The typical Ottoman house has specific characteristics that give it its peculiar place in the universal history of house types. Its origins and its relationship to the house types of the neighboring areas make a fascinating case study for the understanding both of the cultural phenomena of the Ottoman universe and of the processes involved in making architecture in general, Ottoman or not.

Intriguing questions arise that we cannot yet answer convincingly. Was western Ottoman urban culture a homogeneous continuum, or was it articulated in subcultures? If the latter, which of these pertained to the culture of the "core area"? How much of architectural history's distinction between "cultured" architecture and "vernacular" architecture is valid? Finally, almost a century after the breakup of the Ottoman Empire into nation states, followed by some seventy years of classification and description of house types by national standards and boundaries unknown to the Ottomans, are we using the correct instruments and best methods to comprehend the products of that civilization?

In the first half of the twentieth century, the various ethnic and linguistic groups that the Ottoman Empire had comprised made a great effort to generate cohesion and unity in the society and culture that existed within the artifact of the various national-state boundaries. This effort undoubtedly produced a cultural awareness that would have been impossible to stimulate otherwise. While it is certainly useful to speak of the "houses of Turkey" (even though the matrix of the eighteenth-century Urfa house was distant in conception and style from that of Bursa or Edirne) or of the "houses of Greece" (although the typical Mykonos house represents quite a different urban culture from a house in Castoria), the compilations of heterogeneous objects categorized under a single national heading that ensued and the consequent recourse to the myths of climatic and/or ethnic differentiation to justify the too obvious heterogeneity of the objects was just as objectionable. This application of the wrong perspective to the right objects might explain the paradox of why so much description and documentation on the Ottoman town and house have yielded so little in the way of serious linguistic and typological analysis of their basic architectural character and so little understanding of the culture that produced them.

THE DISTINCTIVE CHARACTER OF THE OTTOMAN HOUSE

The vast territorial expanse of the empire included many house types within it. The typical Turkish-Ottoman house with its sharply defined characteristics not found in other cultures prevailed only in a limited core area of the empire, and though it has often been associated by scholars with Turkish ethnic elements, it included a large number of Slavic, Macedonian, Armenian, and Greek communities and craftsmen. Whether the Turkish-Ottoman house existed as a distinct type before the seventeenth century and imposed itself on the non-Turkish Balkan communities when they began to prosper, or whether the Ottoman house was the syncretic product of a multiethnic society from the seventeenth century onwards with the imperial court acting as a powerful catalyst is an open question.

Whatever the role of the individual ethnic components, it is undeniable that synthesis and typological consolidation came after the seventeenth century when, in apparent contrast to the loss of political and military strength by the Ottoman state, middle- and upper-class townspeople gained a larger role in the urban economy and life. It is also undeniable that, seen through the history of urban images and house building, synthesis was kept alive for two centuries, in some areas surprisingly even after a decade or two.
of "de-Ottomanization." The second half of the nineteenth century brought a gradual evolution in the house type, but it took some forty to fifty years for it to lose all its original characteristics. It would not be wrong to say that the Ottoman house as we know it had a rapid gestation but only a short life in which it maintained its specific character (a century and a half is certainly a brief period of survival for one of the main house types of world architecture) followed by a long and vigorous old age (half a century was a long time to survive in the face of modernization).

The main elements that distinguished the Ottoman core-area house in its century and a half and which somehow only in part lasted into its final period have been widely discussed in a very rich if fragmentary bibliography (see Appendix). Each of them can be found in one or more of the house types of neighboring cultural areas but their combination and their impact on townscape and urban culture are unique to the core. These characteristics are:

Fig. 1. Residential urban tissue in Sarajevo, 1880.

Fig. 2. Residential urban tissue in Safranbolu, around 1960.
Fig. 3. Residential urban tissue in Erzurum. (From Akin Günkut, "Laterendeckenhäuser in Ostanatolien," *Architectura* 19 [1989].)
Plan and sitting. A characteristic of Ottoman town morphology was that the urban tissue was composed of not very large garden/courtyard-plus-house units originally of low density (figs. 1-2).\(^3\) The plan was generated within the plot but encroached on the street, thus conditioning its architecture. The peculiarity of the Ottoman linkage of street patterns to building type consisted in its development on an axis perpendicular to the street, articulating the volumes in a free pattern from the street inwards. Because of the preference for open patterns, low density, the constant quest for a view and for good sun orientation, and the position of the house right on the street front, Ottoman urban morphology was ideally the result of strings of garden lots set, if possible, along the isometric curves of the site, in contrast to the West European street-to-house relationship of continuous façade elaboration and to Asiatic and Mediterranean models that tend to be more introverted (figs. 3-4) and to fill up the city block, carving out rooms within its given margins. In western Ottoman towns as well as Slavic, and to a certain extent Magyar, traditional settlements, patterns are open and allow the house to be composed as an agglutination of preconceived and geometrically regular rooms (fig. 5). All this implies an extensive exploitation of land as opposed to the intensive use of space in the Mediterranean *hortus clausus* in which fields and urban plots are first enclosed and then built or cultivated from the margin inwards, filling up as much space as possible. In the Ottoman house only the ground floor adapted to the site, invariably edging up to the street front, even when it was irregular. Such a procedure is rare in urban history; one exception is the Genoese villa settlement in the Chios-Kampos district, a few hours sail from Izmir — of whose house model more will be said — where settlement patterns (fig. 6) are similar to the Ottoman ones, though the house type differs. The individual layout and façade solutions of the Ottoman house were the outcome of that peculiar mode of referring house to town. Façades could be imaginatively playful or austere, but conveyed no feeling of bourgeois self-representation.

