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A SPATIAL STUDY OF THREE OTTOMAN CAPITALS: BURSA, EDIRNE, AND ISTANBUL

Under Ottoman rule the cities in former Romano-Byzantine territories underwent a transformation within the framework of the conventional Turkish urban organization of castle, city, and suburb, but in each a somewhat different scheme evolved. In Bursa, the commercial and residential areas developed in a linear pattern at the foothills of the Anatolian Mount Olympus (Uludağ) on the east and west of the ancient fortified town. In Edirne, the Ottoman city enveloped the old town and a new castle. In Istanbul, a new castle was also built in the middle of the walled city, but owing to the availability of free land inside the fortifications, Ottoman urban renewal took place mainly within the Theodosian walls. In all three Ottoman capitals, however, there was a common denominator: the castle occupied a central position, the bazaar sprawled a few hundred meters away from castle walls, and the new Ottoman neighborhoods grew up around the imarets, or religious community centers.¹

BURSA

Prussa ad Olympium, which is believed to have been founded by King Prussias I (232–192) of Bithynia sometime in the second century B.C., had an uneventful history until the Ottomans laid siege to the city and took it in 1326. It was after Prusa — called Bursa by the Turks — became the Ottoman capital in 1335 that it started to develop as a major political and commercial center.

This is how Evliya Çelebi described the fortified city of Bursa in the seventeenth century:

The castle of Bursa is roughly a rectangle whose long side extends from east to west. It perches on a rugged rock above a cliff without a moat on three sides. ... Its location at the foot of Keşiş (Monk) Mountain protects the castle from easterly and southwesterly winds; the houses in it face the vast plain to the north. The castle walls have a total length of ten thousand paces. There are sixty-seven towers and five gates: Pınarbaşı (Fountainhead) and Zindan (Dungeon) gates on the south, Kaplica (Hot Springs) and Balık Pazarı (Fish Market) gates on the west. Within this castle are two thousand houses but no vineyards or orchards. There are seven neighborhoods each with a masjid, one hammam, and a bazaar with twenty shops. The mosque of Orhan Bey and the palace of the old sultans are also inside the castle [walls]. The palace is now deserted. But it still has a commander and his guards.²

This account is not totally accurate. Not only does Evliya neglect to mention the name of the fifth gate, but he also confuses the exact location of the other four. The correct location of the five gates is as follows: the Hisar (Castle) gate is on the east; the Kaplica gate on the west; the Pınarbaşı gate on the south; the Yar (Precipice) and Zindan gates on the east and west ends respectively of the double-rowed section of the walls against the hillside on the south. The double-rowed section was reinforced by triangular flanges when the Bursa walls were repaired by Orhan Gazi. Odd column shafts, sculptured bases, inscription plaques inserted into the cyclopean walls date from the fourteenth-century restoration.

The walls of the Bursa castle have survived in moderately good condition, but of the double-rowed southern walls only the rubble inner structure remains; its dressed-stone facing has been cannibalized by generations of builders. Similar destructive intrusions can be seen in other parts of the fortifications as well.

When the Bursa castle fell to Orhan Gazi there were several monasteries in the city, the largest of them was that of St. Elias which overlooked the Bursa plain.³ In accordance with his bequest, the founder of the Ottoman dynasty, Osman Gazi (ca. 1300–24), was buried under the lead-covered dome of the baptistery of this monastery. The Byzantine structure called the Gümüşli Kumbet (Silvered Tomb) was first damaged in the fire in 1801 and then collapsed in the earthquake of 1855. A new octagonal türbe was built on the foundations of the original structure in 1863–64 by Sultan Abdülmazid.

When Orhan Gazi died in 1369 he too was buried in another monastic structure near his father’s tomb on the St. Elias grounds which bordered the inner castle. The inner castle occupied a roughly rectangular plot of land measuring 150 by 110 meters. The side overlooking the Bursa plain was a sheer cliff; the other three sides were
protected by walls buttressed by seventeen semi-cylindrical towers (fig. 1). The bey’s palace is now filled with military buildings, and its original architectural composition is not clear. A seventeenth-century document shows that it included a divanhane (audience hall), a has oda (privy chamber), and a hammam, as well as stables and a harness shop for the royal saddlers. It is difficult to say whether or not these buildings were all erected at the same time. All we can say is that the very first buildings in the Bursa castle dated from the reign of Murad Hüdavendigâr (1362–89). Also dating from the reign of Murad Hüdavendigâr is the Şahadet (Martyrdom) mosque which faced the gateway of the bey’s palace across the street. Only the double-domed middle section of this earliest Ottoman congregational mosque is still standing.

The Ottomans first settled in the fortified city of Bursa and developed it to suit their needs (fig. 2). During the 1330’s, Orhan Gazi and his brother Alaeddin Bey each built a mosque and a hammam inside the walled city. Alaeddin Bey’s mosque (1335–36) and hammam were near the Zindan gate; the Orhan Gazi mosque and Eski Hammam (Old Bath) stood in the vicinity of the Gümüşli Kâmbet and of the Orta Pazar (Middle Market) respectively. The two hammams have vanished, and only a four-line Arabic inscription remains of the Orhan Gazi mosque. The Alaeddin Bey mosque has survived in its original state, as has the Lala Şahin Pasha madrasa
near the Hisar gate which dates from the time of Murad Hüdavendigar.

Soon after the Ottoman conquest of Bursa, the semi-sedentary Turkoman groups from various regions of Anatolia began flooding into the Ottoman capital. To provide an urban nucleus around which the immigrants could settle, Orhan Gazi built an imaret in the 1380’s approximately 600 meters to the east of the walled city. This first Ottoman royal imaret in Bursa has survived, at least in part.

