THE COMMERCE OF FORMS AND TYPES BETWEEN THE WEST AND THE OTTOMAN EAST FROM THE SIXTEENTH TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

Herodotus reports that the ancients traced the history of the sweet mutual love and the bitter hatred (all in one?) of Europe and Asia for each other back to the rape of Europa. A long chain of kidnappings had ensued. Helen's ravishment, it was thought, was meant to re-establish the equilibrium in the long-running vendetta. The history of the East and the West, says Herodotus, is a story of reciprocal abductions.

Ancient Greeks tended to perceive their own cultural models as perfectly distinct and separate from those of neighboring cultures, just as modern Europeans and Muslims did and mostly still do. They never acknowledged that their own art and culture would have had a quite different basis without the Lydian, Phrygian, and most Anatolian cultures. Nor, on the other hand, did they fully conceive those neighboring entities, much Hellenized after the sixth century, as part of their own world. And yet, that Anatolian frontier region between East and West was the recipient of a long tradition of cultural loans richly exchanged but rarely mentioned and sometimes even denied. Building types such as the megaron, agricultural techniques such as viticulture, more than one musical mode and architectural element were borrowed to build up Hellenic civilization, and later to diffuse it in these same areas. But still, the Greeks would admit their debt only to the much more remote and therefore less involving Egyptian civilization.

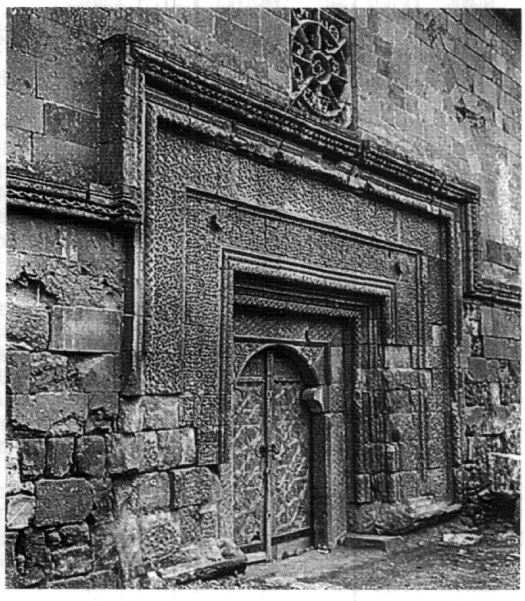
In time the frontier of intercourse shifted from the eastern border of Ionia to the everchanging line which separated the Catholic West from Orthodox Christianity and, later, the Christian from the Turkish Islamic world. But this did not stop architectural concepts, house equipment and organization, choice of building materials, and botanical species to go on traveling to and from the West continuously, just as they had done during the Roman domination.

How much did the West draw on the East? The Muslim Arabs up to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and the Byzantine Greeks as late as the fifteenth were invaluable sources for architectural, artistic, and even urban concepts, and, together with the Catholic monastic orders, were the fountainhead for the conservation and diffusion of Classical pagan thought. In that early stage, learned men from the east and the south had directly or indirectly acted on Western intellectuality.

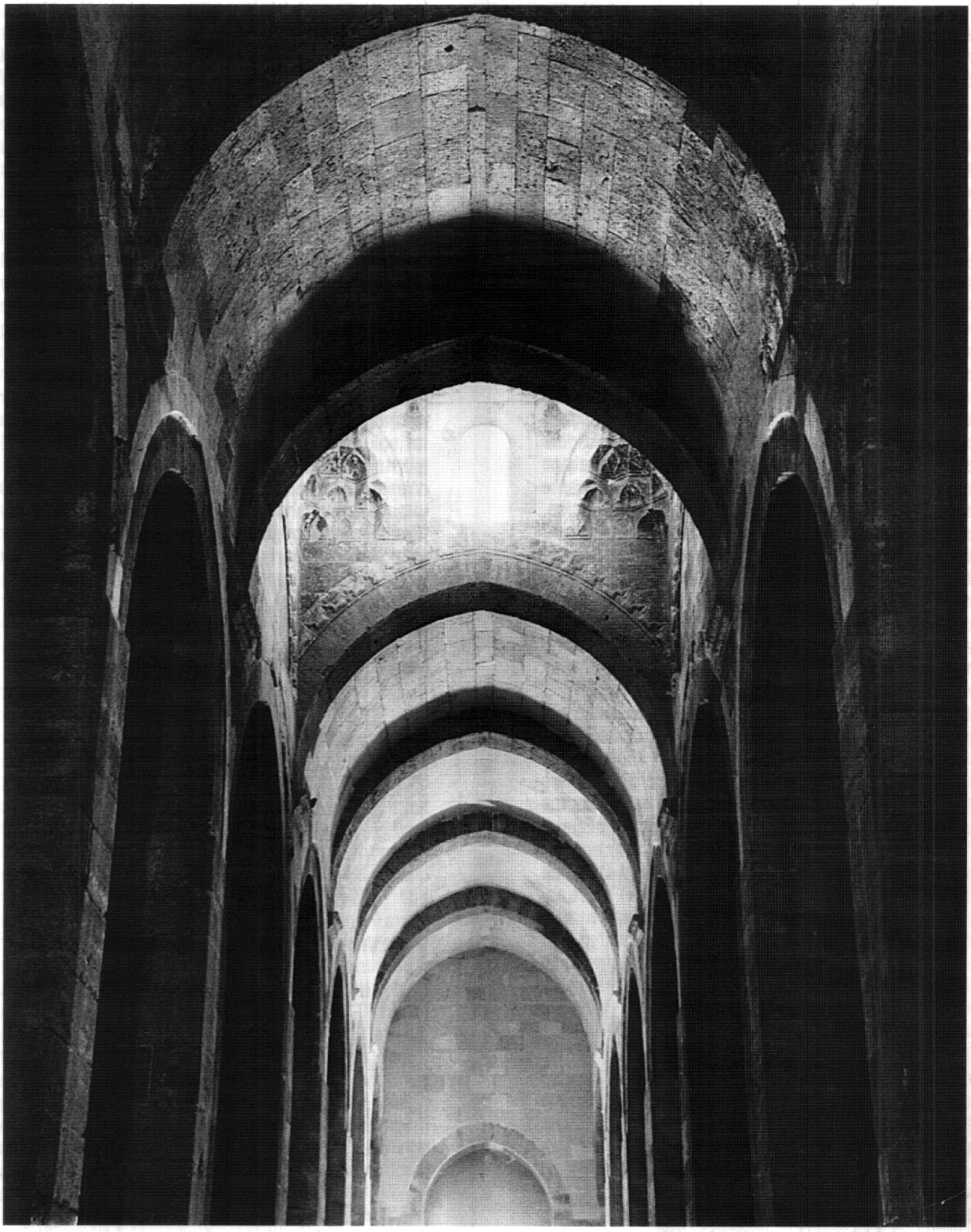
But this was not all. Craftsmen traveled from one region to another and freely borrowed ideas and techniques. Armenian architects certainly influenced Romanesque architecture, though it is difficult to say if early Renaissance architects had had an inkling of how the splendid geometry of the central domed churches of Armenia had depended on Classical Roman and Hellenistic schemes. Art history has dealt with the transmission of iconography and of architectural ground plans which are easier both to compare and to recognize.[1] Overall architectural concepts resist comparison, and their affinity is almost impossible to prove. The effort of synthesis required by architecture is so great and overlapping semantic stratification due to different technological, linguistic, functional sources so rich that no two identical components will easily bear the brunt of identification by analogy if incorporated into architectural concepts or building types born in two different milieus. It is a fact, though, that similar architectural forms did crop up in Western Europe and in the Balkans and Anatolia with surprising frequency. Though the West's debt to medieval Islam and to the Christian East is great, we must also not overlook how much the Spanish Moors took from European architecture (so evident in the Court of the Lions in the Alhambra and its quotations from Western monastic cloisters) nor understate the traces left by Crusader architecture in the architecture of the Mediterranean Middle East.

This well-balanced state of affairs with artisans and patrons from both regions giving and taking was not maintained after the fifteenth century. The movement of craftsmen went on, but the trade winds had turned. The West overwhelmed the East with concepts, types, finished products. The East had not much to teach, and the West was reluctant to grasp or to learn the little that could be taken. The East could at most suggest some

1. PORTAL OF THE SUNGUR BEY MOSQUE IN NIGDE, FIRST HALF OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY, ITS OVERALL PROPORTIONAL AND STRUCTURAL EFFECTS RECALL PROCEDURES IN LATE ROMANESQUE AND EARLY GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE.



2. STONE VAULT IN A SELJUQ KHAN.



craft techniques (like inlaid-wood and marble work through de-Islamized Spain, or carpet-making and silk prints through Turkey) and some images which the West added to its bric-à-brac of universal loot. Bellini and Carpaccio had introduced Oriental scenes and some excerpts of Islamic architecture into their painting (fig. 3).[2] A typical compositional device of Ottoman architecture, from fourteenth-century Bursa on, and of Persian and Central Asiatic architecture, double vertical lines (minarets in mosques or high chimneys in palatial functional elements) framing a dome, came up occasionally in Venice (for example, in Palladio's Redentore apse volume and its two bell towers and also in his Villa Barbaro) and in Vienna, as in Fischer von Erlach the Elder's Karlskirche with the façade flanked by two monumental votive columns.

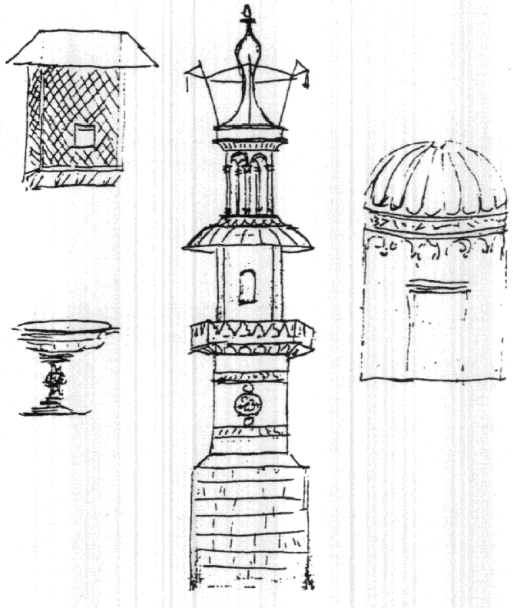
Of course, after decades of systematic archaeology and historical research, late-nineteenth-century Western architects came to ransack for inspiration the newly acquired thesaurus of etchings, surveys, and photographs of world architecture on a grander scale. But by then, the neighboring Mediterranean Middle East had become merely part of a whole cultural package containing many distant exotic cultures on the same footing. When it did acquire some preferential attention, its influence was more that of an imaginary and picturesque Orient than that of the active memory of shared sources in architectural history. Of course, some Western architects, such as D'Aronco and to some degree Lutyens, did internalize the influence of the Eastern lands where they had worked without forfeiting their own personal search for authenticity, but they were rare exceptions.

The fundamental long term intercourse between the Anatolian-Balkan East and the West was long neglected or understated by most historians of art and of social culture, perhaps as an effect of the mutual antagonism between Orthodoxy and Catholicism. Perhaps also, the long-standing anti-Byzantine bias so evident in medieval chronicles such as Odo of Deuil's *Journey of Louis VII to the East* broke the ground for later anti-Ottoman attitudes whose extremes military and political antagonism alone could not justify. This bias further blurred the perception of influences, complicated as it was even without that bias and rendered difficult to grasp by the complexities of social history and by the vicissitudes of technical evolution or regress in various sectors in the region.

