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### Article

## Spatial dimensions of literature: Ethnographic codes for the Prag'da Günler story by Nedim Gürsel

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### ABSTRACT

The city, with its social, cultural, physical, and geographical features, can be represented narratively on the axis of interpretations and fictions of reality or imagination. The ethnographic codes of city narratives are physical, structural, and social. They represent the city in various ways and contribute to knowledge in architecture. The research question of this article is, 'Could architecture be reinterpreted through ethnographic narratives of the city?' This question points to a vibrant field of study that investigates the importance and originality of the article and the spatial dimensions of literature. The article addresses a more nuanced perspective on relationships between travel writing and ethnography from a literary approach to narrative analysis and architecture. The article analyses the architectural elements in a literary narrative through qualitative research. It aims to ethnographically examine the story of Prag'da Günler, which emphasizes a European city. Karen O'Reilly's ethnographic method is used for the ethnographic analysis of this story. The ethnographic approach also aims at a certain understanding and appreciation of the spatial dimensions of the literature in the case of Nedim Gürsel. As a result, seeing the city as a writing activity at the intersection of architecture and narrative makes the potential of narratives viable in the reproduction of the city.

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### INTRODUCTION

Architecture comprises interdisciplinary relations and incorporates literary and theoretical genres in the expression of architecture, establishing a significant relationship with the narrative aspect of architecture. Architecture and literature are artistic fields that emerge, exist, and sustain with sociality.

All realities that exist in the social environment are directly reflected in literary works and the field of architecture. However, both architecture and literature are related in their contexts as part of the social environment (Güner & Gökmen, 2020).

One of the intersections of architecture and literature is the combination of design and creation, in other words,

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the design process rather than the completed products. When looking at the history of architecture, it is possible to see examples such as how architecture and literature have been and continue to interact. For instance, architect and writer Matteo Pericoli (2018) brings together the author candidates in the writing program at Scuola Holden in Turin, Italy, and the architecture students at the Columbia University School of Art in New York, America. The program aims to bring new perspectives to the minds of the writer candidates of the architectural culture that designs around a 'void' (Hacıömeroğlu, 2017).

Even if most of them are fictional, texts that have witnessed history carry many things that have disappeared over time in their memory. Novels, diaries, travelogues, biographies, essays, official documents, letters, and literary descriptions serve as part of the narrative and archives prepared for recording and bringing non-existent cities, societies, and buildings to the history and culture of architecture. Even today, many cities, buildings, and societies that have been destroyed because of wars, natural disasters, diseases, and passing time can be seen in the book pages (Hacıömeroğlu, 2017).

To understand how literature is related to other disciplines, it is needed to analyze the language, literary works, and writers involved. Space plays a crucial role in the relationship between literature and society. The space also influences the emergence of a particular group of literary works. Alongside architecture, literary work is also associated with ethnography. Literary work can be presented as a product of ethnographic field studies, and ethnography can be an identity sign in expressing the quality and content of the literary work (Kükreker, 2020). Learning about societies from literary works through ethnography is remarkable because it reveals the interest in literature. In this context, ethnography can also make it possible to produce architectural knowledge about societies.

Discussions of the 'structural' fiction of literature and the 'narrative' power of architecture analyze different qualitative methods and provide the basis for similar studies (Aravot, 1995; Psarra, 2009; Chatman, 1978). Therefore, this article focuses on the relationship between architecture and narratology and draws attention to the potentials of architectural criticism.

The aim of this article, which seeks to answer the question, 'Could architecture be reinterpreted through ethnographic narratives of the city?', is to discover the ethnographic codes that refer to the city as a narrative in a story. This article explores ethnographic codes in Nedim Gürsel's story *Prag'da Günler* (Days in Prague), based on the author's ethnographical expression of his genuine urban experience. Thus, this article aims to bring an architectural perspective to ethnography by exploring ethnographical city codes for the evaluation of architecture in experience-based narratives.

The method of this study, which takes place at the intersection of literature and architecture, fills an important gap with the ethnographic perspective it offers. In spite of the studies that generally focus on the concepts of space and place in the common ground of architecture and literature disciplines, this gap is filled by proposing instrumental codes and themes for observing the city, experiencing the city, and individual experience. The method is based on Karen O'Reilly's (2005) ethnographic analysis steps (Formulating a research question or hypothesis, Sample selection, Definition of themes, Development of a protocol for coding, Coding, and analyzing the results). The 5-step ethnographic analysis is associated with the steps of this article research and the theoretical framework of the method is created. As a result, especially in the fourth step of the ethnographic analysis, 'Development of a protocol for coding', the research material is divided into pieces, selected into conceptual units specific to the passage, codes have been categorized into code categories, relationships between code-category and ethno-category have been established, and the findings have been interpreted.

Exploring the spatial dimensions of literature is closely related to ethnography. The codes that form the basis of ethnographic analysis are shaped by observing and experiencing the city, and each study is unique. In this study, which is based on Nedim Gürsel's story *Prag'da Günler*, the presence of ethnographic codes in his narrative is tried to be made visible. In this context, the realities (real meanings and values) offered by the Prague city experience are revealed in the narrative with the established method. At this point, it is necessary to take a closer look at the relationship between Narrative, City, and Ethnography.

### **Narrative, City, and Ethnography**

The narrative is a fundamental way for people to make sense of the world or shape the world (Cobley, 2014). The narrative works to organize the data of life into recognizable patterns, perceived as a representation of place and space (Cobley, 2014). According to Baak (1983), the spaces in the narratives are culturally defined and, therefore, variable; they are mostly openly associated with behavioral attitudes and value judgments (Jahn, 2005).