The Orhan Gazi imaret originally consisted of a mosque with hospice wings, a madrasa, a khanqah, a soup kitchen, a hammam, and a khan,¹⁰ and the whole was surrounded by a protective wall.¹⁰ It is not known when this wall was demolished,¹¹ but we do know that the madrasa and khanqah were pulled down in the nineteenth century to provide a choice site for the city hall and that the soup kitchen, though in poor repair, still existed in the 1950’s.¹² The remaining three buildings of the imaret are still standing within the boundaries of the city’s central marketplace, which Bayezid I (r. 1389–1405) began to develop in the same general area by erecting its two principal buildings: the Ulucami (Great Mosque) and the bedestan.

The Ulucami, a spacious edifice topped by twenty good-sized domes — four deep and five abreast — stands on high ground some 100 meters to the east of the Orhan Gazi mosque. The bedestan is also a multi-domed structure, composed of a long, narrow hall with a row of square pillars in the middle, extending from east to west; it supports fourteen domes in seven pairs. The large hall, entered through four doors — one at the center of each side — was planned to hold the stalls of vendors who dealt in valuable merchandise. Less valuable goods were sold in the rows of shops called anasta. As reported by Eviya Celebi, in the seventeenth century the anastas in the central marketplace of Bursa sheltered nine thousand shops (fig. 5). These shops, vaulted and lead-covered, surrounded the bedestan on four sides¹³ and were built to provide revenue for the pious foundations of their founders. The khans, which functioned as wholesale centers, served a similar purpose. The Pirinc (rice) khan was built by Bayezid II to generate income for his mosque complex in Istanbul, the Ipek (silk) khan for
Mehmed I’s Yeşil complex in Bursa; the Yağ Kapanı (oilscales) khan for Murad Hüdavendigar’s imaret in Çekirge (ancient Ptolemais).

Despite the fact that two of its buildings were reconstructed in the nineteenth century, one finds a good example of a fourteenth-century Ottoman imaret in the Murad Hüdavendigar in Çekirge which was completed shortly before the registration of its waqfiyya in 1365. The imaret forms a cluster composed of a combined mosque-madrasa-türbe, a soup kitchen, and latrines on a hillside overlooking the Bursa plain approximately 150 meters to the east of its last component, the Eski Kaplica (Old Spa).

Situated on the crest of a hillock in the district now known as Yıldırım is the Yıldırım (Thunderbolt) Bayezid imaret, which had a building program similar to that of the Murad Hüdavendigar in Çekirge. It included a mosque with hospice wings, the türbe of the founder, a madrasa, a soup kitchen, and a hammam. Like the Orhan Gazi imaret, it was planned as a walled precinct.

Unlike the Orhan Gazi and Murad Hüdavendigar imarets, it incorporated a small royal residence perched on top of the precinct walls and a hospital on the southeast some 250 meters away from the mosque-madrasa-kitchen group. The hımarhane (hospital), which is mentioned in Bayezid I’s waqfiyya dated Ramadan 802 (March 1400), should be considered an independent building since it was apparently deliberately built away from the main cluster of the imaret. Whether or not this was done for hygienic reasons is difficult to say. In any case, the monumental hospital with its spacious courtyard, several large halls, and numerous rooms for patients is now in a terrible state, having been allowed to fall into ruin after it was destroyed in the earthquake of 1855.

Like his father Yıldırım Bayezid, his grandfather Murad Hüdavendigar, and his great-grandfather Orhan Gazi before him, Çelebi Sultan Mehmed I (r. 1413–21), soon after he succeeded in gaining control of the Ottoman state following the interregnum caused by Tamer-
lane’s Anatolian campaign, set out to build his imaret in Bursa. For its location Murad Hüdaverdigar had selected Çekirge to the west of Bursa. Yıldırım Bayezid had located his imaret in the opposite direction, some two kilometers to the east of the city. Mehmed I chose a site closer to the center, between the imarets of Orhan Gazi and Yıldırım Bayezid. The district that grew around the imaret Mehmed I founded is now known as Yeşil (Green) — a reference to the exquisite turquoise faience tiles that embellish the inner and outer walls of this sultan’s charitable buildings.

The construction of the Yeşil imaret, begun during the first decade of the fifteenth century, was discontinued in 1419, before the completion of its two principal buildings, as the absence of the madrasa’s upper floor and the mosque’s portico demonstrates.

The last royal imaret in Bursa was built by Murad II (r. 1421–51) a short distance to the northwest of the castle. It is the most mature example of an early Ottoman building complex in that it has the most orderly layout up to that time. It was constructed in eighteen months in 1425 and 1426. Since Murad II’s waqfiyya was registered on 22 Shawal 833 (14 July 1430), one can surmise that the other buildings of the imaret also date from the 1420s, with the exception of the founder’s türbe. Murad II’s türbe was built after he died in 1451 in accordance with his wish to have it placed three to four cubits from the tomb of his son Alaeddin Ali who predeceased him.

All early Ottoman rulers up to Sultan Mehmed the Conqueror (r. 1451–81) founded royal imarets in Bursa. They also encouraged amirs and wealthy merchants to establish imarets of their own in the city. Most of these consisted of a mosque and a hamam, as in the imarets of Amir Timurtas Pasha and Başçı Ibrahim, or of a mosque, a türbe, and a hamam, as in the imarets of Timurtas Pasha’s son Umur Bey and Amir Sultan.