The revival of long-abandoned concepts has been so frequent over the ages, transmission processes so subtly gradual that it is almost impossible to discern the "first" importation of an architectural idea or its ultimate source or effect. Take the striking analogy of many an architectural element and linguistic etymon of preOttoman Turkish monumental architecture to earlier Romanesque Western architecture. Despite the Islamic connotation of the ornamental and scriptural ingredients of the portal of the Sungur Bey mosque of the first half of the thirteenth century at Nigde, its composition and overall proportional and structural effects recall procedures that had gone into late Romanesque and early Gothic architecture (fig. 1). So do the stone-vault technique and aesthetics of many a Seljuq khan (fig. 2). Was it a matter of direct stylistic influence or, on the contrary, of a much less evident *longue durée* process of multiple and minute exchange of models seen and recorded for future experiments? An example of the first case would be that of Western master builders constructing Crusader religious and military structures and their influence on local architecture; an example of the second case would be that of Eastern builders for instance, Armenian architects transmitting long-standing building and geometrical concepts to the much less sophisticated Romanesque masters of an earlier age. And again, was it a matter of craftsmen of diverse nationality and sect working side by side and influencing each other imperceptibly in small things — the way of rounding a square figure here, of creating a sequence of volumes or spaces there? Or was it a matter of patrons and groups transmigrating?

Western architecture before the Renaissance contains many elements whose origins have yet to be found. Could not the rough and yet clearcut threedimensional geometry of early Irish medieval towers, which

3. CARPACCIO, ORIENTAL SCENES. (REPRODUCED FROM JULIAN RABY, VENICE, DURER AND THE ORIENTAL MODE [1982]).



somehow recall the general volume and stereotomy of the more refined cone-roofed Seljuq künbets and Armenian churches, be explained by the existence of Armenian and Syrian monastic foundations in Ireland after the sixth century?

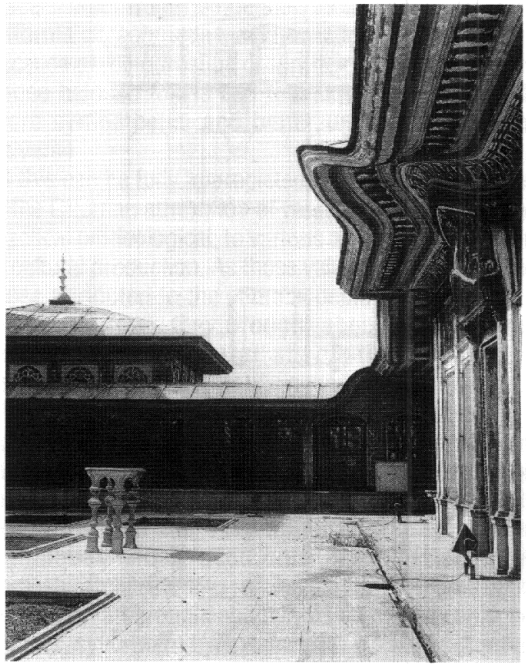
The flow of ideas and artistic and technical models between the Eastern Mediterranean world and Western Europe has been a long process, an accumulation of stratified secondary loans, which, if taken singly, would be of apparently scarce weight. It has never been simple and direct. The direction of flow was not always as clearcut as it had been in the case of the ninth-to-eleventh-century Arab reinterpretation of Greek philosophy and mathematics which gradually seeped into European scholarship. But even in that case, the understatement of the role of Byzantium in the conservation and rediscovery of Hellenistic thought and techniques may have oversimplified as "debts" and "sources" what had been a complex and interactive process running both ways. We must also not forget that the Eastern and Western Mediterranean had a long list of shared sources, both external and internal. China, on the one hand, and the Hellenistic traditions, on the other, were shared sources which had given a common basis and a common patina to the ideologically fragmented medieval and post-medieval Mediterranean. Necipoglu[3] has recently illustrated the intriguing metamorphosis of meaning and symbolism when forms are transmitted from one cultural region or epoch to another. Her subtle analysis has convincingly shown that even an apparently simple and apparently purely ornamental form such as the *muqarnas* had accumulated overlapping meanings and may have had multiple sources.

In Abbasid Islam the recourse to mathematics as an auxiliary of architecture was far ahead of the West. Late Gothic architecture's use of mathematics and geometry would probably have been impossible without three centuries of Islamic experiments in practical geometry.[4] And yet the fascination of eight- or twelve-pointed star ornaments in Islamic ornamentation and the eightpoint plan both the outcome of the superposition of two squares at a fortyfive degree angle that we can see in many late Gothic schemes, for example, in belfry plans were contemporaneous. Apparently distinct and even contrasting forms may have had a common origin, in this case, in forms acquired or mastered through given mathematical applications. The recourse to mathematics can be explained through rational influences, but this does not reveal why it is applied to a certain form or certain parts of the design and not to others. The fascination for a given form and the sense of magic, irrational, or esoteric meanings applied to it point to deeper cultural and emotional roots.

These roots have often been shared by Muslims and Christians. In the examples I quoted, neo-Platonism and the love of formal intricacy were common both to East and West, but not in all cultural periods. Both Renaissance and classic Ottoman architecture rejected formal intricacy; nor did the Ottomans make explicit in formal patterns whatever neo-Platonic ingredient, if any, their ideology might have absorbed. Shared sources were interpreted and reelaborated in different ways in different periods. All the more interesting, then, that similar forms and creative attitudes should have emerged in the Islamic and Christian worlds in certain cultural conjunctures.

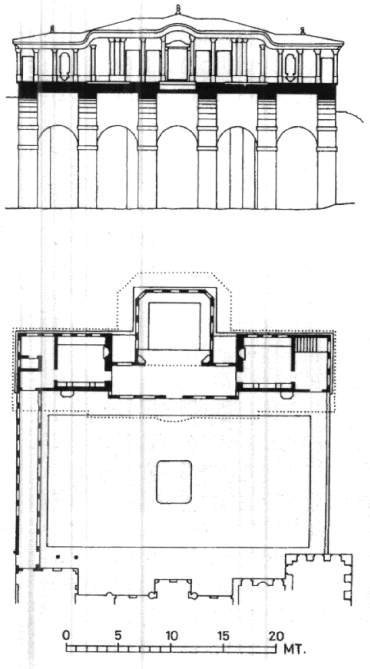
The Mediterranean area proper and its deep German and French western hinterland, as well as its eastern hinterland (Mesopotamia, Persia, and the Caucasus), had experienced periods in which the preference for a type or form overran the whole area despite its deep cleavages. The dome and the central plan, which had been applied in both East and West since the thirteenth century but were never quantitatively predominant, became a major architectural idea both in Renaissance Italy and in the Islamic east up to the eighteenth century, engrossing the imagination of architects and patrons. It prospered as the strongest, if not most diffuse architectural idea over a vast Eurasian region from Olgeitu's fourteenth-century mausoleum to the eighteenth-century Dresden Fraukirche. A convincing explanation has yet to be given for its diffusion. We can

4. OSMAN III KIOSK. EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. TOPKAPI PALACE. (A) VIEW;

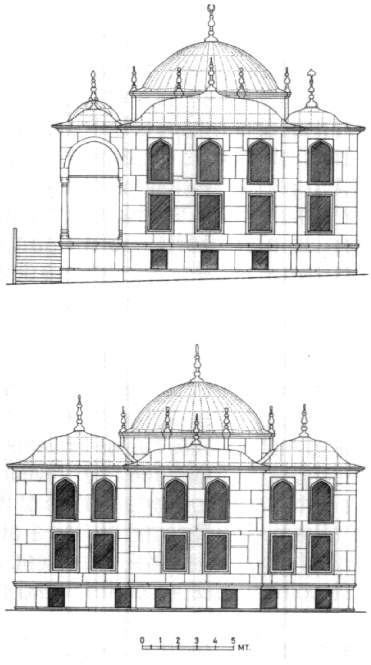


only refer to the mentality of those who design or chose the projects.
The architects or their patrons select, either instinctively or through calculated moves, potential forms immanent in their worldexperience buildings seen, formal solutions implicit in building techniques and town building, in landscapes and not only in their own specific architectural culture. Immanent forms can be mere embryonic suggestions for more complex formal organization; they can also be organically knit schemes, in themselves complex and elaborate, like a given plan type on a specific façade solution. These last schemes certainly have to be better rooted in the architect's or patron's own heritage or achievement: they are assumed because they respond to deeply felt needs or recall schemes preexistent in that heritage. This is exactly what happened in eighteenth-century Ottoman housing when Venetian-Palladian symmetrical plan schemes with a central hall reinforced old Persian and Central Asian house or *kasr* schemes of coupled rooms connected by *iwan* or small vestibule, and came to reform the previously current irregular plan types.
To put it in a different way, loans come either in the shape of embryonic suggestions or of complex and organically knit schemes. It is ultimately the recipient culture's synthesis of borrowed and autochthonous elements which will construct its peculiar set of values and meanings and give each epoch, school, and personality its unmistakable flavor and touch. But the components that epoch, school, and personality have assembled to express that flavor are always manifold and heterogeneous. All architectural cultures have had widespread sources, sometimes so deeply embedded in the past that the search for the proof of the primary source is not only hopeless but even meaningless. This is even more true of Ottoman architecture and townbuilding, in which however, heterogeneity stems mostly from contemporary and spatially (rather than chronologically) widespread sources. The process of synthesis tends therefore to be more transparent, a syncretic ensemble of distinguishable and variegated elements. The richness and significance of Ottoman culture lies in its capacity to assemble and weld, not in its purity.
No wonder, then, that so many ideas and concepts should be shared or at least should come to the fore simultaneously in this region. Here ancient historical references overlapped and commercial, technological, linguistic, and scholarly exchange was so active and yet so fragmented in a flux so continuous and so much covered by the manifest aversion between the main two antagonistic religious-ideological trends that they were

4. (B) PLAN AND FAÇADE.



5. TOPKAPI PALACE. AHMET III LIBRARY, 18TH CENTURY. FAÇADES.



hardly perceived by the actors.
The many artificial and natural barriers dividing Eurasia, not least nationalist ideology and religious antagonism, have brought about a deliberate ignoring of heterogeneity and a selfconscious denial of loans. Nevertheless, the historical research of these last decades gradually depicts this vast area as an interdependent cultural continuum as far as architecture and townbuilding are concerned.
What still eludes all explanation is the fascination the two worlds shared for the same concepts roughly in the same periods. It is a fact that iconoclastic tendencies in Eastern Christendom had its counterpart in Islamic geometricism and that the geometric basis for the *muqarnas girih* patterns and late Gothic composition and structure schemes found the same source and explanation in mathematical popularization. None were totally dominant in any given epoch and all coexisted with quite different concepts. To say that these concepts, as well as that of the dome-covered central plan I have discussed, were born from their patrons' ambition or ideology is merely tautological: the question is why these concepts by no means the only ones available or most popular in a given time and region and not others came to be assumed as the vehicle for that ambition or ideology. For example, Sinan forced his Selimiye into an absolute double-axis symmetry which has no connection to Muslim ritual needs; but at the same time he experimented in the Piyale Pasha with a plan more sympathetic to Koranic precepts. Wren gave his best in the compact space of St. Stephen Walbrook, whereas St. Paul's Cathedral was better equipped to respond to conventional representative liturgy. The central dome, then, was neither a necessity nor the only image available to the powerful.
It is not the chronological appearance and disappearance of each of those concepts, but the periods in which they were assumed to be revolutionary and absorbed the minds of the architects (and to a certain degree of the patrons), that were the same in the East and West. The same ideas took root in the creative mind of innovative architects (who had no school or religious conventions in common) almost at the same time. That is food for thought for the analyst of architecture and of the creative processes in architecture.

