located on or near boulevards were required to be 9 to 10 stories tall, while those situated on side streets off major boulevards had to be at least six stories high (Şahin, 2007).

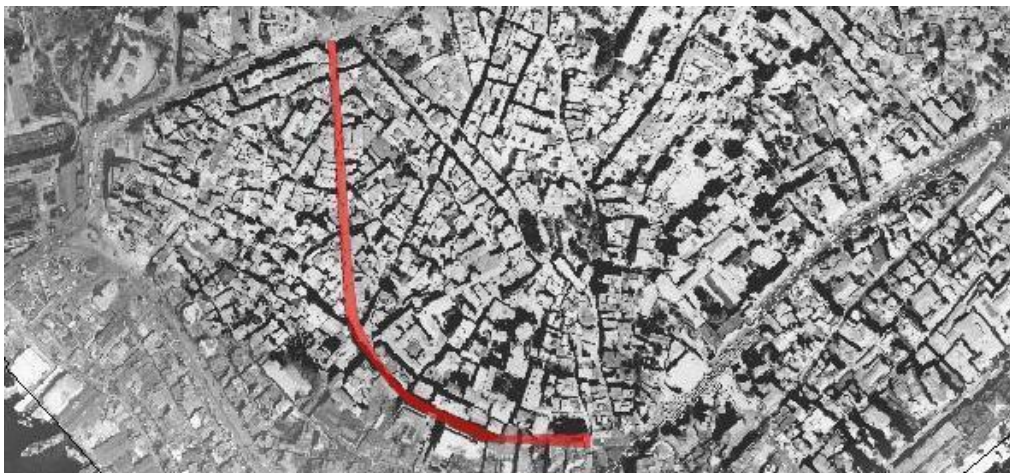


Figure 9. 1966 aerial photo (İstanbul City Map, 2020)

In the 1970's the street underwent significant changes. Five modern buildings were built during this period, and some minor houses were built on the upper section (Eldem, 2000). These buildings signaled a revival of the street, an end to the former policy of adapting available structures without further investment and projects.

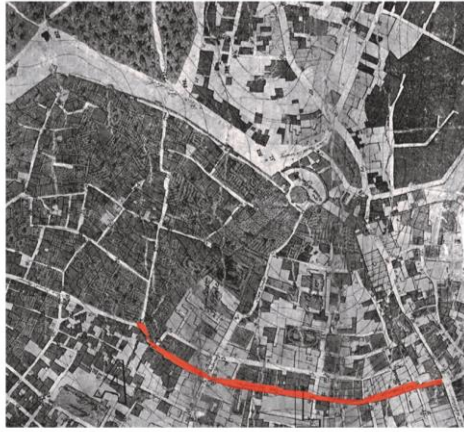
Features of the Streets from 1980 Until Today

The fundamental characteristic of this time was economic liberalization coupled with structural adjustment initiatives. Structural modifications with export promotion, restriction of capital inflows, integration with the global markets, and deregulation of the commodity trade, removing restrictions on international capital transfers in 1989, were the focuses of this period (Boratav et al., 2000). The economic crisis at the start of the 1980s was the cause of this. During this time, neoliberal economic policies served as the primary engine for development in the short term, necessitating a switch from market-based to state-centered economic growth. This was a reaction to the nation's financial might declining (Ozkan & Turk, 2016). Competitiveness is now seen as essential to a city's economic future (Karaman, 2013). 'Globalization' was the name given to the new economic development process the country underwent (Rezafar, 2019). In addition to rapid urbanization, the 1980s saw the transformation of city centers into squatter colonies and the relocation of industrial regions outside of city centers in Turkish cities. The enactment of Law No. 2981 in 1984 was crucial in the transformation of the squatter communities.

Another important feature of the period is flexible planning areas and special purpose laws for more illegal developments. Some special-purpose laws began to be passed in the 1980s with the intention of enhancing competitiveness between cities in the culture and tourism sectors or developing the urban image. Istanbul, Türkiye's main economic hub and most populous metropolis, has been considered a "world city" since the mid-1980s (Bilsel, Zelef, 2011). The Tourism Encouragement Law No. 2634, enacted in March 1982, serves this purpose. This law was the first law to grant the Ministry of Public Works the ability to establish plans for tourism purposes in urban areas and to begin determining tourism centers at the scale of parcels and tourism zones spanning larger areas in urban areas. Nowadays, Istanbul is the target of modern neo-liberal policies. Due to its unique geographical and historical location on the continental transportation lines since the 1980s, the city has seen significant changes as a result of these policies.