The relationship of house type to urban structure and urban culture (an unstable mix of behavior patterns, taste, fatalistic or grateful adaptation, or passive acceptance of physical form and pressure, and of historical asset, of determined rejection or enthusiastic adoption of alien uses and forms) is obviously very important in Ottoman towns no less than in other cultures. The emergence of architectural forms is a very long and slow process of sedimentation, through change in the elements of town structure, of plan, and of architectural form. And yet, we can hardly apply the old functionalist thesis that house form is a reflection of functional and social factors to the better knit and more organic Western European town where type and morphology have adapted one to the other in the long growth of bourgeois culture from the late Middle Ages to the nineteenth century. It is even less true in the case of Ottoman town formation: the looser relationship of house type to urban fabric, open patterns and the separation (ethnic and functional) of each town part diminish the interdependence of typological and morphological elements so that house forms appear to have a life of their own related to, but distinct from, the town’s social life.\(^5\)

Room conception. Domestic life in an Ottoman town to some extent resembled that in ancient Greece, but the use of space was more complex and functionally more articulate. A garden courtyard (more garden than courtyard) replaced the formal court of classical antiquity as the center of family life and contained more functional elements — stables, kitchen, bath, washrooms, etc. — than the ancient Greek court did. Both organization and volume composition resembled the Far Eastern pavilion systems, though the house proper was more compact than comparable Chinese
or Japanese examples. The upper floor was an aggregate of square or rectangular rooms (oda), unmarked by functional specialization; particular functional spaces (water closets, baths, kitchens) were relegated to the ground floor or toouthbuildings in the garden. Rooms were constituted by strongly standardized characteristic elements such as wide single- or double-layer fenestration, niches and walled cupboards, a small conical fireplace, symmetrical ceiling decoration with central focal point, and perimeter seating (mimber).

**Timber structure, roofing, and foundations.** Light wooden-frame construction with brick or earth infill or (later) wood cladding prevailed in most towns. Any sense of permanency, both of tenure and materials, was rare, and perhaps not even conceivable in the institutional and psychological context of Ottoman society. The house had articulated four-slope roofing, usually not sharply pitched, adapted to room and plan composition (the large and steeply sloping roofs embracing whole buildings that can be seen in sixteenth-century drawings of Istanbul had by the eighteenth century disappeared from the urban scene). A distinctive Turkish trait in that urban culture was an abhorrence of structures dug deeply into the ground. Houses rarely had cellars. Foundations were even shallower than those relatively light structures would justify. The houses seemed to be, and to a certain extent effectively were, set on the ground. The aesthetic and psychological implications of this will be discussed further on.

Certainly, these characteristics were not as clear-cut or as schematically precise in all specimens and in all periods as they appear in this short exposition, but in their century and a half of life they did dominate the Ottoman scene and distinguish it from that of neighboring urban systems.

**HOUSE TYPES IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE AND NEIGHBORING REGIONS**

Even a superficial comparison of the Ottoman type with the many other house types coexisting within the boundaries of the empire will show that, while the single elements I have so far described might be shared, on the whole the Ottoman type proper had little in common with the overall character of these other buildings. The Central Anatolian rural house built of crude bricks and usually single-storied (fig. 7) can be traced back to pre-Hellenic cultures and contrasts sharply with the Ottoman type. Only in the hayal gallery variant do we find a certain resemblance in
Fig. 7. Central Anatolian houses and urban tissue untouched by Ottomanization in Nigde.

plan. But then the *ülken* gallery in the Macedonian house and the wood-column porticos of Dagestan and Central Asia are there to remind us that this was a very ancient and widespread model (fig. 8).

The Central Asiatic Turkic and Caucasian types are mainly built in masonry, single-storied, and centered on a private court, sometimes with an iwan, sometimes with a dome-covered central room. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, they formed continuous and rather introverted urban tissues. On the other hand, however, two-story and open-gallery variants existed in the Dagestan and Afghan areas and sometimes, exceptionally, in the Armenian and Georgian Caucasus (figs. 9-10). The northern Armenian house — all one with the Erzurum *tandır* type (fig. 11) — acts, insofar as it presents both situations, as a hinge between the region of closed, continuous tissues and that of single, freestanding types. Here, as in the Ottoman house, rooms are bare (aside from niches and wall cupboards for mattresses) and denote a common house culture. The Ottoman symmetrical room with central ceiling decoration would seem to have had its origin at least in part in this type, despite its false cupola of stepped logs and its central lighting.7

In the rural and urban types north of this same area and north of the Silk Road (Caucasus, Dagestan, Luristan), one finds models (such as the Caucasian *oda sahilli* consisting of one or more rooms with a wooden gallery cantilevered or supported on a beam and post poised over a badly lit masonry basement containing entrance, stable, and storerooms (fig. 9 a.b.c). The two-story differentiation of the house, individual sitting in a garden or on the plot edge and sitting along isometric strings, common orientation toward a view or the sun, and the occasional use of wooden frames are elements in common with the Ottoman model, if we examine them analytically and ignore differences of roofing, style, and general impression.8