The Techniques of Cultural Influence

A point for discussion is how each culture and epoch selects and assimilates loans from alien cultures. The approach of twentieth- century architecture to foreign sources was entirely different from that of the nineteenth century, the former tending to assimilate the general rules incipient in the influx, the latter showing a marked propensity either for eclectic and/or encyclopaedic compilation or, the reverse, for philological quotation. Each epoch and culture seems to work out its specific mode of assimilating loans.
Since the end of the Middle Ages and the emergence of the Renaissance artist, the East and the West had elaborated diametrically opposite ways of borrowing ideas and motifs from distant cultures. Generally, Western humanism, to use an overplayed and not very exact term, tends to weld the alien elements into an organic structure within which they are rarely perceived as autonomous semantic components; the East tends to quote and assemble them as distinct units. Of course, this is too simple an interpretation of artistic processes which have been ceaselessly changing in time and space, but it does reflect a general attitude.
From the modern Western point of view so deeply rooted in the Renaissance ideology of harmony, the action of architectural and typological influences in the Ottoman Empire after the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries would appear illogical and incomprehensible. As a matter of fact, the very interesting techniques Ottoman artists and craftsmen used for fragmentary absorption were the consequence not so much of their isolation from the Renaissance concepts of harmony and unity as of their own peculiar artistic mentality. Some loans were handled underhandedly and went substantially unacknowledged. For example, a certain symmetrical clarity of design in house façade and plan in a very early period reflected the absorption of Western composition techniques, but they were never quoted or mentioned. On the other hand, the Ottomans openly acknowledged their imitation of prestigious models such as the plan of Saint Sophia or Western parks, though they actually had a limited impact on overall architectural expression. In some other cases, we discern what might be defined as a "loving imitation" of forms or techniques, acknowledged and referred to because of their prestige or for their symbolical weight. Those beloved forms and techniques came from the more sympathetic, and better understood, Islamic universe.
All this can be fully appreciated only within the context of the Ottoman attribution of values, no matter whether practical or ideological, to various aspects and elements of cultural production. As those values were distant from those attributed to the same aspects and elements in modern Europe, they brought about quite different techniques of cultural absorption of alien or heterogeneous elements.
Characteristic of Ottoman culture was its propensity to appropriate selected elements from distant (or dead) cultures, adopting plan, volume, ornament, or technology as separate and separable components. We might call the very specific combination of techniques widely used both in monumental and domestic architecture to resolve the basic contradictions of Ottoman art brought about by its many and conflicting sources, syncretism by juxtaposition or by agglutination. Heterogeneity of components imposed peculiar

techniques of assembly and synthesis. The work of art was a montage of many elements combined without losing their original syntax: a very peculiar technique into which Western culture was initiated only recently by modern art. The elements appropriated were not necessarily referred to an organic complex of language and meaning. In most cases the work and its author had borrowed elements from sources to whose overall influences they had not submitted and to which they were not attached by deeply felt cultural ties.

The syncretic tendencies of Turkish art, Ottoman or pre-Ottoman, can partly be explained by the will of the ruling houses to create an imperial art incorporating the contribution of many cultures and traditions. Still, the surprising heterogeneity of the elements incorporated into each Ottoman work of art contrasts sharply with the unique character it expresses. The syncretism in the choice of widely diverging and very heterogeneous sources in no way diminished the strong originality of the final synthesis and its fully Ottoman identity.

I shall discuss a few examples in which single architectural elements or techniques of alien origin were adopted with almost no modification and yet the overall feeling and the expression of the final product were wholly Ottoman. Technical rather than overall cultural assimilation of foreign elements fits quite well into the patterns of Ottoman culture, whose nature it was to knead into homogeneity only some aspects and some strata of its manifestations.

It would be no paradox to assert that this fragmentation of influences and loans was congenial to the Ottoman ruling class in need of continuously renewed stimuli for its hedonistic approach to daily life and architecture. Its domination, even more than in other Islamic regimes, was founded on ethnic and cultural heterogeneity which it cleverly exploited for the richness and variety that ensued. All Turkic political entities were syncretic and since pre-Islamic times had been familiar with the cultural outlook and political techniques needed for enlisting local elements and non-Turkic groups into their imperial style and way of life. This was also true of Safavid Persia and Mughal India. All those dynasties and the ruling classes they had created possessed an extraordinary capacity for enlisting the skill of the various tribal and ethnic tissues they dominated.[5] The Ottoman Empire, built as it was on the geographic and historical bridge across Europe and Asia with its remarkable cultural fluxes and dominating, furthermore, an aggregate of ethnic elements with strong cultural traditions and craftsmanship, could not but reinforce that ability. This did not mean eclecticism or artistic agnosticism. All useful components, whatever their ethnic or cultural origin, were channeled towards the enhancement of the unique character and overall feeling of Ottoman expression. Those components were heterogeneous. Ottoman art referred simultaneously to many sources. Persian, Central Asian, and Far Eastern "manners" freely coexist in *divan* literature and in the art of the miniature. Many a Byzantine, Western, or Persian element was incorporated with very little adaptation into Ottoman architecture without detracting from the unmistakably Ottoman feel or style of the work. The Turkish folk element, on the other hand, appears very strongly in many linguistic elements in the sense of open composition, in transparencies, and simplicity of rhythm distinctly opposed to both Byzantine complexity and to Arab and Armenian geometrical classicism, which were nevertheless dominant despite that opposition.

That is why the purely technical loan, with little or no intellectual or emotional involvement in its sources, was so attractive and came so easily to the Ottoman artisan. All through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, artisans developed with remarkable rapidity a synthesis of the techniques, tastes, and ambitions of many, but not all, the ethnic and cultural components of the empire and freely borrowed from distant cultures and regions. Basically their way of working was not the outcome of a natural melting pot. Many ideological and folk elements (for example, in rites, popular music, and food habits) remained partly or wholly distinct to the very end. It was rather a process of deliberate selection which adapted or rejected foreign and native factors according to their fitness to the *weltanschauung* of the Ottoman court at first, and after the seventeenth century, increasingly of urban society at large, in the course of a transformation open to Western influences. Even when the empire was being dismantled by national revolts social and professional groups were becoming more and more independent and influenced by European trades and professions and the upper classes had abandoned Ottoman art and architecture altogether, this technique was still successfully used for enriching Ottoman middle-class domestic architecture. For example, Bulgarian and Macedonian master builders were particularly successful in grafting Central European motifs onto perfectly Ottoman-like house types. Domestic organization, building materials, building heights had changed, and still the old Ottoman look and the traditional relation to urban fabric was happily and proudly maintained.[6]

Influences were not only Western. During the eighteenth century, artistic imagination playfully took up themes and suggestions from an unrealistic, never too sharply focused East. We cannot ignore the analogy of some aspects and elements of domestic and palatial or *kösk* architecture to the open lodges of unfriendly (to Ottoman political perception) Persia, even of Chinese architecture. One example could be the mideighteenth- century kiosk of Osman III in the Topkapi. We can observe how very widely cantilevered eaves and slim timber columns vaguely reminiscent of Chinese architecture were combined with ornamental forms and curving silhouettes derived from European Rococo, and yet

how, nevertheless, a transparency, lightness, and a very un-Rococolike sobriety of decoration were maintained (fig. 4a). This uncommitted playfulness with foreign elements far from the *turqueries* and *chinoiseries* in the Western fashion that aimed at building up an exotic atmosphere was no more than a tool for underlining the peculiar spatial concepts Ottoman domestic architecture was developing at that time and gives us an insight into the peculiar genius of Ottoman artistry. The interplay of typological or artisanal influences between East and West have to be understood within the conceptual framework of such a combinatory and syncretic view of art.

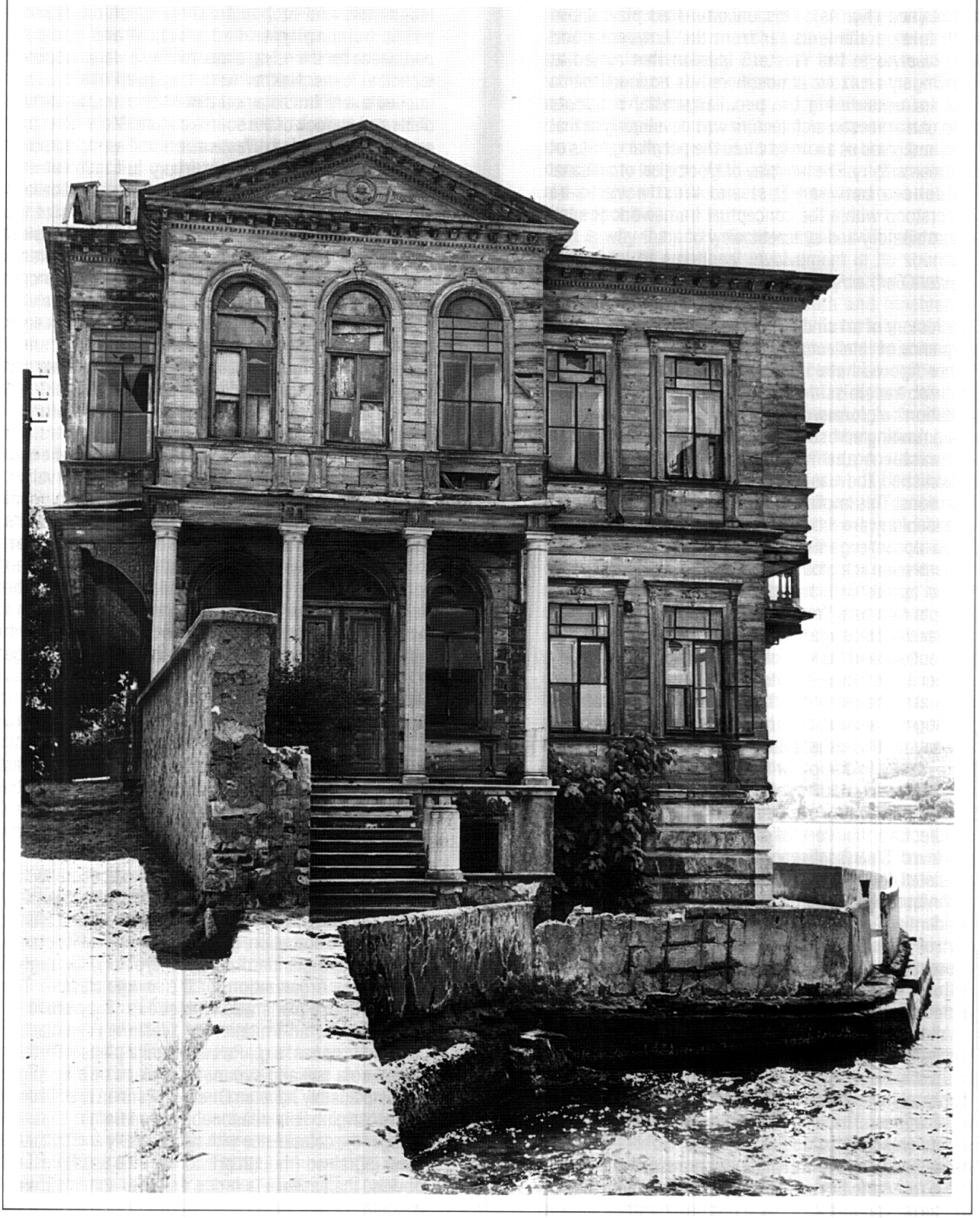
Masters Beloved and Studied

The history of art since the Italian Renaissance and its sequence of intellectually and artistically well-defined father figures have imposed a linear conception of cultural transmission. We might call this a "loving imitation" of forms or techniques in a transmission chain running across generations: artist B was formed by master A and has in turn influenced C who established the basic rules for D's steps into new directions. This implies that artistry, intellectual attitude, and ideology are linked to each other in each artist to build up an organic personality and that cultural transmission is a global process: that artist D respects C and agrees with his ideas, faith etc., and that he accepts him as a "master" who had acknowledged a similar debt to B who had looked to A.