In his book *Signs Taken for Wonders*, Moretti (1997) explains the relationship between narrative and city according to various authors, based on data from the city: Park, et al., (1925) stated that what is known about the insights of city life is essentially indebted to story and novelists. Park, et al., (1925) and Auerbach & Said (1974) address that the connection between city and literature is penetrated through depiction from literature to city, from city to literature. The information about the city can be embedded in the event itself. To inform about the visual features of the city's architecture, the text has to stop the flow of events, suspend the story for a while, and depict the places and

spaces. But literary depiction is never a copy of anything else. It is a way of establishing and conveying meaning, a means of classification (Moretti, 1997). Cities function as centers where information flows, and where it is used, produced, and distributed in every period of time, and that it brings about spatial transformations and stories (Kaymaz Koca, 2015). The city is a spatial presence; each component, value, and meaning are embodied in objects, houses, and things that can be depicted and sorted in various ways.

According to its nature, narrative text rests on two possible approaches: content analysis and semiotic analysis (O'Reilly, 2005). As claimed by Scholte (1987), semiotic examination of the narrative shifts ethnographic interest from focusing solely on narrative structure or rhetorical tools to the effects of language on ethnographic analysis and explanation.

In 1871, the anthropologist Tylor (1871) defined ethnography in his book *Primitive Culture* as a complex whole that, when discussed in a broad sense of culture or civilization, included knowledge, faith, art, moral values, law, traditions, and other competencies and habits acquired by man as a member of society. The concept of ethnography as a complex whole may help literary works by being aware of culture, reconstructing the foundations upon which the work was built, and making it possible to relive that feeling (Greenblatt, 1990).

Brettell (1986) draws attention to the textual reflection of experience by stating that descriptions in ethnographies and travelogues are a mixture of observation, interpretation, and tendencies. In this context, texts are shown as a sign of the strong link between ethnography and literature. Denzin (1998) states that a social theory is also a theory of writing, and a theory of writing is also a theory of interpretive (ethnographical) work. Based on this, it is possible to say that the interpretive role of writing, the narratives of users/writers who rewrite the city by experiencing it, contains interpretation and ethnographical value. While literature, in which writing is of primary importance, focuses on the city, space, and place as the environment in which the event takes place; the observations, comments, and tendencies of the writer show the connection between ethnography and literature.

Wiles (2020) offers three approaches to the relationship between literature and anthropology. The first refers to the use of literary texts as ethnographic material, the second refers to the view of literary writers as ethnographers, and the third refers to the anthropological examination of literary culture and production practices as a subject. When evaluated through the author and ethnographer, the distinction between narratology and ethnography is somewhat artificial because, in many ways, they are quite similar. Both tend to form a distinction, consciously marginalizing themselves towards the cultures they define and alienating themselves to make the familiar strange and

the strange familiar. They both describe the results of their observations and their thoughts about what they observed. Ethnographers who are clearer than novelists and novelists often benefit from the traditions and customs of writers before them (Angelis, 2002).

The ethnographer and the writer have a complex relationship within an ethnographic narrative. Ethnographic novels are of two types, written by a stranger or written by a writer who is in the culture. The writer who writes from within a culture does not have to be consciously anthropological, but in this particular kind of narrative, the writer intuitively touches the story, character, theme, environment, and style of the culture the writer emerges from (Angelis, 2002).

Space is not limited by acceptances and criteria; it is a living and variable organism that continues its adventure since its existence and continues its movement with social, cultural, environmental, and many other orientations. Thus, architecture comes into contact with many sciences, from sociology to anthropology, from geography to philosophy (Ulubay & Önal, 2020). The tools needed to extract data and perform spatial analyses of the data can now be created based on platforms that allow researchers around the world to create new ways for research and even, in some cases, address it (Alves & Queiroz, 2015). According to Lewis (1985), the interdisciplinary study of literary texts as narrative is beneficial because literature often includes both objective descriptions of space and subjective accounts of space, as well as information about spatial patterns and processes (Alves & Queiroz, 2015). The place for reading novels can be done to expand the narrative as material for understanding the daily life of man and to evaluate the 'sense of place' that drives the narrative. On the other hand, there are also differences between the place defined by scientific knowledge and the place related to experience and meaning (Queiroz, 2007).

Although the rhetoric of writing varies, it is not the stories created by the informers that are intended to attract attention, but the events (Rosenwald & Ochberg, 1992). Language is seen as transparent and reflects fixed, singular meanings. There is not a single method or technique for analyzing the narrative (Riessman, 1993). For example, narrative connects spatial representation with storytelling. Storytelling is a way of mapping and directing the writer's viewpoint and its readers in an understandable action in space. The storyteller creates the narrative with decisions such as determining the space to be represented, selecting the elements to be included, and drawing the scale. The literary space is, after all, a real material, geographical place imagined and represented by language (Tally, 2013).

As a result of writers correlating places with specific facts and events, narratives reflect the various processes of places in a social environment. Experiencing the city, and the place by visiting and incorporating the original

qualities of the place into a fictional narrative, emerges as a different representation of the social characteristics of the place. In addition to the lack of identity and quality concerns, narratives can also contain ethnographic references to the city, and place experienced. Narratives shaped by the writer can be transformed into materials in which social, cultural, and spatial knowledge brought by the experience is processed. Thus, it is meaningful for architecture to use ethnographic codes in analyzing the narrative in this article.

### The City in the Narratives of Nedim Gürsel

Nedim Gürsel is a writer who has had a dynamic relationship with the city throughout his life. The author moved away from his hometown with his family and relocated to a different provincial city. He attended Galatasaray High School as a boarder, which exposed him to urban life at a young age. Thus, his journey from one city to another began early on (Bal, 2021).

Nedim Gürsel was asked to be imprisoned for seven and a half years in 1970 because of his article on Gorki and Lenin in the journal *Halkın Dostları*. This situation obligated the author to go to France. When Nedim Gürsel returned to Turkey in 1979, he was exposed to accusations such as state security and obscenity regarding the book subjects after the 12 September 1980 coup. The exile imposed on the writer for these accusations separated him from his place of residence, Istanbul (Sivri & Kuşça, 2015).

Nedim Gürsel transfers different geographies, beliefs, cultures, and ways of life to his readers. Öztürk (2019) reminds us of Gürsel's phrase 'Cities have become a part of my subjectivity with their geography and history; they are not imaginary or invisible cities, as in Calvino's (2013) famous book; they are cities that have been seen and lived' and he emphasized that Gürsel's interest in cities is unlimited and endless. In addition, Gündüzalp (2019) claims that Gürsel had all the material that could be used for fiction removed from his life and had now become a literary language and a piece of art.