Owing to its geographical location in the sloping foothills of the Uludağ, Bursa grew in a linear pattern formed by a string of residential settlements that extended from east to west. In the fourteenth century, the new neighborhoods which emerged first around the Orhan Gazi imaret and then around those of Murad Hüdaverdigar and Yıldırım Bayezid, served as suburbs for the ancient walled city. But as new residential areas were built nearer to the center between the two extremities of the linear city, the suburbs were incorporated to constitute the city of Bursa. The walled city became the castle: the site of the Orhan Gazi imaret was transformed into the main commercial center, and acquired a double fulcrum: the first marked by the bey’s palace and the Şahdet mosque inside the castle; the second by the Ulu-cami and the bedestan which marked the core of the central marketplace below it.

EDIRNE

Ancient Orestia — Orestias — in Thrace was a small town snuggled inside a bend in the Tunca river. During a visit to provincia Thracia, Emperor Hadrian (r. 117–36) saw the strategic importance of Orestia and gave it city status as well as his name — Orestia came to be known as Adrianople (Hadrianapolis).

Under Byzantine rule Adrianople often succumbed to raiders from the north. The Huns, Slavs, and Bulgars posed a constant threat to the city, and it was destroyed and rebuilt several times. Despite extensive renovations, however, the city had not lost its Roman character at the time of the Ottoman conquest in 1361. Moreover, Edirne, as the city was called by the Turks, retained its classical features until the second half of the nineteenth century. Its walls were still extant in the 1820s. They were torn down by the governor Hürsüz Mehmed Pasha who used their stones for new constructions and sold as building lots the land on which the towers and bastions had stood. By the time the Sublime Porte took action to stop the governor’s project, Edirne’s walls had been almost totally demolished. The walls and interior organization of the classical city were quite intact in 1653 when Eviyi Celebi passed through Edirne. His description fits well the typical castrum pattern of a Roman garrison town.

Eviyi Celebi informs us that the city walls of Edirne were constructed of alternating stone and brick courses and the old city (kaleçit) formed a quadrangle with a strong high tower at each corner (figs. 4–6). The Kaplı Kule (Sheathed tower) rose at the corner on the north. The Manyas tower faced the river on the south. The Macedonian tower marked the eastern corner of the old city.

Originally deep moats flooded with river water surrounded the walls, but in the seventeenth century, the moats were filled with rubble and soil and buildings were built on them. Resting against the old city walls, these buildings concealed the old city from view. Inside the old walls, which measured 6,000 paces in length, there were no orchards or gardens but only densely built groups of houses separated by 360 stone-paved streets laid out like a checkerboard.

Citing Eviyi Celebi and Hibri Abdullahman Celebi, Rifat Osman shows that the Byzantine palace in Edirne
Fig. 4. Edirne. Approximate plan showing the Walled City at the beginning of the 14th century. (From Osman Nuri Peremeci, *Edirne Tarhi* [Istanbul, 1939])

Fig. 5. Edirne. Approximate plan showing the location of the Walled City inside the bend of the River Tunca.

Fig. 6. Edirne. One of the city gates. (Photo: from Semavi Eyice, "Bizans Devrinde Edirne ve Eserleri," in *Edirne* [Ankara, 1965])
was located either near the Manyas tower by the river or in the vicinity of the Tekfur Sarayi Burcu (Bastion of the Prince’s Palace) which commanded a superb view of the terrain toward the west, not too far from the Manyas tower.\textsuperscript{34} Wherever it was and whatever the reason, the Byzantine palace in the old city was found inadequate for serving the needs of the Ottoman ruler. Murad HÜdávendigâr ordered a new palace for himself whose construction began in 1365–66 and was completed three years later (fig. 7).\textsuperscript{35}

Murad HÜdávendigâr’s palace — called the Sarayi Cedid (New Palace) until a newer one started by Murad II assumed that name, and this one became the Sarayi Atik (Old Palace) — was approximately one kilometer to the northeast of the old city on a clearing known as the Kavak (Pôlar) maydan close to the Selimiye mosque.\textsuperscript{20} According to Evliya Çelebi, the Old Palace was extensively restored twice: first by Yıldırım Bayezid’s son Musa Çelebi and later by Süleyman the Magnificent. Musa Çelebi enlarged the grounds and raised the height of the precinct walls to twenty cubits.\textsuperscript{37} Süleyman the Magnificent expanded the educational facilities established by Murad HÜdávendigâr in order to increase the number of Janissary trainees to three thousand.\textsuperscript{38} In 1675–76 when the daughter of Mehmêd IV Hadıce Sultan resided in the Old Palace, it was in good condition.\textsuperscript{29} Some fifty years later, Damad Ibrahim Pascha reported to Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) that it was in such poor repair as to be uninhabitable.\textsuperscript{30} Left to ruin, the Old Palace disintegrated rapidly, and its property was allowed to pass into private ownership. The Old Palace grounds remained vacant until the destruction by fire in the 1880’s of the military school near the bastion of the prince’s palace; then its owner Sıdika Hanum donated it to Governor Hurşid Mehmêd Pasha to provide land on which to build a new military school complex.\textsuperscript{31}

The second royal palace in Edirne, begun by Murad II, was located on an island in the Tunça river. Its formative phase was completed by Mehmêd II. Called the Sarayiçi (Island Palace), it had a single row of walls surrounding it and consisted of the Bab-HÜmâyûn (Imperial Gate), Alay Meydani (parade maydan), kitchens, stables, and other service buildings, Bab üs-Saâde (Gate of Felicity), Azr Odâsi (audience hall), Cihanîmûa (belvedere) and Kûm (sand) pavilions, Enderun (inner) court, and the royal harem.\textsuperscript{32}