This outlook and the kind of analysis it requires will apply neither to Ottoman architecture nor to the East-West cultural exchange where there was no question of total ideological, artistic, and intellectual involvement. I am not saying that artistic influence transmitted directly from master to disciple or from one architectural school or tradition to another school or tradition were wholly absent in Ottoman art. In music, in literature, and in architecture the work of a master would be studied and loved. Sinan's influence on monumental architecture persisted for at least a century, and his composition techniques left a mark on the window grouping of residential façades for at least three centuries. But this sort of direct influence does not play the role other processes played in the contact between the various cultures which went into the construction of Ottoman architecture.

It did happen that forms and techniques might be "lovingly imitated," that is, adopted with some degree of involvement, for their symbolic weight or prestige. But rarely were they fully understood in their global implications. The use of floral ornamentation in the *serefe* (minaret balconies) of late- eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century imperial mosques to make them resemble Corinthian capitals was a metaphor of modernization with no discontinuity with tradition insofar as it was assumed to be a modern version of the *muqarnas* technique. The use of European building techniques and architectural composition in some public building types had practical and symbolic pertinence for the ruling class. All these were not purely technical loans. Neither were they used naively. They implied a very limited amount of involvement in the way of life and outlook of the source culture. More often they expressed the wish to Westernize some aspect of social or private life. They did not imply full involvement. They were fully apprehended in their formal implications and to a certain degree potentially as symbols of the reform of Ottoman society. That is why the Classical Revival which had had precise ideological contents diversely in revolutionary and postrevolutionary Europe, in the Ottoman Empire served in much the same way as late Rococo, in the same contexts and time. Even in the eighteenth century, as we can see in two small buildings in the Topkapi palace, the Osman III kiosk and the Ahmet III library, recourse to both classical and rococo taste in much the same period was common (figs. 4-5). The choice of one style or another was no more than a matter of personal taste. The use of either meant that the patrons were modern, anticonservative, with no implication at all of the ideology of Enlightenment (as in revolutionary Europe) or of the Restoration (as in Europe after the Congress of Vienna). In the same way triangular pediments made their appearance in the houses of rich Muslim officials in the Balkans in the early nineteenth century, often with a central sun-ray emblem, but no one associated that form with Christianity or Freemasonry (fig. 6). The change in house plans we observe after the seventeenth century also implied partial but not full involvement in Westernization. Their adoption reflected rather than a cultural influence, a technical option borrowed with no regard for its cultural or ideological roots, sometimes no more than a mere divertissement, more frequently just a useful scheme. It would reinforce the abandonment of the open gallery type and the search for more comfortable homes, as did the increasing use of central-hall *(sofa)* plans as opposed to the previously widely used open-gallery *(hayat)* types (figs. 7, 8). Western trade had brought the use of glass, better water distribution, garden courts free of functional uses, and the standardization of typology through a richer home organization for the middle classes. The origin of those plans was ambiguous. They could be interpreted as an imitation of Western (Venetian or Central European: e.g., Palladian) villa plans with their central sofa hall and symmetrical plans or they might just as plausibly have an Oriental (Persian and Central Asian) origin. It is reasonable to maintain that the stronger the coincidence with conceptually and culturally better ingrained (though previously little used) Eastern models, the easier à la mode Western schemes were assimilated.

6 LATE-NINETEENTH-CENTURY VILLA WITH TRIANGULAR PEDIMENTS, BOSPHORUS.



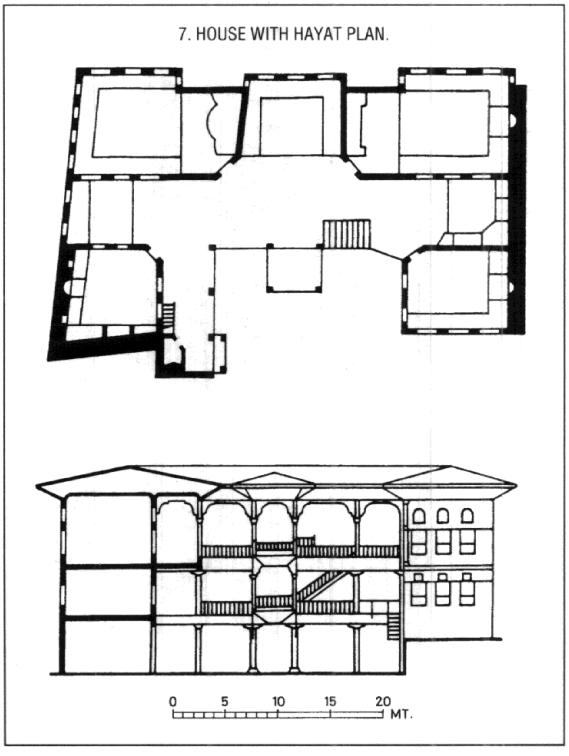
The imperial court was the main agent of modernization. All Istanbul looked to the palace for new fashions and refinements and all the empire looked to Istanbul. But the Turkish middle class, too, had a role in linking the heterogeneous contributions of local groups to the imperial style. Master builders from Macedonia, Epirus, and the Bulgarian plains, regions which had noteworthy contacts, the first with Italian influenced Adriatic, the last with Austro-Hungarian Mittel-Europa, were active over vast extensions of the empire from the last decades of the eighteenth century far into the nineteenth, working for both Muslim and Christian patrons, varying only slightly their style to adapt it to local or individual taste. The alternating passivity and action of each social group filtered out novelties, fitted them to the outlook and propensity of the leading group which would then pass them on to other groups and areas. If we can extrapolate from the results of Stainova's research[7] on the diffusion of certain types of floral ornamentation to other sectors of art and architecture, we can say that novelties were first experimented with in the imperial court, then had some success in Istanbul, and finally spread into the provinces. House types had a slightly different movement because of the action of builder squads.[8] Otherwise, it would not be too incautious to assert that architectural models, too, had a similar diffusion from Istanbul to the provinces, both eastward and westwards. Such gradual transitions Ottomanized perfectly all imported models and all the products of local syncretism.

Loot and Loan

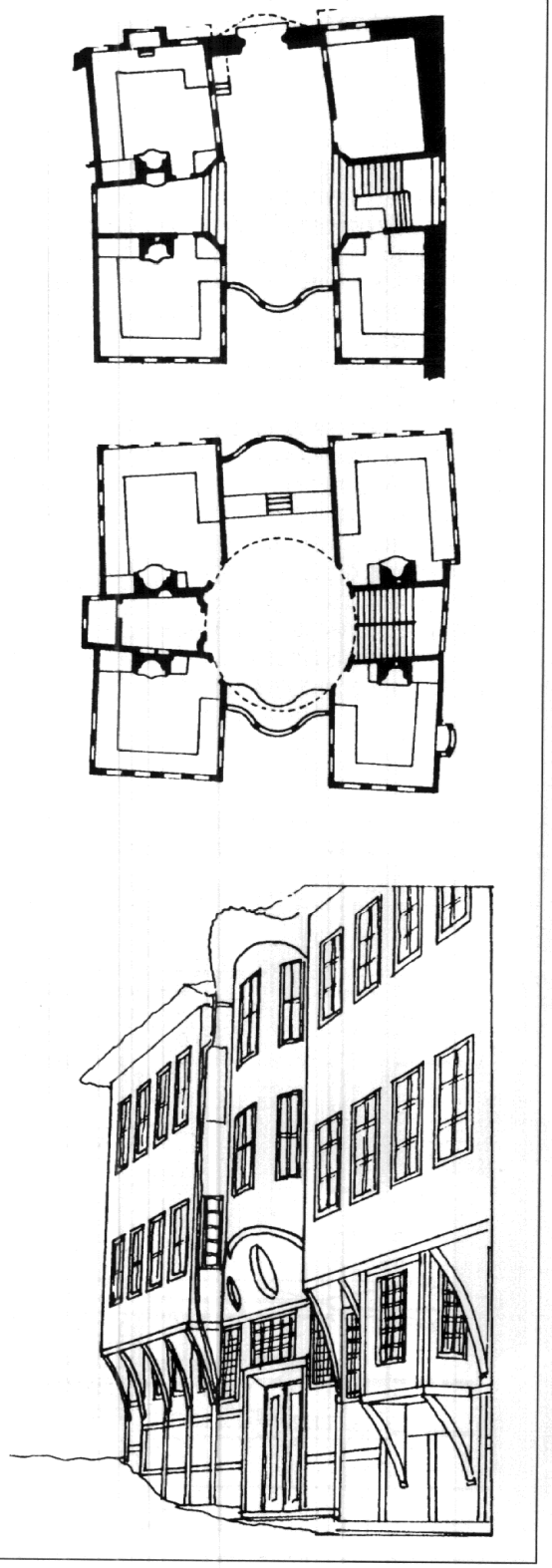
In art and literature the Ottomans had a gift for greedily appropriating all that might come in handy for the expression of a basically unitarian artistry or the enforcement of a very specific way of life and of a very peculiar general feeling towards nature and towns. It is as if their method of conquering territory, with no pretension toward transforming all its institutions and population, had inspired a similar technique for cashing in on cultural models solely for those parts or elements that were of interest to the structure in which they were being used. Even dome-covered baldachin tombs, which in time almost became a symbol of the Ottoman conception of space, had not been built before the Ottoman conquests in Europe, where baldachin (fig. 9) porches and altars or tombs could be seen in churches. I have already mentioned how the Ottomans exaggerated their debt to models such as the plan of Saint Sophia and Western parks. Actually the imitation was only partial, restricted as it was to a very schematic concept estranged from its architectural expression. In Istanbul the Ottomans began experimenting with the Saint Sophia scheme (plan, domes, and halfdomes) from the Bayezit mosque on up to the Süleymaniye. Sinan went so far as to reproduce in scale the scheme and plan of Saint Sophia (fig. 10), and the sequence of domes and half-domes in his Kiliç Ali mosque in Tophane, Istanbul (fig. 11), but the similarity stops there. Emotionally, the two spaces are in no way comparable. They transmit quite the opposite sense of space. Their lighting and structural expression, the scale of doors and windows are (and were meant to be) dramatically distant from each other: St. Sophia is mystical and gradualist in its sequences; the Ottoman copy is rationally clear and analytically articulate. Ornament, too, had diametrically opposed functions: in St. Sophia it was meant to embrace and even hide structure and contribute to the flow of space; in the mosque it emphasized the distinction between structurally emergent elements and the filled parts and rationally articulated space and volumes.

Much later, in the seventeenth century, Ottoman envoys brought back impressive accounts of European royal gardens. The outcome was Sad-i-A'bad, the imperial gardens in the Kagithane prairies of Istanbul. It is a large meadow with a linear water course and some pavilions, but no architecturally controlled perspectives, no massed trees or grouped hedges, and the pavilions were off the main axis (figs. 12-13). The water course at a certain point shed its rigid geometry and assumed a more comfortable natural run. The pavilions were covered with long, low roofs which to the European

7. HOUSE WITH HAYAT PLAN.



8. LATE-NINETEENTH-CENTURY PLOVDIVFILIBE SYMMETRICAL HOUSE WITH SOFA PLAN.



observer must have looked like the eternal headgear of Turkish houses, but which was the peculiar roof architecture developed in no more than a century or so. Was this the outcome of clumsy imitation? Not at all. It was the Ottoman sense of space and of the characteristically subdued relationship of architecture to nature which were being reinvented under impulses that were of alien origin.