Bal (2019) states that in Gürsel's narratives, the city has ceased to be a backdrop and has become a predominant theme, sometimes as a main hero. According to Nedim Gürsel, city components are one of the features that make the city a livable place. In Gürsel's stories and novels, heroes travel the city as a city aficionado. In the narrative, they often benefit from city components and include the daily lives of the heroes. In these examples, which are dominated by depictions due to the influence of the writer's travel and essay writing, the social and economic reasons for the change of the city have not been adequately emphasized. The cities and city components that give their name to the stories and novels of Nedim Gürsel constitute an important significance in the book names.

Andaç (2014) stated in his book *Anonimleşen Edebiyat* that the life of Nedim Gürsel was shaped on a narrative and commented that there is a narrative in his discovery of the earth and his story of the journey. Gürsel develops his narrative on the axis of going to write more. The wealth of subjects and observations, a variety of spaces and places, the depth of emotion and thought, and the intensity of gaze and expression are the gains of these leaving. Spatial and textual journeys are the mains of his travels; he is aware that he is turning to writing when choosing to go.

Gürsel, a prolific writer, combined the concept of the city with his impressions of history, geography, art, and politics while he worked in the fictional field which included autobiographical elements (Bal, 2021). All the cities involved in his life have guided Gürsel's literary life. The city has not only been a place but also a character in his narratives. In his novels, the artistic structure of the city, the change in history, the components it contains, the traces it carries from social and political events, and the modernization efforts shown to keep up with economic change are frequently encountered.

Within the scope of this article, Gürsel's book *İzler ve Gölgeler* is discussed. The book is multi-layered and engaging between the 'travel narrative' and the essay. The author invites the reader to follow in the footsteps of writers, poets, and artists by using numerous contemporary narrative techniques such as review, memoir, diary, paste, intertextuality, and life-changing, objective storytelling in the work. The narrative is like a map because of the intertwined depiction of the cities in which the lives of the people in *İzler ve Gölgeler* are reflected in a realistic approach. Gürsel tries to inform the reader about many issues related to this city and its people and to convey what they see with a realistic approach with the objectivity of the historian. He uses preliminary information, images, historical events, and individuals. In the narratives of the journey, telling the reader about the unknown and informing takes place with the writer's flawless depiction technique. The description in the content of the narrative is more important than storytelling (Genç & Tilbe, 2008).

In his book *İzler ve Gölgeler*, Gürsel describes the reflections of unforgettable writers, thinkers, poets, and historical personalities who live in a certain time and city and integrate with those cities. He follows the traces of artists who dedicated their lives to the cities where they lived like a shadow in various urban places such as cafes, squares, and streets. The artists and cities described in the book are as follows: Baudelaire in Brussels, Caravaggio in Rome, Kafka and Arcimboldo in Prague, Pushkin and Dostoyevsky in Saint Petersburg, Gogol and Dostoyevsky in Ukraine, Ivo Andric in Bosnia, Ismail Kadare in Albania, Apollinaire in the Rhine, Borges in Buenos Aires, Louis Armstrong and Tennessee Williams in New Orleans, Matisse and Tahar ben

Jelloun in Tangier, Nazım Hikmet on the Caspian coast and Loti in Istanbul. In Nedim Gürsel's book *İzler ve Gölgeler*, which reveals the relationship between the city and the author in a unique way, 20 stories take place being: 'Büyük Ayna Oteli, Adını Kana Bulayan Ressam, Prag'da Günler, Basel'in Çanları, Deli Petro'nun Kenti: Sen Petersburg, Beyaz Geceler, Buğday ve Gökyüzü, Dalgın Bir Dalgıçkuşu, İvo Andriç'in Coğrafyasında, Radimlja'nın Taşları, Tiran'da Tango, Kederli Düşüncenin Dansı Tango, Buenos Aires ya da Sevgilisi Olmayan Gölge, Savaşın Yüzü, Irmak Kent ve Arzu Adında Bir Tramvay, Ak Memeler Karnavalı, Tanca'da Günler, Hazar Denizi'nin Kıyısında, Pierre Loti'nin Evinde, Pierre Loti İstanbul'da.' Among these stories, *Prag'da Günler* is dealt with as research material to be analysed as part of this article. The reason for choosing the story "Prag'da Günler" from the book is that, compared to the other stories in the book, it has more data addressing the formation of urban imagery in the mind and is more focused on experiencing a city.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This article is research on the discovery of architecture in narratives through experiences of the city. In this scope, to question the data from the field, it is observed that the selection of research material is an example of travel writing based on city experiences.