After Mehmêd II, several sultans including Süleyman the Magnificent (r. 1520–66), Ahmed I (r. 1603–17), Osman II (r. 1616–22), Mehmêd IV (r. 1648–87), Ahmed II (r. 1691–95), and Ahmed III (r. 1703–30) built new buildings or renovated old ones in the Island Palace. Among the important buildings erected by some of these sultans were the Tekke Kapû (Derwez Lodge gate), Sarayiçi Köprüsû (Island Palace bridge), Terazî (Equity) and Adalet (Justice) pavilions, and the Hünkâr Sofası (royal hall) by Süleyman the Magnificent; the imadiye (Reliance) and Alay (Parade) pavilions and a masjîd by Ahmed I: the Bayrûbâçî (sloping garden) pavilion by Osman II; and an apartment with five rooms in the harem quarters by Ahmed II. At the close of the Tulip Period it lost its importance as a royal residence and fell into disrepair. It was extensively restored one last time in 1867–68, in preparation for Abdülmecit’s scheduled stop-over in Edirne on his return from his European state visit.\textsuperscript{33} The sultan never came, having returned to Istanbul by ship, but it gave the Island Palace one final renewal before its total decline. All that survives today from this fifteenth-century Ottoman royal palace are a few stone walls that belonged to the Sand Pavilion bath, the kitchens, and two gateways.

In the old city two churches are known to have remained in the early Ottoman period. One of these — most probably the church of St. Sophia — was turned into a mosque immediately after Murad HÜdávendigâr took the city in 1361; the first Friday prayers were said in this Ayasofya mosque.\textsuperscript{34} Later, during the time of Murad II, the Ayasofya mosque came to be known as the Halebi Medrese mosque when Siraceeddin Mehmêd ibn Ömer Halebi was appointed the first mudarris of the madrasa built next to the mosque.\textsuperscript{35} This was destroyed in the earthquake of 1752, and remained in ruins until the end of the nineteenth century when its stones were reused in new constructions.\textsuperscript{36} The other was the Kılıçe Camii (Church Mosque) — an unnamed church which was first converted into a mosque, then was pulled down by Mehmêd II, who built in its place a mosque with six domes.\textsuperscript{37} Mehmêd II’s mosque has not survived, and it is difficult to say why such a great multi-domed mosque was erected inside the old town so late, since the city center had already been established outside the walls some fifty years earlier when the great mosque and bedestan were built there.

The great mosque of Edirne, known as the Eski Camii (Old Mosque), was begun by Bayezid I’s son Amîr Süleyman in 1402–3 and completed in the time of Mehmêd I. The Eski Camii was damaged in a fire in 1745 and by an earthquake seven years later, but it was restored and saved from ruin by Mahmûd I (1730–54). The bedestan, also built by Mehmêd I (r. 1413–21), is a replica of the Bursa bedestan with its seven pairs of domes covering a
long, narrow hall lined with shops. It stands at an angle to the Old Mosque a short distance from it to the northwest.

By the end of the sixteenth century Edirne’s central marketplace had grown to include a large number of khans and two monumental arastas with barrel-vaulted streets. The Ali Pasha arasta (1566–69) extended on a north-south axis west of the bedestan. The Kavaflar (shoemakers’) arasta (last quarter of the sixteenth century) leaned against the high retaining wall of the Selimiye Mosque square overlooking the Old Mosque. Both were built to produce income for pious foundations: the first for Grand Vizier Semiz Ali Pasha’s imaret in Babaseki, the second for the Selimiye mosque and its two madrasas in Edirne.

Evliya Çelebi reports that there were in the main commercial district of Edirne fifty-three caravanserais, some fifty merchants’ khans, and seventy bachelors’ khans. In the 1930s, Peremeci included in his book only twenty khans and caravanserais, but, citing Badi Efendi, he also pointed out that formerly forty more khans and caravanserais existed in the city in addition to those twenty.

Among the lost merchants’ khans in Edirne may be mentioned the Yemis (fruit), Un (flour), and Bal (honey) khans between the Selimiye and the Old Mosque, the İkikaplı (double-doored) khan between the Old Mosque and the bedestan; and the Halil Pasha khan on the south of the Üç Şerefeli mosque. Those that have survived are the Taş (stone), Havluçular (towel-makers), Kâhir (mule), and Rüstem Pasha khans. Of these, the last is a unique structure. Built in 1560–61, it combines a merchant’s khan with a caravanserai. The merchant’s khan section consists of rooms on two floors that surround a vast rectangular courtyard at the center of which originally stood an elevated masjid. The adjoining caravanserai section around its own courtyard incorporates a large stable and a good-sized kitchen on the ground floor and comfortable guest quarters on the upper level.

The Rüstem Pasha khan has survived in excellent condition. So has the Ekmeçioğlu khan, which is composed of two spacious stable wings on either side of a deep iwan and guest quarters. The latter were built during the first decade of the seventeenth century by Ekmeçioğlu Ahmed Pasha on Sultan Ahmed I’s orders.

The Ottomans had lived within the confines of the old walled city for a good half-century before they moved outside it to establish new residential areas; this is shown by the fact that no known mosque constituting the core of any neighborhood outside the old city dates from before the fifteenth century. The earliest such neighborhood mosque is that of Gazi İbrahim Bey near the Macedonian tower which, according to its inscription, was built in 1411–12. Among other extant fifteenth-century
single-domed neighborhood mosques are the Kuşçu Doğan (1426–27), Haci Schabeddin Pasha (1436–37), Cavus Bey (1443–44), Sitti Şah Hatun (1449–50), Selçuk Hatun (1455–56), and Ayşe Kadın (1468–69). The neighborhoods that grew up around these mosques now comprise the central residential areas of Edirne.