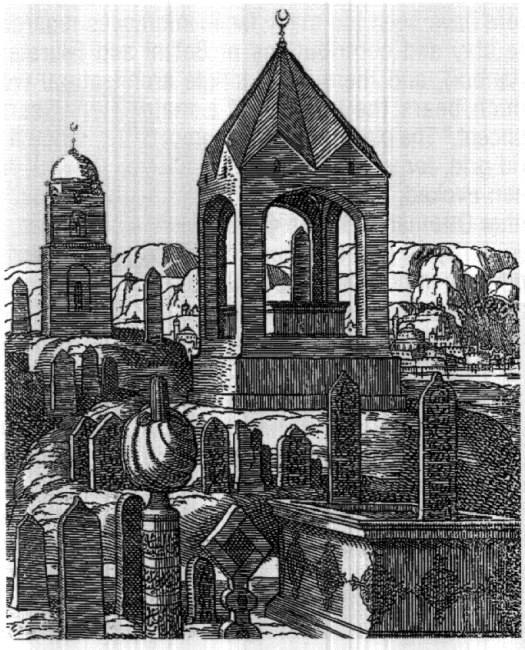
In both cases I have mentioned, the Ottomans took up a scheme welcomed just as a good idea, no more, no less as a starting point, purged the subtle artistic and ideological content of its origins and used it for their own purposes, building up an unmistakably Ottoman space, much as a Romantic composer might have taken up a Baroque melody and improvised variations that were totally Romantic. In other words, the alien stimulus was an opportunity for unleashing their native capacity for synthesis and inventiveness.

Unconscious Historicism: Transmission of Types and Archetypes

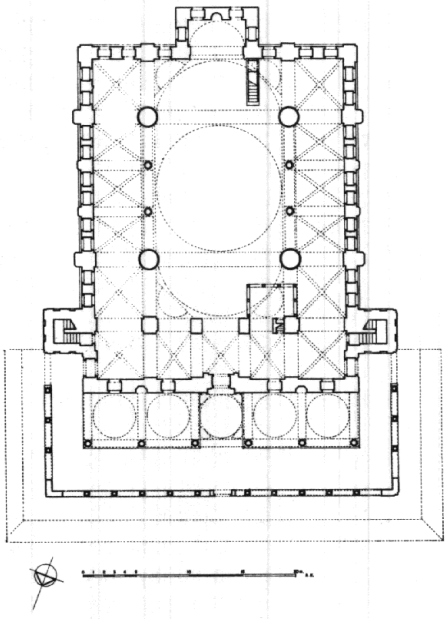
In the transmission of architectural ideas from East to West and vice versa, we have the impression that those ideas had common roots and that they arose not so much from recognizable schools of style or crafts as from the depths of collective consciousness. This points to the evident emergence of architectural forms through the long, slow process of sedimentation, to the multiplicity of the processes of formation in each architecture.

Architectural form is the outcome of cultural processes where the individual architect's vision of art and of the world accounts only for a small part of its content and structure. A building's type, its relationship to urban form or landscape, its functional program have an impact on its ultimate significance as much as, if not more than, the architect's individuality. Those are factors which have been decided within the bounds of a universe of complex, but not clearly defined social, cultural, and geographical interactions. No linear interpretation of influences will explain why a certain typological form has set in over a vast region. No clearcut economic or climactic cause will explain an architectural form. If a social group chooses to live in wooden houses for generations and keeps to that tradition even where stone houses would respond better to economic and functional requirements, if another social group adapts itself to the regional architecture, despite its religious and social or economical peculiarities, then we must conclude that cultural trends prevail in certain regions in a logic that is geographic and cultural rather than religious, climatic, or economic in nature.

Simple religious and economical factors will not explain why open settlement patterns were preferred in the Ottoman core area (Balkans and western Anatolia) and in the Slavic territories, independently from creed and

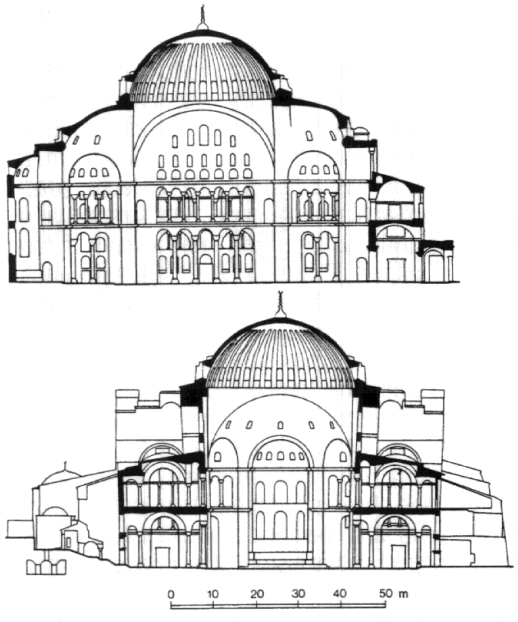


9. OTTOMAN BALDACHIN TOMBS. ETCHING BY MELCHIOR LORICH, 1570.

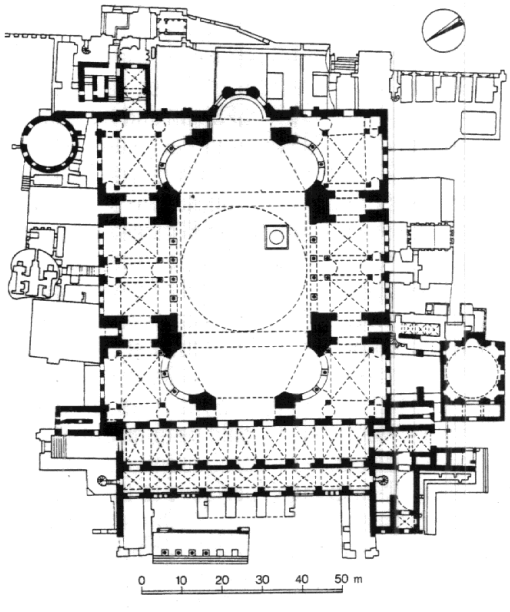


11. PLAN OF SINAN'S KILIÇ ALI MOSQUE IN TOPHANE, ISTANBUL. (FROM APTULLAH KURAN, SINAN - THE GRAND OLD MASTER OF OTTOMAN ARCHITECTURE [WASHINGTON, D.C.ISTANBUL, 1987]).

10. SECTION OF ST. SOPHIA IN CONSTANTINOPLE.



10. PLAN OF ST. SOPHIA IN CONSTANTINOPLE.



class, or why in the Latin and Arab Mediterranean and in eastern Anatolia, again independently from creed and class, the urban fabric was more compact and introverted. Nor will they explain why perfectly symmetrical rooms, whether dome covered or with flat ceiling with central decoration, were the key to volume composition in towns from the Caucasus to northern Bulgaria through Anatolia. Or again, why after the eighteenth century Turks and Armenians in Kayseri lived in stone masonry houses quite different in type and language from the typical timber Ottoman house of Safranbolu, Istanbul, or Manastir, where, too, Turks and Armenians and Greeks and Slavs lived in almost identical house types.

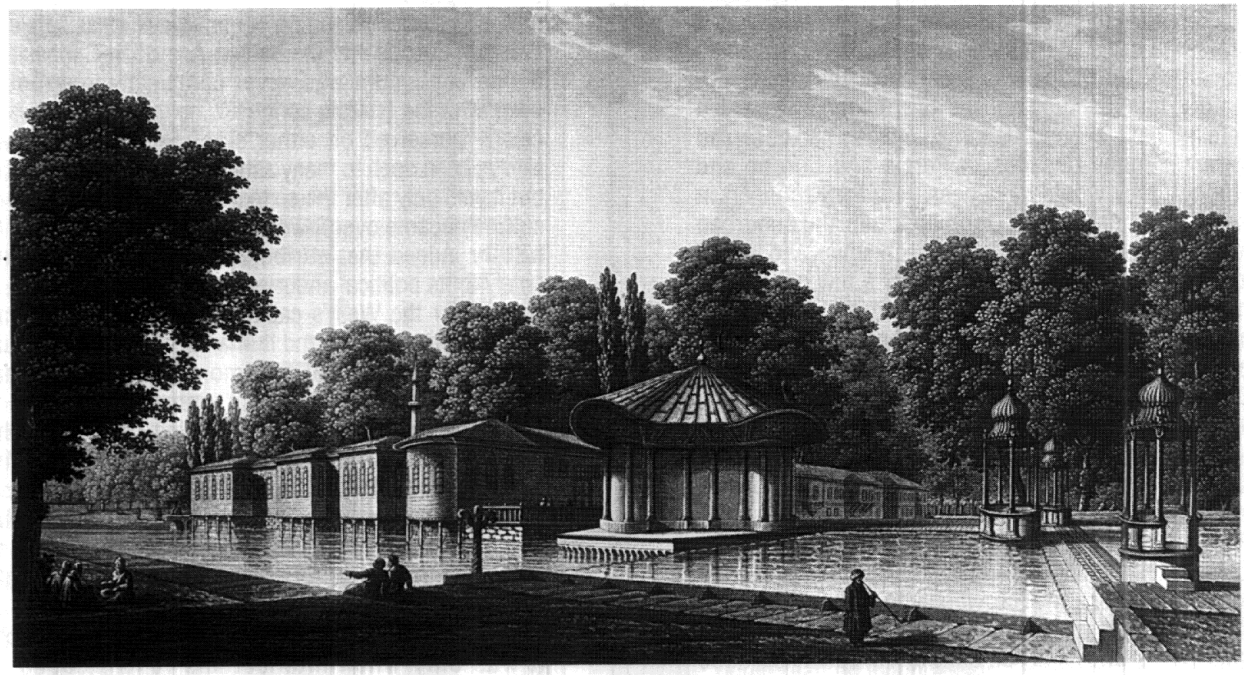
An interesting archetype which gradually entered Ottoman architecture first in the classical period in Sinan's late work and that of his disciples and, later, in current housing, is that of façade composition with regularly repeated window openings. This archetype is not as naturally rational as it would seem. Byzantine architects had recourse to subtly varying rhythms, evident even in the case of the relatively regular façade of Tekfur Saray. Earlier monumental Ottoman architecture had a marked preference for compact but composite figures such as the triangular grouping of windows or the variation of intervals between windows in different parts of the façade. Ottoman housing, like medieval European housing, had had varying and even asymmetrical schemes. At most, each horizontal layer of openings was regular, but different layers would have a different rhythm or proportion for the windows. Uniformity of openings both horizontally and vertically had been established in Renaissance Europe with the palace architecture of Tuscany. That regularity was a consequence of the application of the Classical orders or, even when it was not accompanied by the halfcolumns and modanature of the orders, was assumed to be a paradigm of order, rationality, and majesty. In the later works of Sinan and his school, as, for example, in the Zal Mahmut Pasha and Ivaz Efendi mosques, this scheme often replaced the complex compositions of earlier mosques. Two centuries later, in more than one mosque, even in those in the socalled Ottoman Rococo style, the scheme of repeated, regularly rhythmic windows would frequently appear in the minor façades of mosques (fig. 14). It also became a recurrent leitmotif, accompanied by the reduction of intermediate wall members, in the better middle and upper class housing of the last two centuries of Ottoman architecture. Here, too, it would be quite out of place to mention Renaissance or Baroque influences. It was a scheme which responded perfectly to the yearning for order and majesty inbred in Ottoman culture and psychology. It was adopted as a linguistic archetype rather than as a complex language-style loan.