Since the early 2000s, various functions such as lodging, cultural, and leisure services have gradually replaced technology-oriented and electrical retail activities along the selected street, contributing to the transformation of Galata and Pera into emerging arts and culture hubs. However, the brick structures still convey a strong impression of their former commercial and governmental roles from the nineteenth century. On both sides of the street, there are reinforced concrete structures; yet, the historical buildings demonstrate how the city evolved during the latter years of the empire and the country (Figure 10) (Eldem, 2000). These spatial layers, shaped by different historical and political processes, reflect the cumulative transformation of the street over time. This transformation is systematically summarized in Table 1. The red lines indicate the study area, encompassing Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets, which show their persistence as primary urban arteries despite successive periods of modernization. The chronological sequence reveals the gradual transition from Ottoman urban planning (1860-1887) through Republican-era urban reforms (1905-1966) to contemporary urban development patterns (2020), illustrating how regulatory frameworks and socio-political changes have influenced the physical transformation (such as the opening of Okçu Musa Street, the widening of streets, the opening and closing of the tram line, the change and increase in construction) of this historically significant commercial district.

Table 1. Maps and aerial photographs showing the changes in streets throughout history Dostoya Map 1858-1860 (Atatürk Library Map Archive); Huber Map 1887-1891 (Özyurt, 2007, p.76); Goad Map- Detailed 1905 (Salt Galata Archives, 2023); 1966 Aerial Photo (Istanbul City Map, 2020); The location of the streets (Istanbul City Map, 2020)



1860



1887



1905



1966



2020



Figure 10. Voyvoda Street, building façade and details; Voyvoda Street from Ottoman to now (Voyvoda Street from Ottoman Times to Today, 2023)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The research reveals that, although they are not comparable in scale, Haussmann's urban design initiatives could be seen in Ottoman architecture and planning in terms of design concepts (Özbay Kınacı & Zeren Gulersoy, 2021). Whereas early Republicans primarily focused on preserving monumental buildings and maintaining cultural heritage as part of their thriving planning system (Demiröz & Şahin Güçhan, 2021) (Table 2). At the same time, a modern architectural attitude prevailed among European architects. Concerns over "nationality" resurfaced in the 1940s. The nationalist and narrow-minded attitudes of the Western states began to manifest in our nation, the second national architecture movement, which aims to build on the foundations through comprehending national character via architecture, has begun to take shape (Türker & Tapan, 2022). In general, High-rise masonry structures with neoclassical facades can be used to characterize the street's overall architectural identity. Neo-Greek elements are also reflected on the building facades as structural and ornamental elements, in addition to the dominant Rococo and Art Nouveau architectural styles. So, the street can preserve its original features and silhouette, which have become focal points in some important buildings, as well as its east-west direction.

Table 2. Legal decisions and their effects on the street's features

Decisions and Their Effects	
1848	Ebniye Regulations: the width of the street is the determinant of the height of the building, and the provision of expropriation in the regulation on the road network (based on the principle of public benefit), there are also provisions regarding the licensing of buildings and construction supervision.
1857	The first municipal organization, the establishment of the Sixth Chamber Municipality covering Galata and Beyoğlu regions, and the

	establishment of the City Commission
1864	Turuk and Ebniye Regulations, a more comprehensive regulation covering the whole country, allows the roads to be widened to allow the passage of cars and trams.
1882	Ebniye Law: Provisions on land parcelization, building floor heights, and road widths have been introduced throughout the country.
1933	The first planning study for the Galata Region was carried out by Hermann Elgötz in 1933.
1956	Historical buildings were demolished due to the opening of new roads during the Menderes Period Zoning Plan works. Squatter Housing was the solution for the migrants, which at the same time affected the features of urban areas.
1956	Reconstruction Law No.6785, enacted in 1956, with this law, the central government gained more authority, and the State Planning Institute (DPT) was established.
1965	The Condominium Law No. 634 has enabled the creation of independent ownership rights for completed or under-construction buildings such as residences, shops, stores, and business offices.
1985	Within the scope of the Reconstruction Law No. 3194, zoning activities were decentralized and distributed.

The analysis demonstrates that socio-political factors had a more significant influence on the transformation of Voyvoda and Okçu Musa Streets than organic urban evolution or coherent planning thoughts. The successive legal frameworks documented in Table 2—from the 1848 Ebniye Regulations through the 1985 Reconstruction Law—progressively altered street features, building heights, road widths, and architectural expressions as political priorities shifted. This created a layered urban fabric where each period's socio-political agenda became physically manifest in the urban fabric. The research findings indicate that these streets experienced critical turning points that corresponded directly to political transitions rather than planned urban development initiatives. This pattern of politically driven adaptation, rather than comprehensive urban planning, reveals the challenges of preserving urban identity in Istanbul amidst fragmented legal frameworks and competing institutional authorities. For cities like Istanbul facing intense development pressures, this study underscores the necessity of improved integration among legal frameworks and institutional departments to protect historical urban areas effectively. A more coordinated approach to urban heritage management would help preserve Istanbul's distinctive identity while accommodating necessary urban evolution.

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*The number(s) corresponding to the relevant explanation in the contribution section have been written

1. Designing the study
2. Collecting the data
3. Analysis and interpretation of the data
4. Writing the article
5. Critical revision

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There is no personal and/or financial conflict of interest within the scope of the study.

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