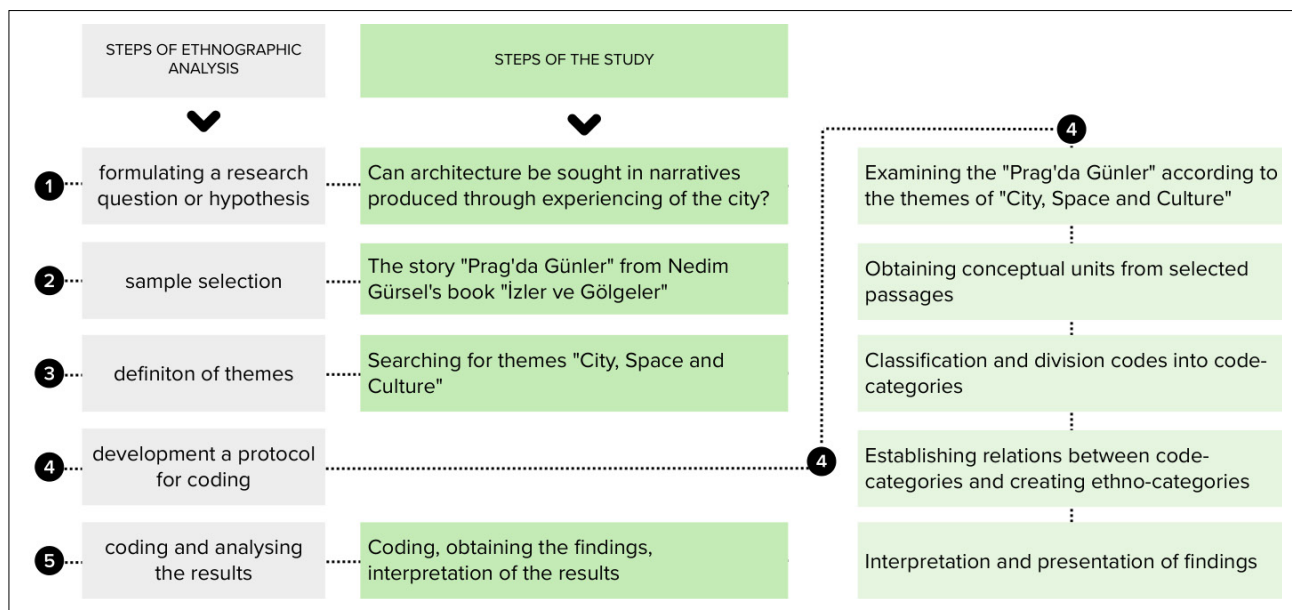
According to Hymes (1973), ethnography and literature must surely be seen as indispensable to each other, mutually contributing to what is at the base of the same enterprise of cultural interpretation. From early in the twentieth century up to the present, as Pratt (1986) has shown, the mix of personal 'narration' and cultural 'description' established in narratives continues to shape the presentational strategies of ethnographies. According to Brettell (1986), the form of the account itself—a guidebook, an itinerary for those on the grand tour, a journal, a narrative, or a series of letters to a real or fictional person back home—is an important consideration in any attempt to evaluate the observations it contains. Considering the relationship between narratology and ethnography in Nedim Gürsel's stories, the close connection with reality is associated with ethnography. In this context, Nedim Gürsel's book *İzler ve Gölgeler*, where he usually builds his stories on the cities he visits and lives, has been selected as research material. The story of *Prag'da Günler*, which tells the story of a European city with an emphasis on the powerful city, is found suitable for ethnographic analysis. This story, with its multi-layered structure of experience and evaluation of the city, is covered in five chapters: 'First Day: Yağmurun Sesi (The Sound of Rain), Second Day: Cinin Anlattıkları (What Jinn Tells), Third Day: Sokaklarda (On the Streets), Fourth Day: Kafka'nın Dünyasında (In Kafka's World), and Fifth Day: Paul Leppin'in Prag'ı (Paul Leppin's Prague).'

The method of the study is based on O'Reilly's (2005) ethnographic analysis method, which tries to define themes before coding them. In general, studies that use qualitative coding, category, and themes are often used instead of each other. In this article, the theme will be used to express a wider scope before coding, while the category will be used as a step in the coding process. From this point of view, it can be said that place, space, and cultural codes are present in the narrative experience. Therefore, this article focuses on the relationship between the city and ethnography, while the author does not explore his text as ethnography.

According to Ezzy (2013), data collection, analysis, and writing are integrally linked in ethnographic research (O'Reilly, 2005). In ethnographic analysis, two types of data from the text are mentioned: content and semiotic (O'Reilly, 2005). Content analysis has a variety of definitions and applications. Semiotic analysis refers to analyzing the text in terms of both the meanings they express and the meanings they evoke. Content analysis is more popular in culture, media, communication, literary studies, and politics rather than in sociology and anthropology (O'Reilly, 2005). For this study, ethnographic analysis is close to content analysis of its species to focus on its basic and initial meanings, not semiotic analysis, which focuses on the side meanings and connotations of words and concepts. Content analysis has the potential to provide more ethnographically realistic objective data by dealing with the codes and categories of semiotic analysis while dealing with what shows and what is shown. In her book, O'Reilly (2005) states that Altheide (1996) derives the term ethnographic content analysis, which is more alternate and repetitive but more implicit in the coding process, rather than traditional content analysis. Therefore, content analysis is preferred as a more useful method to determine which codes are available for the themes of cities, places, and cultures. Because the method of this study focuses on the production of codes according to themes for the analysis of information from the field. The experience-based structure of the *Prag'da Günler* story provides an example of ethnographic content analysis that reveals codes from the field with its ethnographic quality. The following ethnographic analysis stages of Karen O'Reilly (2005) are followed as a theoretical method:

- Formulating a research question or hypothesis
- Sample selection
- Definition of themes
- Development of a protocol for coding
- Coding and analyzing the results

O'Reilly's (2005) ethnographic analysis steps are used as a preliminary for the development of the method that made coding possible for this article in Figure 1.



**Figure 1.** Steps of the ethnographic analysis and study approach.

The story of *Prag'da Günler* is analyzed according to the ethnographic analysis steps in Figure 1, and the architectural knowledge of the city is revealed textually. The steps for developing a protocol for coding are taken from O'Reilly (2005); to make sense of the data, the researcher uses a combination of inductive and deductive reasoning processes, constantly moving between the concrete data set and abstract concepts, and again between definitions and interpretations (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

While in the development of the protocol for coding, context or environment, situations and definitions, perspectives, ways of thinking about people and objects, processes, activities, events, strategies, relationships, and social structure, and the narrative flow are usually centered. In this study, the themes of 'city, space, culture,' which are especially significant for architecture, abide. These themes looked for in the text are the common themes of both ethnography and architecture. The steps in the creation of the protocol for coding in ethnographic are as follows:

- Examining *Prag'da Günler* according to the themes of 'City, Space and Culture': All five chapters of the 29-page story are read multiple times and passages expressing, defining, describing, and evoking the city, space, and culture are concluded in each section.
- Obtaining conceptual units from selected passages: In the selected passages, concepts, words, or phrases that form the themes are drawn and removed. With this simplification, the conceptual units are generated.
- Classification and division of conceptual units into code-categories: Based on themes of city, space, and culture, conceptual units consisting of ideas, connotations,

descriptions, qualities, or buildings are collected and classified and large information units containing many conceptual units are produced.