There is absolutely no sign of Renaissance forms or schemes in Ottoman architecture (the role of Renaissance artists has certainly been overplayed, and there have been too many facile inferences regarding the stay and contributions of Bellini and Filarete in Istanbul), and there is no single architectural work which bears the imprint of a major Renaissance concept.[9] The plan of the Fatih complex (fig. 15) and its arid grid, for which the name of Filarete (fig. 16) has been evoked, have none of the distinctive finesse of either Ottoman or Italian monumental architecture. Its regularity is just a scheme with no conceptual or linguistic implications, as if some architect or traveler had given an oral description of Filarete's ideas and some other architect or builder had simply conscientiously applied the little he had inferred from those few phrases. Another example is that of the Ottoman *revak* portico-court. Round arches were used only in certain regions (Epirus and western Macedonia) and the pointed arch generally dominated the Ottoman scene; nevertheless the *revak* type portico courts, with its series of arches and columns, suggest both Renaissance taste and Western medieval origins.

Double-pitched roofs and triangular pediment compositions are also quite rare in Ottoman architecture. When Sinan used them in some of his caravanserais, combining them with wellcut stone masonry and an ornamental distribution of small fenestration, it is difficult not to be reminded of earlier Christian and Armenian church architecture in Cappadocia and eastern Anatolia.

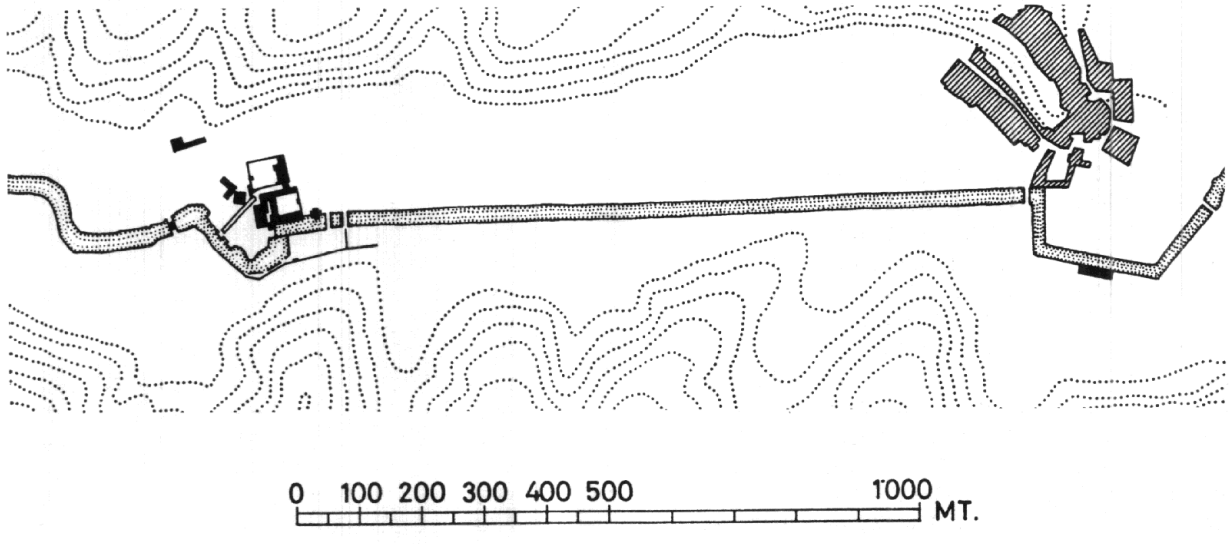
In all these cases, patrons and builders, less in their own individual experience than in that of their professional or social group, had encountered forms and concepts belonging to the past, no matter if recent or distant, autochthonous or alien, and had internalized them, with no participation, however, in their original cultural mood and contents. This reflected an unconscious or semiconscious acquisition of models or archetypes.

Not that the Ottoman mentality was wanting in historical consciousness. On the contrary, Ottoman culture and Ottoman attitudes were imbued with historicism. But in architecture it was a historicism de facto, practical, derived from actual experience. Scholars would quote ancient Islamic authors and (not always *à propos*) Classical pagan philosophers. The references of architects, on the other hand, went unnamed. They knew nothing of Vitruvius or of the more recent European masters. They simply saw ancient buildings in the land they came from or a place they visited.[10] That was a historicism which openly paid tribute to a golden past, Islamic or not, but it was based on instinct rather than school, on fundamentally empirical and unsystematic observation rather than learned tradition: lessons were absorbed and stored for future use. The selective aspect of this historical revisitation throws light on Ottoman artistic language formation. No basilica or hypostyle plan type, so frequent both in the Arab regions and in Renaissance and Baroque Europe, was



12. THE SADI A'BAD IMPERIAL GARDENS IN THE KAGITHANE PRAIRIES OF ISTANBUL, IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY.

13. THE SADI A'BAD IMPERIAL GARDENS IN THE KAGITHANE PRAIRIES OF ISTANBUL. PLAN. (FROM S. H. ELDEM, KOSKLER VE KASIRLAR [ISTANBUL, 1969]).



ever taken up. Nor were sequence-forming perspectives extant both in the West and in the Persian East imitated on a large scale. With some exceptions for Sultanate properties, up to the last decades of the nineteenth century, free-standing houses surrounded by a garden were not built, although Ottoman officials had observed them for many decades in Persia and Europe and although they would have been very easy to insert in the open patterns of the Ottoman urban and suburban fabric. Byzantine brick-masonry techniques and formal composition were taken up for only a few decades in the eighteenth century. Stone masonry and the ensuing techniques and forms were not applied to housing (except in the houses of the rich Greeks of Fenar), despite much insistence on doing so by the authorities, despite excellent local stonemasons, and despite the numerous examples of widespread use in neighboring Dalmatia, east-central Anatolia, Mediterranean Europe, and in subject Chios.

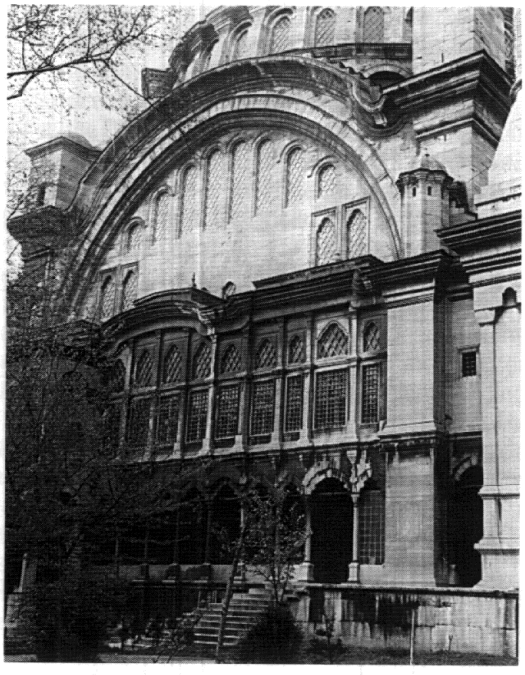
Minor craftsmen, mainly from Western-influenced areas (Epirus, Herzegovina, Ragusa as an "outer gate," the Danube corridor), who crowded into Ottoman building sites and housing production, introduced Italianate proportions and taste or Central European Baroque and Rococo in single elements but not in overall conception. It is striking that indirect Renaissance or Italianate influences should have been active just at a time when imperial Ottoman architecture was opened up to Oriental architectural influences, as its eastern borders were rolled back to the Mamluk, Armenian, and Syrian regions. Imperial ideology stimulated a sort of synergy of influences: alien elements were assimilated the more easily when similar forms were present in other influential sources or when the autochthonous cultures had met them in their own past or in their own physical environment. These sources, it must be emphasized, were many and ranged over a very broad historical and geographical area.

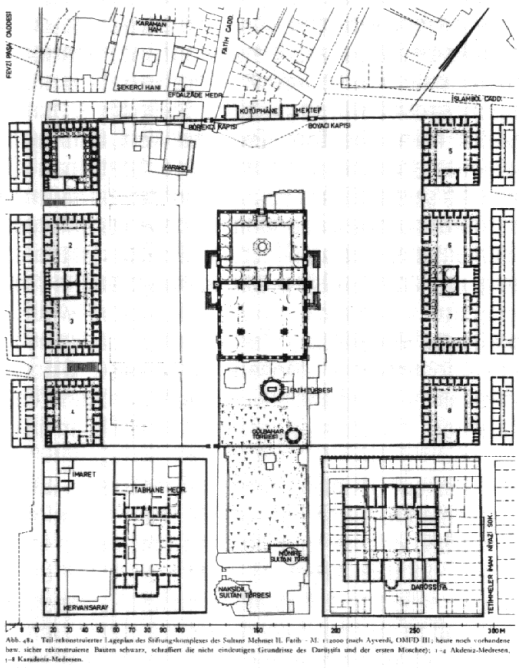
Mutual Blindness

A number of prejudices have played havoc with our perception of the interplay between Eastern and Western cultures. The individualistic view of art production is certainly prejudiced in so far as it neglects the substrata of collective thought (type, techniques, urban culture which determines relationships of building to urban form, functional program, and so forth) which are independent of schools and censorship and therefore unaffected by borders. The prejudiced interpretation of relations between neighboring but dissimilar cultures as a struggle for domination and the identification of art with political and religious ideology have blinded many an analyst to the common practice of artists and craftsmen to draw, with little or no bias, motifs from cultures held to be antagonistic by common opinion. Such borrowing has been the general rule rather than the exception.

Although the longstanding commerce of ideas between Western Europe and the Balkan-Anatolian-Caucasian-Syrian continuum was never completely interrupted even after the Islamic conquest, neither was it always clearly perceived on either side. The Ottomans had always been open to many aspects of Western influence, but it was only after the sixteenth century that Western culture became overpowering. It is a very poor view of history indeed that attributes the West's hegemony solely to its political and mercantile power, however. It was rather the West's capacity to provide an overall explanation of culture and human action, its intellectual vitality, that made that hegemony possible. But that capacity and vitality could not embrace all culture. It would not (yet) put its own and alien cultures on the same footing. That is why it could not fully exploit the alien cultures had discovered in its military and commercial ventures. That is also why, before the twentieth century, the Eastern élite was unable to recognize the elements of its own culture and held either a mythical view of that culture or rejected it wholesale and adopted a positivist Western approach. It was only when intellectuals fully steeped in contemporary Western scientific and cultural methodology and its analytical approach had emerged that the Eastern Mediterranean began acquiring a deeper

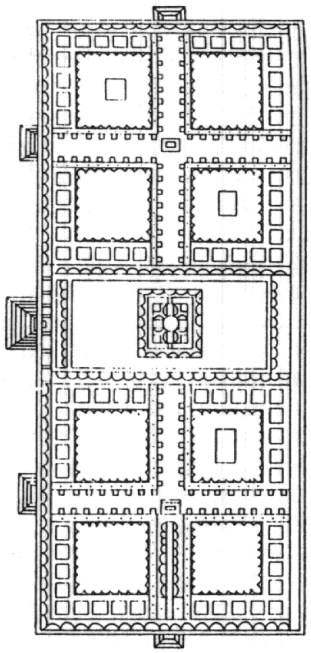
14. SIDE FAÇADE OF NURUOSMANIYE MOSQUE, ISTANBUL, 1756.





