PROJECT SUMMARY

RUSTEM PASHA CARAVANSARAI
Edirne, Turkey

Conversion of 14th Century caravansarai to a 150-room hotel

Completed in 1972

I. OBJECTIVES

- The restoration and re-use of an important architectural heritage.
- The adaptation of an existing structure to the requirements of a contemporary society.

II. DESCRIPTION

A. Location
The caravansarai is located in the historical centre of Edirne which was the second capital of the Ottoman Empire, and is noted for its many historical landmarks. At the present time, Edirne is a middle-sized city on the main route to Europe. The Historical Complex stands impressively at the centre of a low rise neighbourhood. Recent roads cut into the complex and isolate single monuments which would otherwise have been part of a cohesive urban texture.

As a consequence of this new urban situation, the Rustem Pasha Caravansarai has become a free-standing building.

B. The Historic Building
The building is composed of two main parts. The great courtyard was built by Mimar Sinan but the architect of the second court is not known. The Caravansarai consisted of more than 100 rooms, 21 shops at the exterior, two entrance portals, and a mosque. All rooms open to the court.

The roof structure at the first level is vaulted and at the second level it is domical.

C. The Present Building
The Caravansaray as converted to a hotel consists of:
1. A restaurant and a cafeteria in the small court. The restaurant is being used as a night club and has a separate entrance.

2. A metal structure with an orange plastic roof has been set in this court by the renter. This provides a covered link from the main entrance to the cafeteria and to the entrance of the large court.

3. The main court is surrounded by the common and service spaces largely abandoned and out of use. At the second level hotel rooms are located, half of them having connecting baths. All these facilities, including a 30-ton capacity boiler for the central heating system and equipment of washing and other hotel services have evidently not been used for some time.

III. DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION AND USE

A. Restoration

1. The restoration consisted of:

   - consolidation of walls and vaults at ground level, with concrete used as infill;
   - reconstruction of the first level according to measurements taken from the ruins;
   - the vaults were strengthened by a frame of concrete beams;
   - domes were reconstructed in concrete and supported by concrete beams;
   - rubber sheets - far less expensive than the original lead coating - were used to cover the roofs.

2. Materials

   - The restoration combined traditional and modern materials and technique, both local, to reconstruct, consolidate and convert the building.

   - They have sometimes simplified the technology: where traditionally pieces of stone were used as fill, they have used concrete.

   - Local stone, ceramic tile and marble are all local and have been worked by local craftsmen.

   - The wood work, doors and furniture have been made in Ankara.

   - The brick used for flooring, 36 x 36, are the same as the original.
- The equipment, such as boilers, watertank, washing machines, etc... come from Istanbul.

The northern wing, both at the first and the second level, has been heavily damaged by humidity.

The rubber sheets which cover the domes are partially the cause of the humidity damage.

The horizontal drainage system is also broken in several points.

B. Use
The issue of conversion of Rustem Pasha Caravansarai to a new use has to be separated from the restoration aspect. While this latter respects good standards of conception and performance, the application of a hotel programme to this Caravansarai remains questionable, both in terms of organisation and of maintenance cost.

1. Organisation
   - Edirne has hard winters. The circulation areas in Rustem Pasha Caravansarai are arcades at the two levels, open to the central court.
   - Small windows do not provide sufficient light to rooms, and some corner rooms have no windows at all.
   - A horizontal organisation of spaces in a hotel requires more services and personnel facilities. The hotel cannot afford these.

2. Maintenance
   - The common services, especially the central heating, are too expensive to be kept in use unless the hotel maintains a very high level of occupancy during the winter, which is not the case in Edirne.

IV. CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE AND COST

The restoration project was initiated and sponsored by the department of Pious Foundations. The work began in 1960-61 and in 1964 the conversion to a hotel was agreed upon. The whole work was completed in 1972.

Cost
A total of 11,000,000 TL (230,000 US$) was spent. Total construction area is 6659 m².

V. PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

A. A major monument of important historic value has been saved and restored.
B. The restoration itself respects rules and technologies which can serve as an example for other work of this kind.

VII. PROJECT PERSONNEL

DESIGNER: Mimar Sinan

RESTORERS: Ertan Çakılar (responsible for design and part of the supervision)

Others with minor responsibilities:
- Ertuğrul Eğilmez
- Kemal Ucuncuoğlu
- Erol Çetin

Date: June 1980
Doc.: N. Paghih (Technical Reviewer)

Rüstem Pasa Caravanserai, Edirne, Turkey