The Cappadocian, southern Armenian, and south-central Anatolian urban houses are all built in fine stone masonry, one or two stories high, sometimes centered on an inner court but with elaborate street façades (figs. 11-12). They are directly affiliated to the Arab — especially to the western Syrian — court house but have no elaborate open-air space as does the Cairene *qa'a* or the rich Baghdad inner court (figs. 13-14). Nor do we find any rationally articulated house schemes as in the Cairene *hawsh and râb* (fig. 15). The south-central Anatolian model which has prevailed in such Turkish towns as Kayseri (fig.16), Urfa, and Diyarbekir (fig. 17) and influenced classical Ottoman monumental architecture much more deeply than the Ottoman house we are discussing, is part of the eastern Mediterranean (Arab, Armenian, and late-classical) post-Roman architectural culture.9 The most obvious differences between them and the Ottoman type house are in building materials, terrace roofs, stylistic structure: their proportions are more "classi-
Fig. 9. A selection of two-floor types and tissues in the Caucasus area: a, b in Daghestan, c, d in Georgia, e in Armenia. (Redrawn by Luigi Spinelli from Khan-Magomedov, Khalpakchian, Lang)
Fig. 10. Caucasian type housing from an early-nineteenth-century view of Tbilisi.

Fig. 11. Tandır type room in Erzurum. (From Akin Günkut, *Laterendeckenhäuser* [1989])

Fig. 12. House in Cappadocia near Nevşehir.

Fig. 13. Plan of a house in Damascus. (From Maury, *L'Habitat traditionnel dans les pays musulmans* [Cairo, 1988-91])
Fig. 14. Section of an elaborate inner court of a Baghdad house. (From Oscar Reuther, Das Wohnhaus in Bagdad und anderen Stadten des Irak [Berlin, 1910])

Fig. 15. Rab' and hawsh housing in Cairo. (From J. Ch. Depaule et al., Actualité de l'habitat ancien au Caire: le rab Qizlar [Paris, 1990])

Fig. 16. House in Kayseri. (Redrawn from Vacit Imamoğlu, Geleneksel Kayseri evi [Ankara, 1992])
cal” and the feeling for walls and masonry has none of the ephemeral quality of the core-area houses.10

Where we do find an analogy, as in the qisma or shah-nishin bow window or in the alignment of the house along the street, it may be attributable to a transfer of earlier primary concepts from regional or Roman architecture through common Byzantine sources. The Ottoman court milieu always admired this architecture and adapted more than one of its elements and themes for the monumental and palatine architecture of the classical period (Sinan even came from the Kayseri district, the nearest of these peripheral areas). Nevertheless this model did not seem to attract patrons, rich or middle class, of house building, though one of the many fermanis calling for more fireproof domestic architecture in Istanbul mentions the exemplary houses in Urfa, Aleppo, and Diyarbekir.11

The Greek Mediterranean house can be found from the southern borders of Thessaly through the Peloponnese to the Aegean islands, with a few specimens on the southwestern Anatolian shore.12 Here, too, as in the Cappadocian–western Syrian type, but in far less rich forms, one finds elements indicating considerable continuity with the Mediterranean concept of hortus clausus which had prevailed in both town and country in classical antiquity. This type is built mainly in heavy masonry, with small windows and terrace roofs (fig. 18). It is sometimes court-centered and almost always built in continuous urban textures with few free-standing houses (fig. 19). Rooms are not, as in the Ottoman type, an agglutination of independent geometric forms, but space cut out of a given enclosure. Resemblance consists in the two-story arrange-
Fig. 19. Urban textures with few free-standing houses in Mediterranean islands. (From *Anthologia Hellenikēs Architektonikē* [Athens, 1981])

Fig. 20. Houses with tiled roofing and wooden balconies in central continental Greece. (From *Anthologia Hellenikēs Architektonikē* [Athens, 1981])

Fig. 21. The Mistra type house. (From Orlandos, reported in *Anthologia Hellenikēs Architektonikē* [Athens, 1981])

Fig. 22 a-b. Facade and plans of a house in the Chios Kampos. (From Fanny Aneroussi and Leonidas Mylonades, *The Kampos of Chios in Its Heyday: Houses and Surroundings* [Nea Smyrni, 1992])
The compact tower-like, two-or-more-story stone masonry, fireplace-centered fogo houses of the Adriatic-influenced regions (inland Dalmatia, the Epirote-Albanian area, part of Herzegovina and northern Macedonia) and their kula variant were gradually superseded by the Ottoman house concepts and timber-and-infill techniques (fig. 23).\textsuperscript{14} They had, however, left traces in fine stone workmanship, rounded arches, and almost Italianate proportions in a very wide area. In the Mostar region and in some Albanian districts those types survived. The region where they flourished was one of the two areas with a very ancient and vital stone-cutting tradition (the other was Cappadocia and southeastern Anatolia), whose master builders played an important role in the transmission of techniques and concepts from and to Ottoman building sites and court taste.