Some forty years after the Ottoman conquest of the city, imaret was founded to provide social and welfare facilities for new settlements located some distance from the old city. The very first imaret in Edirne, the imaret of Bayezid I, was completed in 1399–1400. It was situated across the Tunca river approximately one and a half kilometers to the north of the old city, and consisted of a mosque, a soup kitchen, and a hamman. The mosque with two hospice rooms, though in poor repair, still stands. The soup kitchen was destroyed during the Russo-Turkish war (1877–78), and only a small portion of its walls and a fireplace with a tall chimney survive; they stand in a cluster some twenty paces to the east of the mosque. A hamman that was recorded as being near the mosque has vanished without leaving a trace.

While Bayezid’s sons Amir Suleyman, Musa Çelebi, and Mehmed I developed the main marketplace of Edirne, they built no imarets near the city. Mehmed I’s son Murad II, in addition to transferring the royal palace from the Kavak maydan to an island on the Tunca river, founded three imarets in Edirne. These were the Darülhacis, Muradiye, and Üç Serefeli imarets. In this early period of Ottoman Edirne, during the time of Murad II and his son Mehmed II, a number of imarets were also founded by amirs — the most notable among them being the Gazi Mihal Bey, Şah Melek Pasha, Beylerbeyi, Ibrahim Pasha, Mahmut Pasha, and Kasm Pasha.

In short, the physical development of Edirne by the Ottomans began after the consolidation of their authority in Thrace, some forty years after the city’s conquest in 1361. During those forty years in the fourteenth century, with the exception of the royal palace which was situated on high ground to the east of the old city, urban activities in Edirne were confined to the area within its classical fortifications. The church of St. Sophia converted into a mosque functioned as the principal religious edifice of the city; the Byzantine marketplace and houses presumably served the needs of the Muslim settlers as well as the local Christian population.

A major urban project was launched at the beginning of the fifteenth century when the Old Mosque and betestan were built to form the nucleus of Edirne’s main marketplace at the foot of the royal palace. Throughout the fifteenth century, new residential areas and their imarets were built until they surrounded the old walled city. Edirne’s growth took on a concentric pattern around the old city and the central bazaar. With the construction of the Üç Serefeli mosque in the middle of the fifteenth century, the boundaries of Edirne’s main marketplace were pushed toward the north, and when the Selimiye complex took their place near the Kavak maydan in the third quarter of the sixteenth century, Edirne achieved a new urban expression highlighted by three great mosques which marked the corners of its densely packed city center.

ISTANBUL.

Following his triumphal entry into Istanbul on May 30, 1453, Mehmed II, in keeping with Islamic convention, ordered the conversion into a mosque of the city’s cathedral of St. Sophia. The venerable basilica became the great mosque of Ayasofya when the khatibe was read in it after the first Friday prayers.

Mehmed II showed no interest in converting the Byzantine imperial palaces in the city for his personal use. The Great Palace near St. Sophia, in which the Roman and Byzantine emperors had lived from the fourth to the eleventh centuries, was in a state of ruin, but it was excellently located and could possibly have been restored to its former splendor, had he chosen to do so; the palace of the Blachernae could also have been renovated and modified to serve as a residence for the sultan and his household. Instead, Mehmed II ordered a new palace for himself near the Forum Tauri. In accordance with Turkish tradition, the Ottoman ruler wanted to create a citadel in the middle of Istanbul on which to place his palace (figs. 8–9).

Construction of Mehmed II’s palace in Istanbul began in 1454 and was completed a year later. Surrounded by a high wall 1,520 meters long, the palace grounds included the present central campus of Istanbul University as well as the land occupied by the Süleymaniye complex. In 1548, Süleyman the Magnificent appropriated a good portion of the palace grounds for his mosque and subsidiary buildings. He also distributed sizable pieces of the same property to his viziers and the agha of the Janissaries on which to build their own mansions.

The palace near the Forum Tauri had three gateways: the Divan gate on the east and two others on the south and north. Inside these gates were several private pavilions of varying sizes and their necessary service facilities. The buildings were designed to meet the sultan’s residential and official needs. After the completion of
the second Ottoman palace on the site of the ancient acropolis of Byzantium, however, the governmental functions were transferred there and the Old Palace, as Mehmed II’s first palace in Istanbul came to be known, was used only as the royal residence where the sultan’s family and the main portion of his household lived. In the second half of the sixteenth century, when the royal harem moved to the New Palace, the Old Palace was assigned to the mother, daughters, wives, and women of deceased sultans.

Ruin beyond repair after several fires, the original buildings of the Old Palace were demolished by Mahmud II, who in 1827 erected on their grounds the headquarters for his new army. In 1864 Abdüllaziz replaced Mahmud’s military headquarters with a palatial building, the Daire-i Umur-u Askeriyye (Department of Military Affairs) which later became the Seraskerat (Ministry of War) before it was turned over to Istanbul University after the proclamation of the Turkish Republic. No trace of the Old Palace buildings remains. It is difficult even to speculate with any degree of accuracy what the architectural layout of the Old Palace was, other than to state that the main buildings were clustered on the south side of the grounds overlooking Bayezid Square.