15. THE PLAN OF THE FATIH COMPLEX IN ISTANBUL.

16. THE PLAN OF FILARETE'S OSPEDALE MAGGIORE IN MILAN.



selfconsciousness, if not in all fields, at least in art and architecture. We might even say that after the seventeenth century the fortunes of the East-West cultural exchange were totally conditioned by the state of Western culture and research and that a balanced and passably objective view of that exchange could only be reached within the last three or four decades, when developments in Western culture tended to make it a world culture both in geography and in its actors and subject matter. But this is current history and reflects developments not yet complete.

Previously the West could trace back forms and concepts to old and esteemed *maitres à penser,* to Vitruvius or (reluctantly) to anonymous Gothic masters, but it was blind to the traces of ancient and remote archetypes and linguistic structures in its contemporary art and architecture. It was not that it would not perceive them, it was that it could not. Nor would it recognize in Eastern cultures an important part of its own heritage.[11] Even Europe's own folk and rural architecture and, until Goethe, even Gothic architecture were relegated to a sort of cultural noman's land where specialists reigned but where contemporary culture could reap no living lesson.

The descriptions of the characteristic *scena tragica* and *scena comica* of Renaissance and Mannerist theater stage design give us some clues about the selective interpretation of architectural history by post-Renaissance theory: the former contained monuments and palaces of Renaissance taste considered noble and called *all'antica* (i.e., derived from classical antiquity); the latter, featuring mainly town-folk houses and shops, were considered plebeian and called "modern" (today we would describe them as Gothic or post-Gothic). In other words, a lineage running directly from classical antiquity to the Renaissance was the basis for cultured architecture, whereas all intermediate history was no more than vernacular accumulation. All that was distant from élite culture and its Renaissance roots was perceived as estranged: mere folklore frozen in time. Hence the reluctance to cope with all manifestations of art, architecture, and culture within a given field, and the inability to explain the evolution and linkages within a given field of activity say, architecture across the methodological and ideological borders that sixteenth- to-nineteenth-century Europe had traced to construe its idea of "high" culture. Hence the West's inability to understand that Eastern cultures, too, are complex and differentiated, that they require multiple and refined instruments. Hence, also, the nonsense of the very notion of "Orientalism," that is, of a single science versed in all the aspects and production of a complex of different societies and cultures and of specialists capable of understanding a given field within a given geographical context, as, for example, historians of Islamic architecture with little or no grasp of architecture in other cultures and even more pernicious

of the methods and workings of architecture at large. Paradoxically, Orientalism's defect was that, despite its specialized approach, it was not up to the standards of Western cultural hegemony in furnishing an overall vision of Oriental cultures precisely because it limited its research to "the Orient." Just as paradoxically, the fault of anti-Orientalism is its partial, predominantly political and economic explanation of Orientalism, which misses the complicated and even devious implications of ideology on artistic and emotional grounds. Both anti-Orientalism and Orientalism perceive in the East-West relationship no more than the action of dominant to subordinate, of master to disciple, of despot to victim. They both fail to recognize that art and architecture very often have a timetable and trends which do not coincide with those of economic and political events. Both tend to filter art and architecture through an imaginary global entity, omniscient and satanic, in which political ambitions, ethnic connotations, *weltanschauung,* and artistic techniques form an inextricable organic unity. If in art and society *beaucoup se tient,* the saying tout se tient is misleading. Orientalism and its cousin anti-Orientalism miss the point that artisans and architects can, and often do, exploit ideas and sources playfully, and that, to use some modern expressions, they "play it cool," even tongue in cheek and that patrons, most of all Islamic patrons, agree with that attitude. Concepts of domination and ideological borders ill apply to art and architecture. In many phases of Islamic history the extensive exploitation of alien artistic concepts was a conqueror's privilege and the conquering and hence allembracing mentality survived even when Islam was in no position to conquer.

Of course this was not always so. Purism and the rejection of alien and therefore repugnant forms set in intermittently. But even when this was not the case, the selective rejection of certain alien forms in certain fields had always existed. It is said that the ulema violently protested when Sultan Mahmut proposed what might have looked like a Christian church for the mosque which would later be called the Nur-u-Osmaniye. We do not know how near those first designs were to Western religious architecture, nor which particular elements had been perceived as alien or non-Islamic. We do know that there had been no specific protest when the portals were decorated with Rococo modanatures which only vaguely recalled the traditional *muqarnas.*

It would illuminate the creative processes and their relationship to the social mind to understand such selective censorship: on what grounds did patrons and artists choose what they thought to be "culturally and ideologically pure," which elements did they find to be "alien and foul," and which could be exempted from such taxing distinctions. Politically oriented selectivity is not difficult to understand. Prior to the nineteenth century it was inclusive rather than exclusive. The recourse of conquering Ottoman sovereigns to Byzantine (and indirectly Roman) models is well known and reflected their imperial aims. It was nineteenth-century nationalistic Romanticism and its twentieth-century sequel with its ambition to deploy a "national style" in many countries, East and West, that rejected elements deemed not sufficiently "national." The elements selected are a source of infinite bewilderment and mirth for the uncommitted observer: Moresque ornamentation and architectural elements appeared in Hungarian and Turkish public buildings and in Jewish synagogues; identical typological factors would be considered Macedonian, Turkish, or Bulgarian in each region dominated by those ethnic groups, though in almost all these regions their authentic, though foreign-influenced, Rococo traditions would have been heartily abjured.

In the western Ottoman world such censorship was rare and seemed to touch only certain realms religion and to a certain degree language and dress even in later periods. In those regions where daily life and its paraphernalia had submitted to cultural unification, it is difficult to sort out truly distinctive ethnic elements outside religion and costumes (these last mainly imposed by law). Even language ceases to be distinctive in such cases as that of the Karaman Orthodox Greeks of Central Anatolia who spoke Turkish and whose tombs bore epitaphs in Turkish. But all the same they used the Greek alphabet to write Turkish, proving once again that alien alphabets were universally considered taboo, perhaps because of the strong connection between alphabet and scriptures.

Why have patrons and artists invested in ethnic or religious purity in certain periods? What basic components of the work of art were held to be vehicles of purity or impurity? What alien elements were sought and accepted? Contemporary chronicles, rarely courageous and honest, and the statements of artists too eager to please their patrons and to ward off charges of unorthodoxy are nowhere near furnishing answers. Only serious and painstaking comparison of architectural icons can disclose the nature of the meandering processes of influence and loan. Such comparative analyses have been put off by the legitimate interest of art historians during the last two decades to combine ideological and philological factors and come up with a history of art version of the *histoire des mentalitès,* extremely interesting and fruitful for the insight it provides into the patrons' hold on the work of art, but somehow stealing attention away from the specific artistic processes and from the vehicles of technical/cultural exchange.

There is no doubt that the West's will to dominate and its sense of superiority have obfuscated the real mechanisms of cultural interchange; but so have the East's processes of self-identification, its inferiority complex, and the defensive attitudes which are their

consequence. Eastern cultures bordering on Christian and Hellenistic cultures have been plagued by what I call the complex of Anacharsys. Anacharsys was a Scythian prince sent to classical Athens to give an account of Athenian polity and civilization; he was strongly attracted to what he saw and "went native," and (Herodotus reports the rumor) for that reason was executed on his return to his Scythian homeland. This might be taken as a paradigm of some, if not all, Eastern cultures to take something useful from the West and, at the same time, maintain their own identity and the emotional content of their art.

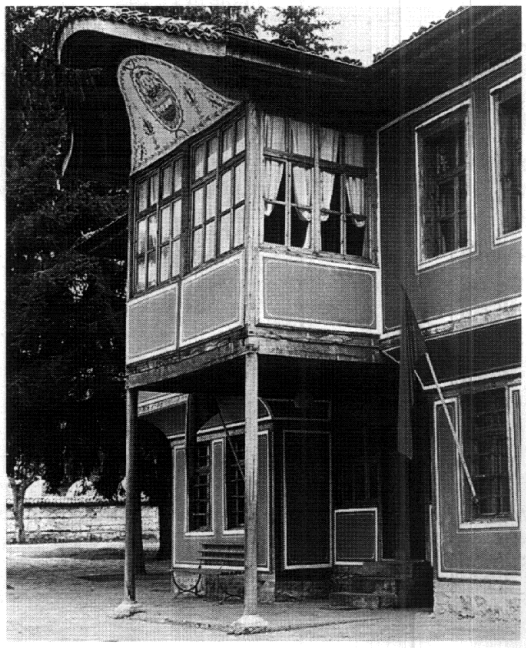
In the case of the Ottoman-dominated Mediterranean the Eastern regions were strongly influenced by single mechanisms and details of Western models and yet were capable, up to the nineteenth century, of maintaining their own overall character, their "Oriental" feeling. Perhaps they were unaware of the Western capacity to analyze complex structures and hence of its creative and intellectual processes as an organic system or, conceivably, they were unable to adopt such an approach. Eastern artists and technicians could not wholly exploit the novel ideas and inventions they were submerged in, but for reasons quite different from those of Westerners confronted with the East. Just as Western culture perceived a fragmentary East, so too in the East Western influences were taken piecemeal.

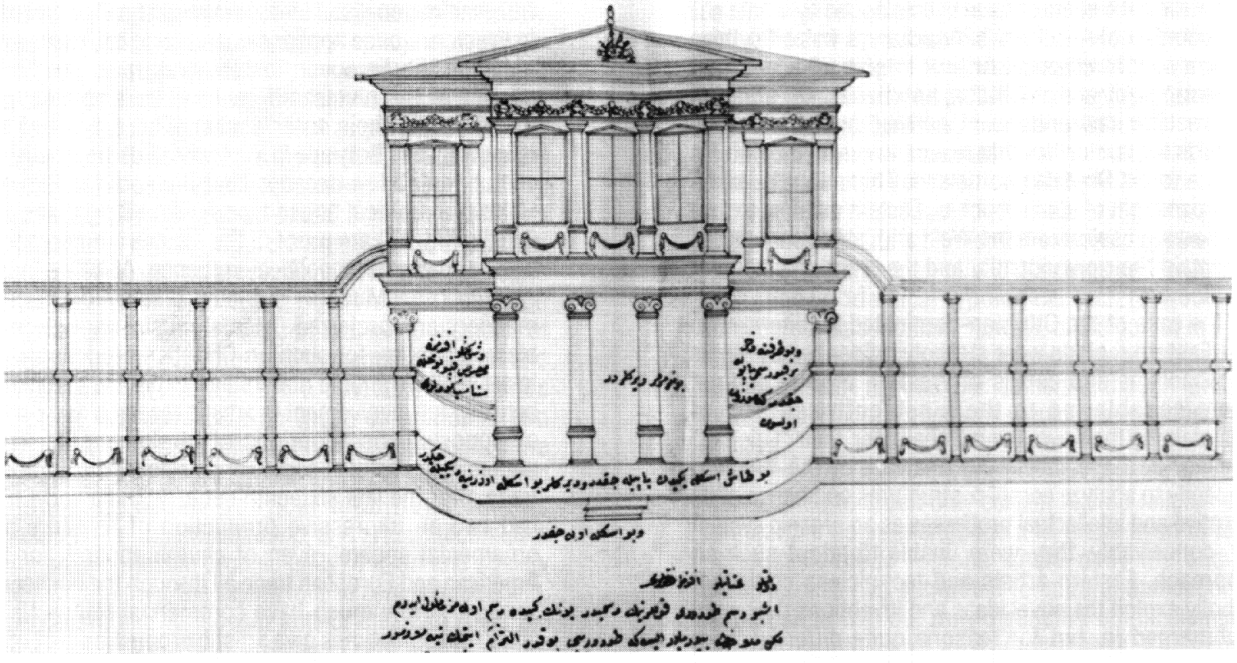
Fortunately this attitude was not completely fruitless from the Ottoman point of view. We might go so far as to say that it allowed the survival of artistic and emotional microcosms of socialcultural pregnance (?): felix culpa! Such was the case of late Ottoman house building and residential urban tissue far after their social and political foundation had disappeared. The late Ottomans lived in an emotional world. The Islamic universe had long lost its intellectual domain of social and artistic life. Aesthetics and feeling rather than ethics and rational reflection gave form to daily life and cultural production. Though there were noteworthy differences between ruling class art and way of life and those of the urban middle classes, they showed the same hedonism, the same taste for the same modest pleasures of urban life and for the sights of nature, the same feeling for architecture and music. Novelties, mostly from Europe, but also from the East, were absorbed so long as they enhanced that taste. It is fascinating to observe which aspects of which trades and production were Westernized and which kept to their traditional structure and feeling.