In rural Bosnia a compact and steep-roofed house, sometimes in timber, dominated and was also adopted for use in the smaller towns,\textsuperscript{15} where it was constructed mainly in brick and plaster with a very slightly cantilevered upper floor (figs. 24-25). Curiously it also turns up in various sixteenth- and seventeenth-century engravings of Istanbul, which might be explained either by an engraver's erroneous interpretation or by the activities of western Balkan immigrant owners and builders (fig. 26).
Although the single-story houses of Slavic and Slavic-Hungarian rural settlements on the Danube and in the Rodope region (usually long rectangles with shallow porticos or cross-divided four-room square log houses in some Bulgarian mountain districts) are quite distinct from the Ottoman house, the open patterns of their arrangement in the urban setting show the same low density and close link to the street; the houses edge up to the street with their narrower sides and are separated by gardens (figs. 5, 27). We find here the same distinctive contrast with the closely knit texture of the Mediterranean and Central Asiatic regions. Some single-story variants of the Edirne type house show some affinity to those types insofar as they introduce into the Ottoman town the predilection for ground-floor living of the Slavic-Hungarian area.

The area dominated by the Ottoman house showed considerable continuity with these adjacent regions both in population and institutions and in the exchange of skills and manpower. It would therefore not have been unreasonable to expect strong technological and typological influences, but with some mar-

Fig. 25. View of Jajce around 1920. (From Kurt Hielser. *Jugoslawien — Landschaft, Baukunst, Volksleben* [Berlin, 1926])

Fig. 26. Extract from Melchior Lorich's 1559 view of Istanbul. Steep-roofed houses very similar to the Bosnian model on the left upper half of the figure.
original exceptions this was rarely the case as far as house forms were concerned.

THE CORE AREA AND THE AREA OF THE OTTOMAN HOUSE TYPE

Ottoman urban culture as we know it in Istanbul, Bursa, and in the more important Balkan and western Anatolian towns was formed over a wide area of the Ottoman Empire — but not in all of it — in the surprisingly brief period from the end of the sixteenth century to the beginning of the eighteenth, expressing not only its ruling classes but also vast segments of its composite society. The culture of town society — much indebted to court culture and yet so distinct from it — and hence its housing survived and even expanded its influence up to the first decades of the twentieth

Fig. 27. Hungarian rural house. (From Balassa-Ortutay, *Magyar utonja* [Budapest, 1979])

Fig. 28. The core area of the Ottoman Empire where the Ottoman type house and town prevail. Towns with continuous evlet and toncah functions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are indicated.
century, long after the court’s elite production had been changed or abandoned.\textsuperscript{16}

The urban civilization of the Ottoman Empire was not homogeneous. Each of its subregions contained various, and sometimes antagonistic, cultural traditions. The distinction between inner or core areas in which the Ottoman house type prevailed and external or border areas where interpenetrating influences were at work is very important for research on the origin of the type. Formed in a region of not very large towns and rejected in the Anatolian and Arab east where towns were larger and architectural traditions stronger, the Ottoman house type nevertheless influenced territories immediately neighboring its core area. The very first step in that influence acted on the taste and feeling of the owners: paraphernalia that did not substantially modify the original local type, such as tile roofing, gables, \textit{çikma} bow windows, and some minor changes in window proportions were gradually absorbed.\textsuperscript{17} The houses of Rhodes and in the Coptic quarter of Cairo had taken on an Ottoman look by the middle of the nineteenth century, but this was due to the \textit{çikma} additions in an ornate and elaborate version similar to those of the Greek quarters of Izmir; the plan, the masonry work, and the basic house type remained firmly those of the Mediterranean Greek and Arab regions. The districts where the Ottoman model produced only superficial or stylistic changes and pre- or non-Ottoman models were otherwise retained allow us to come to a reasonably reliable definition of the domain of the Ottoman house.

The towns of Konya, Kayseri, and Erzurum contained transitional types of the central Anatolian model and thus define the outer eastern limits of the typological area (fig. 28). In the Caucasus the situation was much more complex: periods of Turkish and Russian (and before that, Persian) domination had radically altered the aspect of these towns. Tile roofing, gables, and \textit{çikma} provided the Turkish aspect; elaborate wood verandahs and window ornaments Russified them; but plans and sections revealed their purely local origins. On the Black Sea coast, however, the Ottoman type dominated, thus defining the northeastern line of demarcation. In the Balkans, Bosnia — with Mostar and Foča as external focal points — and part of Albania and the Epirus as well contained transitional types and defined the western border (figs. 23, 24, 29); in the south. Thessaly is the limit, though even some Peloponnesian and island towns further south had occasional Ottoman-looking \textit{kona}ds built by dignitaries. To the north, the Danube can be considered the limit, except for its delta where Ottoman influence advanced further north along the Black Sea coast.\textsuperscript{18}