- Establishing relations between code-categories and creating ethno-categories that depend on themes: Ethno-categories are created by combining code-categories that are related to each other. This stage is the abstraction or simplification to find the basic pattern or finding that arises by answering research questions.
- Interpretation and presentation of findings: The resulting ethno-categories are put together following the themes and presented systematically.

In this context, the protocol for the coding process is conducted following the themes shaped by the discipline of architecture. Accordingly, the findings and interpretations provide a new perspective on architecture.

**Protocol for Coding in Ethnographic Analysis: The *Prag'da Günler* Story**

The ethnographic analysis of city codes allows us to explore the architectural projection of a city in the narrative. In this study, which followed the ethnographic analysis method, the themes to be encoded are determined as 'City, Space, and Culture' by examining Nedim Gürsel's story *Prag'da Günler*. In determining these themes, concepts that are effective and common on the axis of architecture and literary disciplines have been selected. The themes (city, space, culture) chosen for narrative research within the discipline of architecture are among the common research topics of both disciplines. Themes have the potential to be shaped according to the narratives' own axis and context (Bal, 2016). At the same time, in ethnography, the analysis

of themes are areas that can be specialized with contextually appropriate content for cultural portraits. In this context, the themes taken as the basis for this study are the themes that stand out in the representation of experience in Gürsel's story *Prag'da Günler*.

The ethnographic analysis of the *Prag'da Günler* story is shown in the following steps according to the protocol for the coding part in Figure 1. Color codes are created for ease of reading and for tracking the inferences of the story. The color yellow indicates the expressions with intense spatial code connotations, and the color green indicates the expressions with more cultural connotations for Figure 1 and 2.

### Examining the Story *Prag'da Günler* According to the Themes of 'City, Space, and Culture'

Following the themes intended to be investigated, passages having 'city, space, and culture' are detected in the story. The following figure is an example of a reading to obtain units of analysis from the story (Figure 2).

### Obtaining Conceptual Units from Selected Passages

The passages detected after the examination are collected in the left column of Figure 3. Examples of passages in the figure include references from all five chapters of the *Prag'da Günler* story. Conceptual units suitable for themes from passages are boldly stated. A list of the conceptual units derived from the selected passages appears in the right column next to the book paper. The coding in the below image is redefined through conceptual units on the *Prag'da Günler* story based on themes which are city, space, and culture.

### Classification and Division of Conceptual Units into Code-Categories

The conceptual units are determined in the story. Conceptual units are merged and classified, and code-categories are created. In the next step, code-categories are classified, and then ethno-categories are created. For this story, after deep reading, these categories are determined with the architectural view. In the concept cluster formed by conceptual units, concepts that show architectural, urban, and cultural similarities are brought together and categorized. These categories have formed the categories that are uniquely produced and have high potential within the scope of the study. For example, different types of buildings such as bridges and castles form a group, while characteristics such as the changing of the city, being scary, and mysterious come together to form another group. In this context, the conceptual units and code-categories are shown in Table 1.

### Establishing Relation between Code-Categories and Creating Ethno-Categories

In this step, code-categories are classified, and fewer ethno-categories are created (Table 2). The creation of large pieces from small parts has made it easier to relate to the theme. When code-categories relate closely to each other, they are included in the same classification, resulting in a few ethno-categories. The small number of ethno-categories makes it easier to interpret and extract meanings from the data.

When creating ethno-categories, it is important to establish a relationship between the city, space, and culture themes determined at the beginning of the study, code-categories, and ethno-categories. Code-categories and ethno-categories

### Selected passages in the story

#### Prag'da Günler

#### Birinci gün: yağmurun sesi

yağmurlar içindeydi Prag  
bir gölün dibinde gümüş kakma bir sandıkta  
kapağını açtım  
içinde genç bir kadın uyuyor camdan kuşların  
arasında  
saçları saman sansi kirpikleri mavi

Nâzım Hikmet

Bende Prag'a gitme isteğini uyandıran, ergenlik çağımdan bu yana her kitabını ilgilyle, biraz da çekinerek, hatta korkarak, o umutsuz ve karanlık dünyasının gizlerine tümüyle varamadan okuduğum Kafka'nın bu kentte yaşamış olmasını diyebilirim. Gerçi Bohemya'nın başkenti, *Bir Savaşın Tasviri* hariç, doğrudan yer almıyordu Kafka'nın yapıtında. Ama eski, dar sokakları, karanlık pencereleri, koridorları, ıslak delhizleri, tavan araları, köstebek yuvasını andıran geçitleri ve Şato'suyla neredeyse her cümleye sinmiş, her sözcüğün ardına saklanmış gibiydi. Sonra Nâzım Hikmet'in "Prag'da Vakitler" şiiriyle karşılaştım. Kenti ikiye bölen Vltava Irmağı'nın hızlıyla akıp giden dizeler düpedüz büyüledi beni. Ne var ki yaşamı boyunca umudu, gelecek güzel günlere olan inancını haykıran şair Prag'da "hasretlerle delik deşik" olduğunu yazıyor, barok yapıların şafakta ağır ağır aydınlanışını betimlerken "yaldızlarda karamış keder"den söz ediyordu. Ve yine Prag'da yazdığı "Son

Otobüs'te "lıyce yaklaştı bana büyük karanlık / Dünyayı telaşsız, rahat / seyredabiliyorum artık" diyordu.