It would also be worthwhile investigating in which fields the Ottomans accepted technical change but wanted to conserve their own emotional background. We note, for example, that in the first half of the nineteenth century the upper classes would revert wholly to Western architecture, accept the coexistence of Ottoman and European music, and yet be very conservative in their literary taste. At the same time, the non-Muslim middle classes which bred very un-Ottoman nationalistic ideas, enthusiastically converted to Western house appliances and gadgets, dressed in public in the European fashion, yet up to the fourth quarter of the nineteenth century, built houses very traditional in their outer aspect. The *konaks* of the ruling house in Belgrade in the first half of the nineteenth century and a few decades later the socalled Plovdiv-Filibe symmetrical house type built by Bulgarians and Greeks (fig. 17) are proof of the relative indifference of cultural patterns to political influence. At home, many *zhimmi* (non-Muslim) subjects displayed Ottoman manners and preferred Oriental music, enough to be blamed publicly for such un-Christian propensities.[12]

In art itself we should understand better the distinction between full involvement in artistic research and playful or opportunistic adoptions of foreign motifs. Iznik potters manufactured particular objects for the European trade after the late sixteenth century; India and China had had an impressive production of furniture and ornamental apparel, even of church apparel, for the American and European trade all through the nineteenth century.[13] How much have commercial transactions, which did sometimes give artistic production part of its orientation, affect later production? Of course, the distinction between authentic artistic research and commercial production is a legacy of Romantic thought

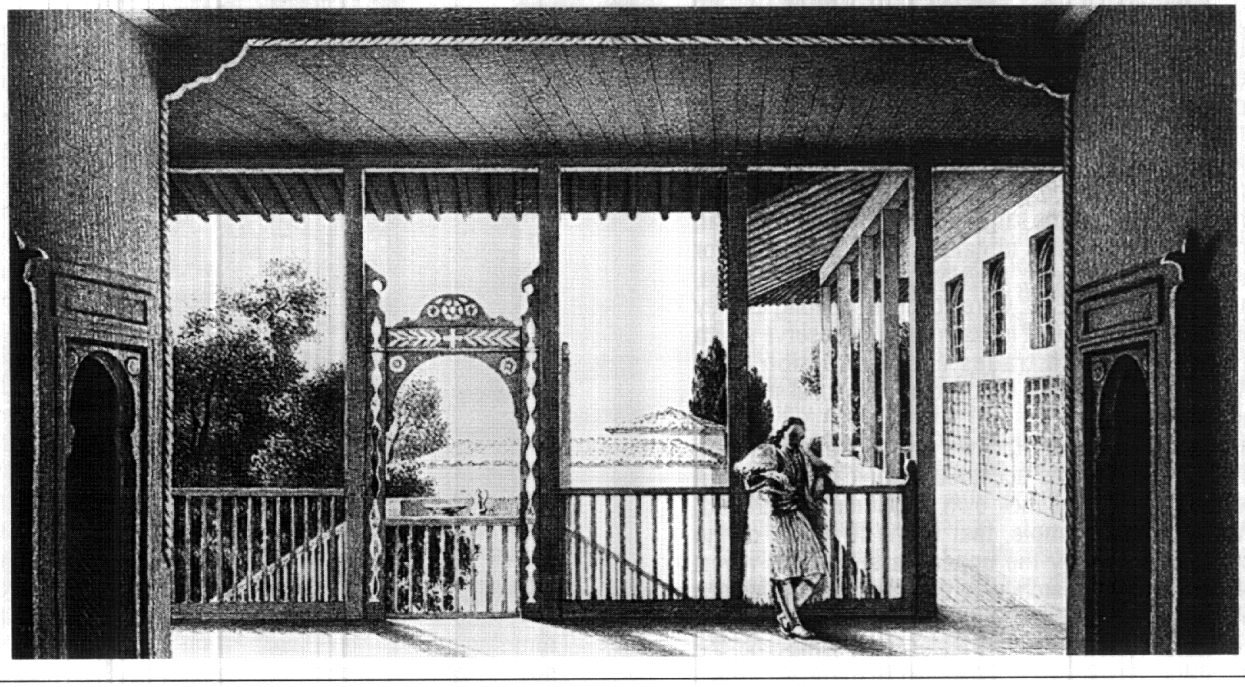
17. TYPICAL BULGARIAN HOUSE INCORPORATING OTTOMAN AND WESTERN ELEMENTS. COMPARE WITH FIG. 8.





18. DRAWING OF A SEASIDE KIOSK FOR THE SULTAN BY A CERTAIN TODORI. NINETEENTH CENTURY (PROBABLY THE FIRST DECADE).

19. COURT AND HAYAT GALLERY OF A GREEK HOUSE IN THE EPIRUS. FIRST DECADE OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.



and can be applied only very awkwardly to Eastern art, but it is a fact that not all innovations accepted for commercial reasons seeped into all aspects of artistic production. In different epochs and in different classes, some activities pertained to technical innovation and were not deemed worth conserving; others pertained to the field of emotions and ideology where innovation or conservation would mean full cultural involvement in the alien source or, on the contrary, its rejection. Selim III, the sultan who reformed the Ottoman army and laid the foundations for the institutional and municipal reforms culminating in the 1839 constitution and in the transformation or degradation (according to one's point of view) of Ottoman town and society, was a composer of classical Ottoman music and the patron of Dede Efendi, the composer whose music is still the mainstay of the Mevlevi dervish rites. In the same decades, his daughters and nephews would applaud Rossini, and light opera would be presented at court receptions.

The miraculous syncretism of Hellenistic or even of Roman civilization simply was not present in the commerce of forms and thought between the West and the Ottoman East in modern times. Bred into both cultures was the dichotomy of technology and of culture at large, and the systematic blindness to all that was not its own interpretation of knowledge and values. Both had their deep contradictions. Humanism in the West and globalism in Islam (as well as the imperial and universalistic ambitions of the Ottomans) should have stimulated, more than mere curiosity, an understanding of neighboring cultures, but it did not. From this ensued both the East's inability to absorb other cultures without loss of identity and the West's long-standing inability to understand and use other cultures creavively, or at least to recognize in them the reflection of its own alter ego past and future.

Maurice Cerasi

NOTES

1. The Eastern influence in early Ireland referred to above is a good example. The influence of Syrian, Coptic, and Armenian monastic foundations on Irish manuscripts and book art is soundly documented (see for example Françoise Henry, "Early Medieval Irish Art"), but, so far as I know, Irish and Eastern architectural forms have neither been confronted nor even suspected of bearing comparison.
2. Julian Raby, *Venice, Dürer and the Oriental Mode* (Totowa, N.J., 1982), and Josef von Karabacek, *Abendlandische Künstler zu Konstantinopel* (Vienna, 1918). See also Clarence Dana Rouillard, *The Turk in French History, Thought and Literature* (15201660) (Paris, 1938).
3. Gulru Necipoglu, *The Topkapi Scroll: Geometry and Ornament in Islamic Architecture* (Santa Monica, Calif.: The Getty Center for the History of Art and the Humanities, 1995).
4. Ibid., pp. 16166 and 19496.
5. Those were not modern virtues of multiethnic tolerance as some too enthusiastic observer might infer, but a quite egotistic and clever exploitation of the status quo by the ruling classes of a multi-ethnic state which separated communities rigidly and called on each community for its contribution in terms of taxes and professional skills.
6. See my "Late Ottoman Architects and Master Builders," *Muqarnas* 5 (1988): 87-102.
7. Michaila Stainova, "Le commencement de l'Européanisation de l'architecture de la Turquie ottomane et certains aspects de son influence sur l'architecture des Balkans," *Revue des Etudes Sudest européennes* 3 (1979). The phenomenon of influences was complex and ran both ways, eastwards and westwards within the Ottoman Empire and between imperial court and urban folk art, and was very early, even if limited to the Balkan region; see Verena Han, "Les courants de styles dans les métiers d'art des artisans chrétiens au XVIe et durant les premières décennies du XVIIe siècle dans les régions centrales des Balkans," *Balcanica* 1 (1970): 23974.
8. Some of these artisan groups (at the time called taife brigades by the Ottomans and *koudaroi* by the Greeks) worked as far as Cairo: see map of their area of influence in Nicolaos Moutsopoulos, *Koudaroi Makedones kai ipeirotes maistores* (Athens, 1976).
9. See, for example, Franz Babinger, "Vier Bauvorschlage Lionardo da Vinci's an Sultan Bajezid II (1502/3)," reprint from *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen* (Göttingen, 1952), and Julian Raby, "El Gran Turco: Mehmet the Conqueror as a Patron of the Arts of Christendom," Ph.D. diss. Oxford, 1980.
10. In his autobiography (Sai Mustafa Celebi, Tezkiretül Bünyan, transcribed by Metin Sözen [Istanbul 1982]), Sinan does mention his studies of ancient buildings, but his interest seems all technical and he does not mention one single specific monument or building.
11. Enrico Guidoni, "Urbanistica e città medievali europee," *Storia della Città* 7 (1978), and "Mediterraneo, Islam, città," *Architettura nei Paesi Islamici Seconda Mostra Internazionale di Architettura della Biennale* (Venice, 1983), pp. 299305, develops an acute analysis of the Renaissance and post-Renaissance West's blindness to non-Western Mediterranean cultures as part of a refusal to acknowledge its own medieval past and its own rural cultures.
12. Nikolas Svoronos, *Histoire de la Gréce Moderne* (Paris, 1964), and Léandre Vranoussis, "Les Grecs de Constantinople et la vie intellectuelle à l'age des Drogmans," in *proceedings of the Association Internationale du SudEst Européen* 1973 (Bucarest, 1977), trace a convincing map of the combination of integration with and antagonism to Ottoman culture in the Greeks of the eighteenth century. Many a Balkan historian and chronicler mentions the envy many Christians expressed in wanting to live and be housed as well as their Ottoman masters. Envy, imitation, autonomous elaboration seem to constitute a cycle that regarded the relationship of Christian subjects to Turkish masters, lower classes to the ruling classes, small towns to Istanbul, Ottoman upper classes to West European models. See also Georges Castellan, "L'influence de Constantinople sur la vie quotidienne des villes balkaniques (fin XVIIIe début XIXe siècles," in *Proceedings of the Association Internationale du Sud-Est Européen* 1973 (Bucarest, 1977).
13. The Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts, has a very interesting collection of objects and prints of such Indian and Chinese production. It exhibits a very wide range of elements and motifs which later filtered into both Western household culture through a change of taste induced by those objects and into Eastern craftsmanship which adapted techniques and some aspects of artistic taste it had first applied for commercial reasons.