The boundaries to the region where the typical Ottoman house type dominated coincides roughly with the area of typical west Anatolian and Balkan towns with their common characteristics of low density, open plan, and common differences from Mediterranean and eastern Asia Minor towns.\textsuperscript{19} The core area so defined, though including a web of small and medium towns, did not partake of the ancient and deeply rooted Mediterranean (Greek and Arab) or Persian and Central Asian urban traditions. Long before the Ottoman conquest, Slavic and Bulgarian invasions had disrupted and modified the towns and the settlement patterns of that area which had been Byzantine. This might explain why the form of the Byzantine house, if it did have a typical form, is still a controversial subject and why so little can be traced back from the Ottoman model to the Byzantine house. The Greek houses of Fener (fig. 30) conformed, not to a non-Ottoman model (as De Beylié had imagined when he classified them as Byzantine), but to an Ottoman model of a different time, namely non-religious Ottoman architecture (khan, libraries, \textit{sibyan} mekteb\i\ schools, etc.) of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Certainly some details of Ottoman public and domestic
architecture such as stone and wooden cantilever beams supporting small arches or protruding walls, wooden galleries cantilevered from masonry walls, characteristic proportions and rhythmic schemes of window distribution in façade composition derive from Byzantine and even from Roman architecture, eastern and western, mediated both by Syriac and by Genoese and other Latin influences. But then these details frequently recur in Ottoman monumental and functional architecture from the late Sinan onwards and in the richer houses east of the Konya-Erzurum line especially in the Kayseri region, though they are rare in typical western Ottoman domestic architecture. Whenever they do appear in the domestic architecture of the core area, as is the case with window composition, the lesson seems to come through Sinan and his has mimar successors rather than directly from ancient sources. On the other hand, though we know that wooden structures existed in Constantinople as far back as the thirteenth century and that prior to the Ottoman conquest the decaying city had been full of badly built wooden shacks, we have no way of knowing if the building techniques and formal conception were precise and articulate enough to have been taken over by the new inhabitants. Where the peculiar forms of the monumental and functional modes of Ottoman architecture can be referred to earlier models, the modes of domestic-type timber technique are very difficult to link to past or local building practices. That is why the sudden appearance and marked specificity of the type and its capacity to impose itself as a model of prestige over a very extensive area strike us as an intriguing mystery of architectural history.

Within the core area, unity rather than variety pre-
vailed in urban texture and in the visible aspects of daily life. An early-nineteenth-century traveler, coming from Western Europe or from the eastern provinces of the empire, would find that Ayfı and Ambelakia or Ohrid and even some Serbian towns looked alike and that the rhythm and way of life of their towns were similar, despite evident differences in the organization of municipal institutions and religious ideology. Comparing Istanbul and Cairo or Damascus he would infer much that was common in institutions and religion but much less in the architectural background of everyday life and in the response to the environment. Actually, Urfa and Bursa, Mykonos and Kastoria are part, not so much of different climate areas, as of different cultural regions. Nor are religious categories pertinent to our subject. The Harabat Baba Tekke of Tetovo has much more in common with the Christian "bourgeois" houses of nineteenth-century Plovdiv than with the marabouts of Morocco or most Asiatic zawiyas.

In other words, political or religious boundaries do not coincide with those particular aspects of cultural geography evidenced by housing, urban texture, and town life. The millet system which separated religious groups (and as a consequence sometimes ethnic groups) was permeable to some aspects of social and cultural life and did not inhibit overall unity within each cultural region or town. The names of patrons in Kayseri, Plovdiv, and many other towns prove that in each town Turks, Armenians, Slavs, and Greeks commissioned similar houses. Turks, Greeks, and Armenians lived in much the same Ottoman house types in Plovdiv, Ohrid, Bursa, or Kütahya and the same Turks, Greeks, and Armenians lived in much the same non-Ottoman house types in Kayseri or Erzurum. There were very few exceptions to that general rule of uniformity within the same town. One exception was the upper-class Greek quarter of Fener in Istanbul whose houses were, as we have seen, different from those of the current housing of the city, but even they partook of other non-residential types in the Ottoman town — hans, living quarters in large complexes, and so on.

THE PROCESS OF UNIFICATION

How did the cultural unity of the core area come about? Certainly its long pre-Ottoman history, the early Ottoman conquest (for most of the area as early as the fourteenth century), the enduring unification (at least up to the last decades of the nineteenth century) and its climate and geography (temperate and reasonably wooded except for some hinterland plateaus) were decisive.

It was in the nature of Ottoman culture to meld into homogeneity only some aspects and some strata of its manifestations. All Turkic-ruled states had excelled in the art of cultural syncretism, that is, in the capacity and the will to exploit and combine the manpower, attitudes, and skills of the various tribes and ethnic groups they conquered. The Ottomans had developed the cultural outlook and the political techniques needed for enlisting local elements and non-Turkic groups in their imperial (and therefore tending to universal) style of life. They subjugated the skills and attitudes of their artisan subjects to a common design, both political and aesthetic, in which they had learned to incorporate most of the contents and ideas, even the most heterogeneous, that came from all strata of urban society. In most manifestations of Ottoman art and architecture there is a striking variety of sources simultaneously referred to. This variety is openly acclaimed in divan literature and is quite evident in the coexistence of Persian, Central Asian, and Far Eastern manners in the art of the miniature. In architecture it may mistakenly be taken for eclecticism, which it rarely was, and then only in untalented hands. More appropriately we can interpret it as deliberate appropriation (sometimes too greedy and unmanageable) of all that might come in handy for the expression of a basically unitarian artistry or ideology.

It would be vain to define the basic artistry and ideology of Ottoman culture — or any culture, for that matter — by providing a list of characteristics. Nevertheless, we can say that the ruling ideology in the eighteenth century — the century in which the Ottoman town assumed the shape and adopted the organization we have come to know best — was very far from the court ideology of the sixteenth century, committed to the expression of state power and unity and to the exclusive magnificence (and munificence) of the ruling pashas. The eighteenth century gave full expression to the mercantile expansion that allowed the exchange and consumption of all kinds of goods for all social classes. Its ideology centered on the enforcement of a very specific way of life, tendentially hedonistic for the rich and even the moderately poor. Investment came in the form of khans and small vakif buildings and fountains well distributed in all the main quarters. The sultan's most important commitment was to cover the Grand Bazaar of Istanbul and
construct the Nur-u-Osmaniye mosque connected to the bazaar renewal project.

