

**Assembling 'Cosmopolitanism':
Making Modern Pera through Infrastructure in Late Ottoman Istanbul**

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Assembling 'Cosmopolitanism' traces the emergence of modern Pera district of Istanbul in the second half of the nineteenth century. It examines Pera as a 'cosmopolitan assemblage' of urban and environmental elements assembled via several infrastructure projects, and tells the story of how humans and animals, and the nonliving and the dead in the Ottoman capital took part in the making of this mythical urban center. It scrutinizes four case studies, namely replacement of the district's walls with wide streets in 1864, construction of the world's second oldest subway in 1875, installment of waterworks between the northernmost Terkos and Pera in 1884, and the endless efforts to establish a working sewage system.

I stipulate that Pera's rise to prominence can fully be understood through unraveling its hidden but fundamental constituents, that is, what lay beneath and beyond Pera's facade, its transformed spaces, recycled material, and environmental connections. Making of this 'cosmopolitan' assemblage involved not only Westernized elites of Pera, but also of a multitude of actors who have so far been silenced within the district's historiography and discussions of cosmopolitanism: the poor and dead of Pera; the residents of the neighboring district who had to live with Pera's sewage; and forests, animals, and water from Istanbul's far-off regions. By giving a material and environmental twist to Pera's urban history, I aim to provide a revised account of the transformation of the city and nature of modernizing Istanbul, as well as a much-needed materialist critique of Ottoman cosmopolitanism.