Yıllar sonra yolum Prag'a düştüğünde, Kafka'dan Kundera'ya, Hrabal'den Nezval'e, Meyrink'ten Rilke'ye açılan bir okuma yelpazesinde -bu adlara Angelo Ripellino'nun *Praga Magica*'sını da eklemeliyim- efsane kentin yazınsal çağrışımlarından kolayca sıyrılıp çevreyi "telaşsız ve rahat" seyredebileceğimi anladım. Üstelik, tam sokaka çıkmaya hazırlanırken bir de yağmur başlamaz mı! Ama ne yağmur! Otelde beklemek zorunda kaldım. Nisan yağmurdur geçer diye de pek fazla kaygılanmadım. Yanılmışım. Dinmek bilmedi gün boyu, biktirdi usandırdı. Şimdi gel de Nezval'in ünlü kitabının başlığını anımsama! Şair, sokaklar boyunca sürüklediği yalnızlığını, kimi zaman dumanlı bir şarap mahzeninde, "sıvı ekme" tabir edilen biralara köpürdüğü bir *hospoda*'da yoksul ressamlarla paylaşır ya da tüm gerçeküstücü sanatçılar gibi kentin rastlantısal güzelliklerinin peşinde dolaşırken, boşuna "yağmur parmaklı" dememiş Prag için. Kent, çatı katındaki odamın penceresinden baktığımda bir kristal sürahiyi andırıyordu. İnce, uzun boyutlu, zarif ve kırılmalı bir Bohemya sürahisini. Hem Kafka'nın şatosu kadar ulaşılmaz, hem elimi uzatıp dokunabileceğim kadar yakındı. Evet, uzanıp bir dokunsam ses verecek, öylesine saydam ve duyarlı. Sudan çıkmış balık gibi de ıslak, allı pullu. Uzakta, irmanın sol yakasındaki Hradcany tepesine tüm görkemliyle çöreklenmiş, Başkanlık Sarayı da dahil sayısız pencereler ile yüksek duvarlı yapılaradan oluşan, siyasal erkin odağı Şato, arduvaz çatılarını ardında Svaty Vito Katedrali'nin gotik hayaleti ve önde ağaçlı teraslar; küf yeşili barok kubbelerin altına sığınmış gülmüş kanatlı melekler ile sivri kuleler, kırmızı kiremitli çatılar, Malá Strana'nın yokuşları ile arka bahçeleri, kuytu avlular ve ırmak boyunca yalnız ağaçları dokunsam ses verecekler. Sonra Karel Köprüsü'nü bekleyen heykeller, sıra sıra dizilmiş öbür köprülerin çelik putelleri, eski kentte

Diyeceğim, yağmurda bile Arcimboldo'nun tabloları ile simyacıların imbiğinden süzülmesi gibi altın sarıydı gökyüzü, Vltava'ya bazen kül rengi, bazen yeşil. Karel Köprüsü'nün taş kuleleri de her zamankinden daha siyah ve korkunçtu. Yağmurda bile caddeler kalabalık, yolcular tramvaylarda salıkım saçaktı. Derken, gürlenen gökle birlikte kentin uğultusu da doldu odaya, pencereyi kapatmak zorunda kaldım. Ve Nâzım'ın "gereğinden genç yüreğinin" acısını paylaşarak daha sakin, tüm pencerelerde perdelerin inik olduğu, tramvayların ıslak rayların üzerinden bomboş kayıp gittiği, "bir gölün dibinde, içinde genç bir kadın uyuyan gümüş kakma bir sandık" olarak hayal etmeye başladım Prag'ı. Orada, yağmurun altında yeryüzünün en güzel kentlerinden biri, sandıkta uyuyan genç kadının "elinin çektiği bir eldiven gibi" boşalıyordu. Artık ne Şato umurundaydı, ne Strahov Manastırı'nın soğan başlı kuleleri ile beyaz duvarları. Ne az sonra yanacak olan sokak fenerlerini düşünüyordum ne de Prag'ın büyüsunü. Çatıda kuşların -yoksa Yahudi mezarlığında kalkıp otelein damına konan kargaların mı?- ayaklarıyla yatağın üzerine tiktirtisine bırakmıştı kendini. Yatağa uzanıp uzun süre Nâzım'ın şiirinde sandığı hayal ettiğimi anımsıyorum. Acaba ne vardı içinde? Gerçekten bir kadın mı, şairin bitip tükenmek bilmeyen yurt özlemi mi yoksa? Belki de sandığın içinde Prag'ın başka yüzünü de bana gösterecek bir gümüş aynе gizliydi. Sürgün şairlerinden birinde yine "Prag dedikleri bir gümüş aynâ" diye yazmamış mıydı, bir otel odasında tırtıstü uzanmış ölümün bakkerken ya da ona genç görünse de artık kocalmaya başlayan yüreğinin kanına batırıldığı ekme lokmalarını Lejyonerler Köprüsü'nden martılara atarken? Bir ara dalmışım. Uyandıgında yağmur dinmişti. Damlalar çatıda kuşların ayak tiktirtisiyle dolaymıyordu artık. Caddenin uğultusu da tramvay gıcırtılarına karışmıyordu. Sokaka çıkıp kalabalığa karışmadan önce bavaluma bir göz attım. Yerinde yoktu. Kalkıp dolaba baktım, orada da yok. Derken kapi çalındı. Açtım. Kimseyi göremedim. Eşikte bir sandık

Figure 2. Examining the story *Prag'da Günler*.