Architecture and town building were colored by a very peculiar general attitude toward nature and towns. Housing and leisure pavilions were conditioned by the general predilection for light (not even the poorest house would have small windows) and for transparency (easy to obtain with timber structures). There was a general acceptance of the seemingly informal disposition (disorderly to pre-Romantic Western eyes) of the buildings in their natural or urban context. Despite the temptation offered by Western Baroque and Neoclassical examples, full symmetry and axial composition were never applied to large-scale urban and natural composition, even though Ottoman master builders of the period had the idiosyncratic ability to seek axial symmetry in single rooms and small compositions.

Mercantilism is a fact of economy, the love of nature can have a psychological or functional basis, religion derives from moral and philosophical grounds, but the full expression and impact of all these depend on cultural attitudes which seemed to unite all urban classes and all ethnic and religious groups in that brilliant century. The Ottoman way of life had a very powerful attraction for many ethnic and class groups, not only for the political elite and not only for its Turkish and Muslim components. Housing as well as the çarsı was one of its clearest expressions, so much so that we might say that the Ottoman house was an epiphany of Ottoman civilization, in some situations triumphant even when Ottoman political influence was declining.

Revolts and reactions came as a response to excesses — whether of hedonism or of overwhelming Westernization — but never lasted. At the beginning of the century the sultan’s pleasure ground in Sa’dabad had to be burned down because of popular reaction, it is true, but after a few decades it was rebuilt and many pleasure gardens and public grounds (çayır, that is, meadows) were crowded with common people. The ulema more than once disapproved of even the most timid Westernization, and yet many mosques at the extreme margins of the area, in modest Bosnian or Anatolian towns, were being decorated with floral motifs and even (but that came later) with land- and townscape. Nationalism came towards the end of the century, in part, as a reaction to Ottoman universality and syncretism. But even then political anti-Ottoman feelings would coexist comfortably with the acceptance (apparent or effective) of the Ottoman way of life. It took the full assertion of the national states, of foreign-born sovereigns, and a generation of graduates of the new academies of art and polytechnic schools, for Neoclassicism (in Greece) and Middle European architecture and town planning (in the Slavic countries) to supplant totally Ottoman-originated domestic architecture and town formation.

Variety in the sources and instruments and synthesis in working out of form characterize, of course, all creative processes, but the more coherent manifestations of Ottoman culture are impressive in the extreme heterogeneity of the elements they incorporate. In contrast to the uniquely specific character they express. Single elements were adopted without modification (many a Byzantine or Western or Persian element is incorporated tale quale in architecture) and yet the overall feeling and expression are wholly Ottoman.

Syncretism as a basic cultural attitude had as a corollary a series of techniques and procedures very similar to those of the montage technique in modern movie making. This is particularly true in domestic architecture. Juxtaposition (or agglutination, to borrow a term applied to the structure of the Turkish language) was a widely used procedure, both in monumental and domestic architecture. Often impeccable cut-stone masonry was combined with elements borrowed from timber architecture. The mode of domestic architecture could be aggregated as distinct elements to the mode of monumental architecture: one good example is the sultan’s lodge (hünkâr kârı) in the seventeenth-century mosques of Yeni Valide and Sultan Ahmet in Istanbul. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, window composition from the West or a curved Baroque canopy would be inserted freely and without excessive manipulation into domestic façade compositions. Such combinatory and mechanical collage or montage techniques facilitated the emergence of a far more complex syncretism at a higher level of meaning and style. Through the accumulation of apparently contrasting elements from various sources and regions, the Ottoman house deployed its own specific character. Plausibly, shah-nishin or şkme bow windows came from the gradual accentuation of Roman and Genoese corbelling for upper floors. The basic principles of urban tissue composition and house-to-garden linkage and perhaps wood-frame construction technology came from the rural settlements of northern Anatolia and the east and west.
coasts of the Black Sea. Pitched and tiled roofs from Byzantine architecture, double tiers of windows from Persia along with open taht or çurdak köşk (the last perhaps derived from the Venetian alitana), centered symmetrical room space and ceiling decoration fitted in well with the taste both of ancient Thracian and nomad Turks. Room organization might have originated in the Caucasus or the Central Asia cities.

The list of elements whose origins can plausibly be conjectured but impossible to verify is very long. The point is that all these elements were well known to the diverse groups dwelling or working in western Ottoman towns and that the Ottoman house did not exist as a coherent type before these many ethnic and cultural elements were integrated. We must therefore look for the symbiosis of several elements as well as the mechanical introduction of a few singled-out ones. The ephemeral quality of housing, of lightness as an expression of joie de vivre, inventive imagination in form, and ornamentation of the urban house and its reference in the street scene were novel and totally absent in the regions that had furnished elements to the Ottoman house. These qualities summed up a very specific combination of architectural factors unfamiliar to the domestic life and to the house forms of Mediterranean, Slavic, Central Anatolian, and East Caucasian domestic architecture.