Before leaving for Edirne after his first stay in Istanbul, Mehmed II also ordered the construction of “a strong fortress near the Golden Gate.” Like his palace, this pentagonal castle incorporating four Roman and three Turkish towers was finished by the time he returned to the new Ottoman capital in 1456 (fig. 10).
Fig. 9. Istanbul. Plan of the Topkapi Palace. (From Wolfgang Muller-Wiener, Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbul [Tübingen, 1977])
The construction date of the Golden Gate is controversial. Strzygowski writes that it was built in 386 by Theodosius I as a triumphal arch outside the walls of Constantine and was later incorporated as a gateway into the Theodosian walls. Weigand argues that the triple-arched gateway flanked by square pylons of white marble and the barbican outside the pylons to control passage to and from the city were built by Theodosius II as part of his walls in the first half of the fifth century. Either way, the Golden Gate held an important place in the history of the city. Emperors departing for or returning from military campaigns passed under its vaults. When they came back victorious, they made their entry into the city, riding at the head of their troops, through the Golden Gate. In the fourteenth century John VI Cantacuzenus (1347–54) lowered the height of the Golden Gate’s central vault from eight to four meters, then had all three arches blocked. Only a small door built into the masonry fill of the central archway provided access through the monumental gate. He also had the two towers on either side of the marble pylons reinforced. These square towers, originally part of the Theodosian wall system, were both reconstructed during the Ottoman period as octagonal structures — the one on the north, known as the Ahmed III tower, in 1724–25; the other after it collapsed in the earthquake of 1766. The three towers built during the time of Mehmed II were cylindrical in form.

In the fifteenth century, all seven towers of the castle were surmounted by pointed caps sheathed in lead. Its spacious courtyard contained several barracks for guards, the headquarters of their commander, and a small mosque. Houses replaced the military buildings in the eighteenth century, but the mosque itself was still standing in 1907. Only the short stump of its minaret shaft remains today.

The Castle of the Seven Towers was intended to function as a stronghold for the state treasury. In one of its towers were kept gold bullion and gold and silver coins; in another, mail armor, and helmets, jeweled saddles and harnesses; in a third, precious objects and furniture; in the fourth, weapons and arms; in the fifth the state archives; and in the remaining two, the war booty brought by Selim I from Persia. The valuables remained in the Castle of the Seven Towers until the second half of the sixteenth century when Selim II and then Murad III transferred them to the New Palace, and the castle was emptied and turned into a high-security prison.

Charles Diehl describes Byzantine Constantinople’s main commercial district as follows:

Between the squares of the Augusteum and the Taurus, the bazaar quarter ran through the whole length of the great street of the Mese, its stalls being set up under porticoes. Here were workbenches where goldsmiths carried on their craft in the open; money-changers’ tables, covered with coins; booths of provision merchants, who sold meat, saltfish, flour, cheese, vegetables, oil, butter, and honey; and those of the perfume sellers, who had their stands in the square before the palace. In the neighborhood of the Long Portico, between the Taurus and the Forum of Constantine, the sellers of silks and cottons had their allotted places. There was also the House of Lamps, corresponding more or less to the Behesten in the great bazaar of the modern city.

The principal commercial center of Ottoman Istanbul, the Great Bazaar, had a different appearance. Instead of stretching in a linear pattern along the city’s main thoroughfare, it comprised a network of shopping streets in the center of the city southeast of the Old Palace. Originally there was only a single bedestan, as was customary; after a second bedestan was built, the first came to be known as the Old — or Inner — Bedestan, and the second was called the New Bedestan. It may well be that the Old Bedestan’s site was dictated by the exist-
ing street layout, as it was placed at the intersection of the two commercial arteries, the Mese and Makros Embolos, of the Byzantine city. The Old Bedestan has thick walls and a superstructure of fifteen domes — five lengthwise and three abreast. Kritovoulos tells us that when Mehmed II decided to build it in 1456, "he commanded [his architects] to construct a very large and very fine marketplace, protected by very strong walls on the outside, and divided on the inside into very beautiful and spacious colonnades." It was to have a roof of fired tile and to be ornamented with dressed stone. The New Bedestan, erected some ten years after the Old Bedestan, is similar to it in every respect save that it has small storerooms lining its inner wall and its superstructure has twenty domes instead of fifteen.

Curiously, Mehmed II built no khans near the Great Bazaar. Of the khans clustered on the northeastern corner, only the Kürkçüler (furriers') khan built by Grand Vizier Mahmud Pasha is contemporaneous with the two bedestans; the others date from later centuries.

In addition to the two bedestans Mehmed II built hundreds of shops in the Great Bazaar area. His waqfiyya records 849 shops in the vicinity of the Old Bedestan and 265 more around the New Bedestan; their shopkeepers dealt in such commodities as quilts, turbans, slippers, purses, and books.

Evlîya Çelebi informs us that, after having laid siege to Constantinople, but before he entered the city, Mehmed II ordered a search for the burial place of Abu Ayyub al-Ansari, a companion and standard-bearer of the Prophet Muhammad, who died during the Arab siege of the city in 674-76. Seven days later it was found. On this site in 1458 Mehmed II laid the foundations for a türbe and a mosque complex to commemorate the martyr. The layout of this mosque complex was changed radically in the course of subsequent renovations: in 1724 Ahmed III enclosed the octagonal türbe in a cemetery garden by erecting a high wall around it; in 1789 Selim III ordered the reconstruction of the mosque — it was rebuilt in two years on a new plan in the baroque style of the day; the madrasa vanished during Selim III's renovation; the soup kitchen was demolished in the twentieth century.