**Table 1.** Production of code-categories from conceptual units

Conceptual Units	Code-Categories	Conceptual Units	Code-Categories
dark windows and corridors attics onion-headed towers and white walls of the Strahov Monastery the gold- plated roof of the Black Tower inner courtyards the slate roofs pointed towers and musty green domes of baroque architecture the walls of the ruined castle high walls, tower and windows wide steps stairs of St. Jan hill	Part of the building	wet tunnels gateway like molehill gateways connecting the streets the thirteen bridges over the Vltava the towers of Malá Strana Castle onion- headed towers and white walls of the Strahov Monastery T'yn Church Karel Bridge Legionnaires' Bridge, which crosses the island archway Vysehrad Castle tiny house The old watermill drawbridge	Building type
old narrow streets narrow streets paved with malta stone the narrow streets and secluded courtyards of Malá Strana Thousands of streets Saxons Street narrow Prokopska Street Alchemists' Street Bretislavova Street Nerudova Street slopes	Avenue/street/courtyard	Václav Area the old horse square Václav Square The five districts of city center: The Old Town (Staré Mesto); Nové Mesto, which is called the New Town even though it was founded seven centuries ago; Josefov, tucked away between the street that curves to the north where the famous Jewish cemetery, synagogues are located and new buildings on Paris Street; Malá Strana on the left bank of the river; Hradcany, consisting of houses and parks clustered around the Castle Great Monastery Square Letna Park egg market Jewish cemetery Deserted docks of Vltava tavern	Open public space
the statue of Stalin the statues on the bridge	Artwork	Severin	Artist
yellow and red, slow and squeaky trams the tram stop in Malá Strana hacks and trams	Vehicle / area	the baroque buildings of Prague old town hall the metamorphoses of the city suburbs of the city	History
one of the most beautiful cities in the World the river shining in the moonlight streets illuminated by the summer changing, shapeshifting face of the city the city which stands with all its towers the houses that darkened his soul at night unique views of the city the city which is majestic, unknown, overwhelming cold wind from the river sensual presence of the city women with veils on their faces and hats in the evening chill	Description	chestnut trees near the Castle two banks of the Vltava the left bank of the Vltava St. Jan hill the left bank of the Vltava the slope of the valley Vltava River Kampa Island Devil's River	Natural texture

are created specifically for this article. They originate from the relationships between codes and categories in narratology. Code-categories indicate smaller units of larger conceptual units. According to the methodology of this study, all categories are also steps of the methodology. Code-categories consist of concepts and concept groups that are prominent in the story under study. Categories with ethnographic value are called ethno-categories.

### Interpretation and Presentation of Findings

The interpretation of the findings includes an abstraction that goes beyond codes to the broader meaning of data and

extracting meanings from data (Creswell, 2013). *Prag'ida Günler* is a story that emerged after the writer experienced Prague. Using the author's experiences as material, the data from the city was included in the story, which added an ethnographic quality to it. The architectural themes looked for in the story are determined by city, space, and culture. These themes appeared as a result of coding in which they are included as conceptual units in the text.

The interpretation and presentation of the findings are based on Table 2. In this scope, 10 code-categories have been determined. The code-categories listed on the left and ethno-categories on the right are related to the topics shown

**Table 2.** Relationship between code-categories and ethno-categories in the Pragda Günler story

Code-Categories	Ethno-Categories
Part of building	ARCHITECTURAL
Building type	ARCHITECTURAL
Avenue/street/courtyard	ARCHITECTURAL
Open public space	ARCHITECTURAL / GEOGRAPHICAL
Artwork	ARCHITECTURAL
Artist	LITERARY
Vehicle / area	GEOGRAPHICAL
Description	LITERARY
History	LITERARY
Natural texture	GEOGRAPHICAL

in Figure 4. Axes originating from different code-categories and following the same themes and ethno-categories are the same color. For example, since both parts of the building and building type code-categories reach an architectural ethno-category through space, they are shown with the same color as the axis. However, when open public space has branched out and also gone to the city, it is expressed in a different color axis. These themes are the intersection of the code-category and ethno-category.

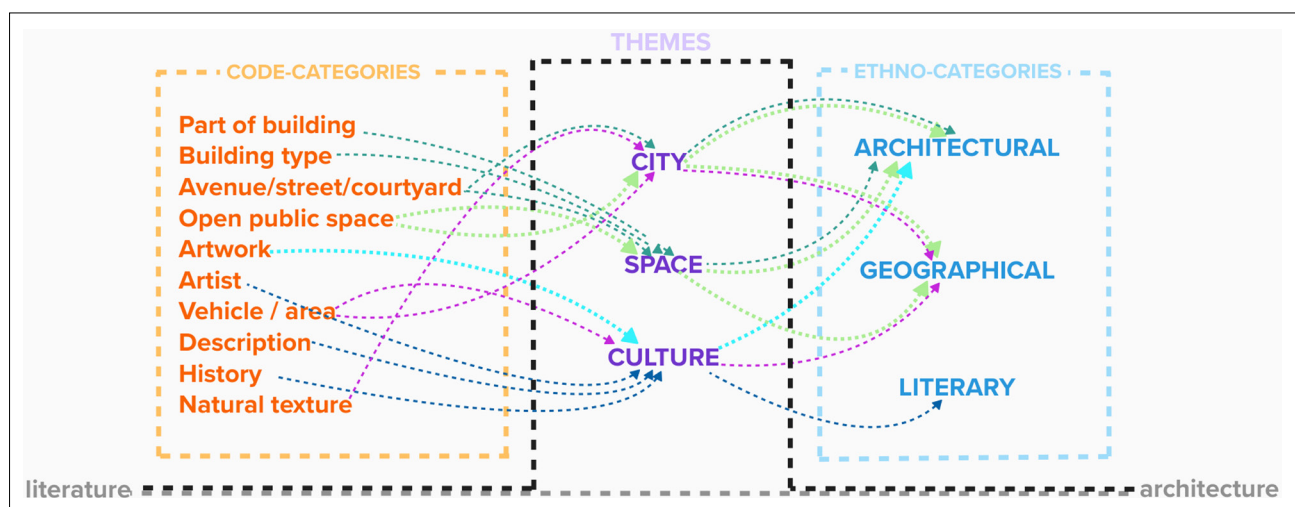
The code-categories that are part of the building, building type, avenue/street/courtyard, open public space, and artwork are classified in the ‘architectural’ ethno-category. The vehicle/area, open public space, and natural texture code-categories came together in the ‘geographical’ ethno-category. The artist, description, and history code-categories constituted the ‘literary’ ethno-category. The open public spaces code-category is classified in both the architectural and geographical ethno-categories. The ethno-categories

are classified by the themes of ‘city, space, and culture’ determined at the beginning of the study. An ethno-category can be included in multiple thematic analyses.

Two of the five axes leading to the ‘architectural’ ethno-category are directly associated with the theme of ‘space’, while two are associated with the theme of ‘city’, and one is seen only as linked to the theme of ‘culture’. The avenue/street/courtyard and the open public space have become architectural ethno-categories through both themes of city and space. Two of the four axes leading to the ‘geographical’ ethno-category are related to the theme of ‘city’, one is related to the theme of ‘space’, and the other one is with the theme of ‘culture’. The ‘literary’ ethno-category is associated with the theme of ‘culture’.