Ottoman syncretism linked distant sources — in the East as well as in the West — apparently in sharp contrast to each other but which had been subject to mutual influence prior to Ottoman penetration. Circumstantial evidence shows that the dwellings of Central Asia and of Persia had been influenced by, and had influenced, Greek and Byzantine typology. This influence most certainly facilitated later interpenetration and smoothed the cultural creases between the Asiatic and the East European and Anatolian origins of the components of Ottoman society. The novelty of the synthesis (which meant that the Ottomans had not brought a preexisting, and therefore imposed, culture) and the familiar patterns of deeply rooted reciprocal influences of Christian and Islamic-Asiatic segments of society gave to all, even when in conflict, the sense of belonging to a common culture in daily life.

It is understandable, then, that in the second half of the nineteenth century when the empire was literally falling apart into nation states and autonomous regions, while more and more new elements were being introduced (as Western models grew in number and attraction) and more and more social and professional groups were becoming active, the model was not immediately rejected. The techniques of aggregation or agglutination were needed to absorb the new influences and were vital to the continuing success and richness in content of Ottoman domestic architecture.

Did the unification of type derive principally from technology? The technological question was fundamental for the late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century positivist approach, which tended to examine all aspects of the material culture as a compact and interdependent block. From Vidal de la Blache to Strzygowski, that approach defined a region of Fachwerk or of the “micro-Asiatic and Persian house,” posing a real problem of cultural geography, of areas, that is, in which certain techniques and conceptual attitudes tended to persist for a long time and in which the transmission of forms and ideas contaminated neighboring regions. Some aspects of that approach were simplistic and were based on an extension and typological configuration of cultural areas impossible to accept. The image of cultural and geographic areas the approach carried was static, as if a given area had been committed to a given type for millennia. Rarely was it recognized that change and interpenetrating influences were, in Ottoman cultural formation, as important as we typical and persisting basic local models.

The use of wood in itself is not a significant indication of homogeneity. Plank and log construction, widely practiced in the woodlands of the Stara Planina and Taurus regions, in mountainous Central Asia (fig. 31), and on the southern Caspian shores (fig. 32) had technological and cultural connotations very distant from those in the Ottoman context dominated by a more refined ideological outlook and by far more elaborate techniques. The peculiarity of Ottoman wood technology was that, though not very complex, it did require skill and organization. Its techniques were not the simple building procedures familiar in the rural regions, which the house owners themselves could apply. Noteworthy were the use of standard sizes in materials and such refinements as the horizontal transposition of vertical struts to decrease static momentum on beams and to reduce the quantity of wood needed (fig. 33). This was the sort of know-how that could be developed in the imperial shipyards which, from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, attracted thousands of carpenters from
various regions (Turks, Black Sea peoples, Macedonians, and Greek islanders from the north Aegean were the best carpenters) accelerating technological synthesis and innovation.

Whatever the origin of timber-building technology, there is no doubt that it responded well to the Ottoman demand for rapid settlement and resettlement. There is also no doubt that some evidently simple or primitive types of log construction or of rough timber and brick and stone infills, surely built by immigrants, which can be found in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century images of the main towns, had disappeared in a later period (except for some peripheral quarters) to be replaced by more sophisticated

Ottoman light-timber construction. Despite frequent disastrous fires, despite harsh climatic conditions in many areas, despite fermans forbidding timber housing, the Ottoman town form and wood-construction techniques developed together and completed each other. Deep psychological factors of settlement and home and a broad technological and ideological exchange among ethnic groups had rooted the technique in urban culture.

It is reasonable to assume that common techniques and common settlement patterns would not have met great resistance in the core area, whose cohesion dated from the Hellenistic epoch and was due to the cultural imprint given by the ruling and merchant classes, to its commercial routes, to the quasi-common ethnic origin of Pontus and the west Caucasus, of Thrace and Macedonia, which all had impressive forest land and good carpenters and were separated from the Mediterranean Sea and its cultural and technological models by chains of mountains or by an inland sea. All had had their common center of gravity in Byzantium and had been overrun by three main ethnic immigrations (Turks, Slavs, Bulgarians) who had the Eurasian taste for open settlement patterns. In such a context, the ethnic or local origin of each element
nacular architecture to cultured architecture is always intricate. Folk architecture does not necessarily pre-
cede court architecture nor is the opposite true. The
erratic role of archetypes and the apparently hapha-
azard loan of single elements from one culture to an-
other, in contrast to those stylistic or ideological in-
fuences that tend to run in only one direction, and
the role that some dignitaries and Christian artisans
and professionals had assumed as intermediaries of
Western cultural models and technology, are prepon-
derant and complicate the course of typological and
artistic events.

The power structure of the court and the social
extraction of the upper classes — even if we reject
the myth of an Ottoman society without class or caste
— were also such that many elements of the taste and
ways of the lower classes filtered into court life. In other
words, influences worked both ways. In the less cere-
monial parts of the Topkapi Palace, especially after
the seventeenth century, the way of sitting in and of
furnishing rooms was not much different from that
of a middle-class urban family, and the forms and
building techniques were no more than a refined
version of current buildings and forms. House building
may have borrowed elements of style (ornament, propor-
tions, taste for certain arrangements) or of build-
ing techniques from pre-seventeenth century palatial
kiosks, but the formation of the two types of build-
ings was distant, and it could not have been other-
wise. The affiliation, both of typology and of language,
of later typical Ottoman housing to the ḥānḫār kāsr
was evident, even though the latter used stone instead
of wood. Whether housing forms derived from the kāsr
or influences worked the other way is difficult to prove.
There are absolutely no other examples of such a
peculiar combination of jutting upper floors, partic-
ular rhythm of fenestration, changes in composition
groups, and wide overhanging roof in the preceding
court architecture. As parthenogenesis does not ex-
ist in architecture and existing elements do not com-
bine casually to create a new language or new types,
we must look for the precursors of the ḥānḫār kāsr
more plausibly in the domestic architecture of the rich
in towns rather than in outstanding saray architecture,
which was until then more similar to that of vakıf
monuments. Another trail might lead to seaside yaltı
architecture; but then, were yaltı so common and ty-
pologically so crystallized at the time of both külley?