Soon after its completion, the türbe of Ayyub al-Ansari became a holy shrine. It was there that the investiture of a new sultan by the Girding of the Sword (corresponding to the coronation of a king in Europe) took place. The sultans, the viziers, and the commander-in-chief prayed at the Ayyub türbe before embarking on an important mission or a military campaign. Girls visited it before marriage and boys before circumcision. Within a short time, the area around the shrine was filled with hundreds of tombs, and the whole district bearing the saint's name acquired a mystic aura.

According to Hammer-Purgstall, the miraculous revelation of Ayyub's burial place was inspired by military necessity. He argues that, having sensed his soldiers' anxiety, the young sultan had asked his tutor Akşemseddin to ease the negative effects of the long siege. By his discovery of Ayyub's tomb, Akşemseddin successfully raised the Janissaries' morale and the city was soon taken. Babinger regards Akşemseddin's miracle as "a pious fraud... not mentioned in any contemporary source...." He writes, "None of the missives sent by Mehmed to the Moslem world, not even his letter to Mecca, contains one word about the Prophet's companion-in-arms." The inference is clear: the legend of Ayyub's tomb was invented for political reasons.

The idea of substantiating a prior claim to the conquered land has always been of primary importance to rulers. This is what Mehmed the Conqueror had in mind when he invented the Ayyub legend. An equally significant consideration seems to have been the need to create an Islamic spiritual center near Istanbul to function as the fountainhead for the cultural conversion of the city.

After the first phase of development comprising the Old Palace, the Castle of the Seven Towers, the Old Bedestan, and the Ayyub shrine had been completed in the 1450's, Mehmed II undertook to execute the second phase of his plan for Istanbul. It involved the Saray-ı Cedid and the Fatih complex (fig. 11). Originally, the Old Palace had no congregational mosque; this oversight was corrected when Bayezid II built his mosque across from the Divan gate. In planning the Saray-ı Cedid (New Palace) no such omission was made. The outer gateway of the New Palace, the Bab-i Hümâyûn, was placed near the Ayasofya and the Suri Sultani (Imperial Wall) passed right by it. The main buildings of the New Palace, located in the middle of the grounds, were essentially organized around two spacious and contiguous courts. The Birûn (Outer) Court, reached through the twin-towered Bab ıs-Selâm (Gate of Peace), was flanked by the kitchens and royal stables on the two sides, and incorporated the Divanhane (council chamber) Adalet Kulesi (Justice Tower), and İç Hazine (inner treasury). The Endêrûn (inner) court beyond the Bab ıs-Saade (Gate of Felicity) consisted of three royal buildings: the Arz Odası (audience chamber), Has Oda (privy chamber), and Fatih pavilion, as well as the various divi-
Fig. 11. Istanbul. Plan of the Fatih Complex. (From Wolfgang Muller-Wiener, Bildlexicon zur Topographie Istanbul [Tübingen, 1977])
sions and related facilities of the palace school. The purpose of the palace school was to educate the highest-ranking military executives to administer the empire in the name of the sultan. The Fatih imaret was built to educate the future religious, judicial, and teaching cadres of the Ottoman state. Until the second half of the fifteenth century, Ottoman scholars had gone to Cairo, Damascus, Isfahan, or Samarqand to complete the education they received in Turkey; the need for these peregrinations decreased considerably when the Fatih imaret was founded, and it soon became a prestigious center for higher learning in Islam.

The buildings of the Fatih imaret surrounded a vast square, 210 meters on a side. The mosque stood in the middle of this plaza. On the east and west, arranged in two rows of four, extended the eight Semaniye madrasas. Originally each one had an annex for preparatory students built against its outer wall at the lower level. A hospital, a soup kitchen (dar ış-ziyafet), and a hostel (tabhane) formed a row on the south side of the plaza. The tübèses of Mehmed II and his wife Guldahar Hatun in the cemetery garden behind the mosque, and a primary school and library perched on top of the plaza wall on the north completed the composition of the educational complex. The Fatih mosque collapsed in the earthquake of 1766 and was rebuilt by Mustafa III on a slightly larger plan. All eight of the Semaniye madrasas, four of the preparatory schools (tanimmes) on the east, and the tabhane are extant.

Under Mehmed the Conqueror during the second half of the fifteenth century Istanbul became the cultural and intellectual as well as the administrative center of the Ottoman Empire. New residential quarters of houses with terra-cotta tiled roofs appeared throughout the walled city. These red-roofed houses contrasted with the lead-roofed stone buildings of the royal and vizierial ima-
Fig. 13. Istanbul. Air view of the city with Topkapı Palace in the background; Nuru-Osmanye Mosque and Covered Bazaar in the middle; and Bayezid Mosque and Bayezid Square in the foreground. (Photo: From Wolfgang Muller-Wiener, *Bildlexikon zur Topographie Istanbul* [Tübingen, 1977])
reloc. Istanbul’s domical and minareted skyline began to take shape. Construction of new royal imarets in the next three centuries gave the city its particular Turkish identity and urban character.

Bayezid II (r. 1481-1512) built his imaret during the first decade of the sixteenth century next to the Old Palace. It faced the square which has since become known by his name. The buildings of the Bayezid imaret formed two groups on two sides of the square. Near the walls enclosing the Old Palace were the mosque, two türbes (of Bayezid II and his daughter Selçuk Hatun), a school, and the building housing the kitchen and caravanserais. Some 150 meters to the west of this group stood the madrasa and double hammam. All the buildings of the Bayezid complex have survived and, with the exception of the hammam, are in good condition.