The deduction made from the diagram suggests that the architectural ethno-category exhibits the strongest connection with themes, followed by the geographical ethno-category. While these two ethno-categories connect with three themes, the literary ethno-category only connects with culture. In this context, it can be said that in the relationship between literature and architecture, architectural and geographical ethno-categories have more ethnographic content than the literary ethno-category.

In the story Pragda Günler, the code-categories “part of building, building type, avenue/street/courtyard, open public space” are associated with the theme of space because they define a void and determine the private-public nature of the experience. Each of the code-categories refers to the space and the suggestion of the void that constitutes it. The code-categories “avenue/street/courtyard, open public space, vehicle/area, natural texture” are directly associated with the theme of city as they emphasize the multifaceted identities of the city such as structural, natural, social, etc. The code-categories “artwork, artist, vehicle/area, description, history” are associated with cultural background as story-writing environments that reflect the



**Figure 4.** Diagram for the relationship between code-categories and ethno-categories based on themes.

unique spirit of the city. For this reason, they are associated with culture, which will serve all kinds of cultural interests in the past-future interface.

The fluid relationship between categories and themes is expressed with a dashed line. This is because these relationships aim to make readers intend to think about and establish new relationships. Nevertheless, if this relationship is evaluated in the story *Prag'da Günler*, which is selected within the scope of the study, it is observed that the relationships between themes and categories are not constant according to the narrative language of the story. The relationship between literature and architecture may vary according to the author's language, experience, and even the perception profile of the reader. Each code, which is perceived and imagined by the reader with the linguistic perspective presented by the author, is collected in the context of themes and categorized into ethno-categories. In the case of this story, the author's experience of the city of Prague is collected under three ethnographic categories. Accordingly, the architectural and geographical ethno-categories communicate with all themes in some way as they constitute the space of the story. The literary ethno-category stands out with the theme of culture, pointing to the essence of ethnography. Because the literal aspect of the story is strengthened by the author with cultural sub-readings. The author seems to have expressed the ethnographic values that come from the codes related to the urban experience and that relate to the meta-themes through ethno-categories.

## CONCLUSION

Narratives as travel writing constitute a source of data for defining and exploring urban identity. Travel writing is an ethnographic narrative because it refers to places, spaces, and events. Urban places in the narrative are architectural references that are very important in creating the narrative identity of a particular city in literature.

The *Prag'da Günler* story, which is based on city experiences, is more constructed through descriptions, definitions, and explanations rather than events. In the story, Prague is a hero who stands out within the narrative and has shaped the identity of the narrative. Experiencing Prague provides the writer with information about both the current situation and the history of the city. With the reflection of this information, the narrative has become an expression of the visible and known face of the city. Urban events, such as urban places, are very important in defining Prague's identity in the narrative.

Nedim Gürsel's story *Prag'da Günler*, which is revealed based on experience, is subjected to a re-reading through ethnographic content analysis. Codes, code-categories, ethno-categories, and themes obtained in the reading based

on the steps of the ethnographic analysis method reveal that the story is an ethnographic fiction.

The codes examined in the story are the form of transfer of information collected by the ethnographic analysis method. Although these codes and categories have a subjective direction, they constitute the ethnographic aspect of the narrative that comes from the field as part of social life and culture. The code-categories that emerge for the Prague impression in this story are part of the building, building type, avenue/street/courtyard, open public spaces, artwork, artist, vehicle/area, description, history, and natural texture. The ethnographic narrative makes it possible to define Prague through these categories.

To elaborate on the relationships between code-categories, themes, and ethno-categories: code-categories, which are formed by concepts and conceptual units in the story, are connected to ethno-categories through themes from the story. There are no sharp boundaries between code-categories and ethno-categories, but they are connected to each other through themes. Themes (city, space, culture) act as both a transitional element and a bridge between literature at one end and architecture at the other. In the story *Prag'da Günler*, it can be clearly observed that the knowledge gained by the author through his experience of the city is more in contact with the themes of architectural and geographical ethno-categories. The code-categories shaped around the urban experience are clustered in architectural and geographical ethno-categories through the themes. This shows that the experience is not only an architectural but also a geographical undertaking. In addition, the code-categories artist, description, and history are connected to the literary ethno-category through the theme culture. In other words, it can be said that the literary ethno-category is less visible in the story, and among the concepts and conceptual units that characterize the city and make up the code-categories, those related to the theme of culture are closer to the literary ethno-category.

While architectural and geographical ethno-categories are related to all themes, the literary ethno-category is related to the theme of culture in this story. Although all ethno-categories express the atmosphere of the city holistically, the fact that the architectural ethno-category is more connected with themes shows that architecture is an important tool in generating ethnographic data from the city. The fact that the literary ethno-category is only related to the theme of culture can be explained by the fact that expressions based on experience in the narrative are more physical. Ethnographic analysis of the narrative provides a contextual and semiotic preliminary for ethnographic research. Ethnography, which is a holistic and deep analysis, is an effective method of producing knowledge by considering architecture and literature together.

The conclusion to be drawn from this is that it is an illusion

to think that only literary ethno-categories can be found only in literature. For it is necessary to look for architecture in literature and to imagine that architectural-geographical categories can also exist in literature. At least in the context of this article, the potential for thinking in spatial dimensions has been demonstrated.

As a result, this article is an example of how the existence of rich narratives is made visible through ethnographic analysis of the story *Prag'da Günler*. Code-categories, ethno-categories, and themes make visible the connection between narratology and architecture. Steps of ethnographic analysis in the text become a way to think about the relationship between architecture in a literary text; these stages create the route for analysis. In conclusion, it is possible that the conceptual levels of ethnographic analysis in the evaluation of literary data (narratives and discourses) in architecture are diverse. The ethnographic analysis can indeed yield valuable insights, acknowledging limitations, and reflecting potential benefits.

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