The SÜleymaniye complex was also located in the vicinity of the Old Palace (fig. 12). It overlooked the Golden Horn. Like the Fatih complex, the SÜleymaniye was planned primarily as a center for higher education, and it incorporated seven madrasas on the east and west of a large rectangular plaza with a monumental mosque at its center. In the cemetery garden behind the mosque were the türbes of SÜleyman the Magnificent and his wife Hürrem Sultan, and a dar iltıc, a (Qur’an school for boys). The hospital, dar iltıc, and tabhane formed a row on the north side of the plaza; the hammam stood by itself on the southeast corner of the precinct.

Before the SÜleymaniye was built, SÜleyman the Magnificent founded two other royal building complexes in the city to commemorate his father Selim I (r. 1512-20) and his son Mehmed. The Sultan Selim complex in the district known by the same name consisted of a mosque, the türbes of Selim I and his wife Hafsa Sultan, a school, and a dar iltıc. The mosque, Selim’s türbe, and the school are in good repair. The Hafsa Sultan türbe has been reduced to foundations walls. The kitchen has vanished, and the site is occupied today by a secondary school. The Şehzade Mehmed complex was composed of a mosque, a türbe, a madrasa, a school, a large kitchen and refectory, a tabhane, and a caravanserai.

In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, four more monumental royal complexes were founded in Istanbul. The Sultan Ahmed in At Meydani (the Hippodrome) was ordered by Ahmed I (r. 1603-17) and consisted of a mosque, the türbe of the founder, a madrasa, a school, a hospital, and a three-unit kitchen.

Construction work on the Yeni Cami (New Mosque) complex in Eminönü, begun in 1579 by the Queen Mother Safiye Sultan, was discontinued on her son Mehmed III’s death in 1603. Not until another queen mother, Hadice Turhan Sultan, decided to finish the project was the work resumed. Completed in 1664, it included a mosque, a türbe, a school, a dar iltıc, a sabil, and an ell-shaped covered arasta called the Egyptian Bazaar.

The Nuruosmaniye complex opposite the New Bedesten in the Great Bazaar was started by Mahmud I (1730-54) and was completed during the time of Osman III (1754-57). In addition to the mosque, it consisted of a türbe, a library, a sabil, and a building housing both a madrasa and a kitchen, as well as numerous shops built against the outer walls of the precinct on two sides.

The Laleli complex, in the district bearing that name, was the last monumental royal imaret. Founded by Mustafa III (1757-74), it had a building program similar to that of the Nuruosmaniye, with one major difference: in this complex the mosque rose over a large cella which provided it with additional height, allowing it to dominate the cityscape.

Istanbul’s unique skyline was formed by the royal or vizieryal building complexes on high ground or by the seawhore where they could be seen from various directions (fig. 13).

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NOTES

1. The term imaret originally meant the whole building complex, but during the Ottoman classical period it came to refer only to the kitchen, refectory, storage areas, quarters for travelers, and stables for their beasts. Under inflationary pressures in the subsequent centuries, imarets stopped taking in guests, and their function was reduced to catering only to madrasa students and the poor. In modern Turkish usage an imaret is a public kitchen which serves free food to the needy.
5. Baykal, Bursa ve Anadolu, p. 16.
8. This inscription is now over the east door of the Sahadet mosque. It was put there to keep alive the memory of the Orhan Gazi mosque after it collapsed in the eleventh century. For the text of the inscription, see Ayverdi, Osmanlı Mimarisinin İlk Devri, p. 59.
9. Ibid., p. 61.
11. Ibid.
15. Ibid., p. 421.
19. Ibid., p. 43.
20. Ibid.
22. Ibid., p. 1014.
23. Ibid.
25. Ibid., p. 16.
27. An Ottoman cubit is 75.8 centimeters.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., p. 20.
32. Ibid., p. 24.
33. Ibid., p. 44.
35. Ibid.
40. Ibid., pp. 89–93.
41. Ibid., p. 97.
42. Ibid., p. 89.
43. For this mosque, built on the foundations of a late Roman building with a cruciform plan; see Kuran, Mosque in Early Ottoman Architecture, pp. 105–9.
44. Ayverdi, Osmanlı Mimarının İlk Devri, p. 495.
45. According to Tursun Bey, upon seeing the ruined Great Palace, Mehmed II uttered the following couplet in Persian: "The spider is curtain bearer in the Palace of Chosroes // The owl sounds the relief in the Castle of Afrasiyab" (English trans., Bernard Lewis, in Istanbul and the Civilization of the Ottoman Empire [Norman, Okla., 1963], p. 8).
47. Eskiya Çelebi Seyahatnamesi, 1: 79–80.
48. Ibid.
49. Ibid.
51. Ibid., pp. 273–74.
54. Ibid., pt. 3, p. 104.
55. See "Das Goldene Thor in Konstantinopel," in Archäologisches Institut des Deutschen Reiches, Jahrbdch (Berlin, 1894).
57. Halil Edhem, Yedi kale Hisarı (İstanbul, 1932), p. 25.
58. Ibid., p. 29.
59. Ibid., p. 20.
63. Ibid.
64. In the waqfiyya of Mehmed the Conqueror both bedestans are mentioned. The New Bedestan must therefore have been completed before 1472–73, the year the waqfiyya was registered.
68. On this subject, see F.W. Hashuck, Christianity and Islam under the Sultans (New York, 1973), p. 714.
69. For a detailed account of the Saray-ı Cedid and the Palace School, two excellent sources are Gülru Necipoğlu, Architecture, Ceremonial, and Power: The Topkapi Palace in the 15th and 16th Centuries (Cambridge Mass.: MIT, 1991); and Barnette Miller, The Palace School of Muhammad the Conqueror (Cambridge, Mass., 1941).