Whatever the origin of the single types, court ar-
chitecture and domestic architecture can reasonably

of the house is far less decisive than the propensity
of the ethnic or cultural components to accept and
exploit that element, no matter if discovered, redis-
covered, or invented autonomously or with the help
of the other ethnic components.

It is also reasonable to assume that those innova-
tions or rediscoveries did not penetrate other areas
which had well-established urban traditions and pat-
terns and a house and home culture uninterrupted
by mass invasion.

Was the influence of the imperial court decisive in
the formation of the Ottoman type or, on the con-
trary, did the court submit to and accept types extant
in society at large and refine them? There is no easy
answer. The imperial court's architecture and way of
life did have a definite impact on the modes and cus-
toms of urban society. All Istanbul looked to the pal-
ace and all the empire looked to Istanbul for new
fashions and refinements. But the relationship of ver-

Fig. 33. Late-nineteenth-century timber building technology in Istanbul.
be linked only from the mid seventeenth century on, when townspeople were affluent enough to build their houses with care and the great gap between the very rich and powerful ruling class and the middle classes (to use an inaccurate modern term) had diminished. That, of course, is true only up to the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the court openly converted to Western typology. Before and after those hundred and fifty years imperial court influences were in the domain of style (ornament, proportions, taste for certain arrangements) or building techniques, not of typology proper.

The analysis of composition procedures and of proportions also shows that there had been consistent feedback from monumental to domestic architecture, though this occurred on a professional basis, that is, in the work of architects and master builders and not merely in general fashion and taste. A certain clarity of composition and a general reluctance to use asymmetrical forms set in. Certainly, Western, particularly Dalmatian-mediated Italianate influences were at work, but the daily lesson absorbed by the observation of classical Ottoman architecture was even more effective. Assimilation was certainly facilitated by the use of palatine-like façade composition in the façades of less important mosques, with their repeated, regularly rhythmical window openings, and the reduced proportion of intermediate wall members built by the late Sinan and his disciples.

Later, very widely cantilevered eaves, slim timber columns, transparency and lightness, ephemeral qualities, no tendency to exaggerate the interplay of volumes and minor constructive items and, above all, the sparsely used decoration are there to demonstrate that current European, Persian, or Indian influences, if any, were always transposed into a language familiar to the court, townspeople, and builders. Such qualities appear first in the ihalet and kiosk grafted onto the main body of the house, in the very deep overhangs and eaves and, later, in the continuous windows with no infills between the struts. In this last case, the taste for light elements and transparency that had originated in the sanay was combined with the innovation introduced from the West of using an ample amount of glass: denoting, again, a characteristic process of interiorization of external influences by combining native and foreign impulses.

One question — rather disturbing because no logical and easily demonstrated answer to it is possible — is the analogy of some aspects and elements of domestic and palatial or kiosk architecture to Far Eastern, especially Chinese, architecture, particularly in the eighteenth century. One plausible answer lies in the court’s contemporary dealings with the Crimean khans and with Central Asia (perhaps mediated by Persia) and hence, indirectly, with Chinese-influenced zones. Baron de Toth does describe in detail the skill Tatar (and Turkish) carpenters displayed in strut-and-beam construction, but that was in the eighteenth century. It would seem that direct contributions or indirect influences had been submitted, in one way or the other, to an architectural outlook that had much in common with architecture further east. We might conjecture a chain of contacts and exchanges of craftsmen, perhaps limited to court circles and eastern Central Asia, but such conjectures have yet to be confirmed by written sources.

Another question, one that apparently contradicts the preceding one, regards the persistence of Baroque or Rococo influences far into the nineteenth century in domestic architecture. In the Balkans and, exceptionally, in some Anatolian houses, we find curving bow windows and in Plovdiv even double-S-shaped tympana. These forms had appeared a century earlier (and curiously intermingled with the above-mentioned Chinese influences) in the Osman III Kiosk in the Topkapi Palace (fig. 34), perhaps through the mediation of Western or local Christian craftsmen and architects. But then, why did these forms penetrate so slowly in areas, such as the Bulgarian plain (fig. 35), which should have been more open to those influences because of the creed (Christian) and profession (trade) of the local patrons? One tentative answer might be that, up to the last decades of the nineteenth century, all layers of Ottoman society were, or chose to appear to be, conforming to the conservative principle of slow and gradual modernization, leaving to the imperial court the job of experimenting with novelties. This answer does complicate our preceding vision of a stratified and multiethnic Ottoman society, but would explain the unity acquired and maintained up to the very last in each town and region.

The reader will by now have noticed that this paper contains almost no reference to ritual and religious ideology in the making of the Ottoman house type. Could it be defined as an “Islamic” house? While there is no doubt as to the Islamic basis of institutions and of the functional distribution of Ottoman towns, east-
ern and western, no persistent and broadly diffused element of the west Ottoman house can credibly be referred to Islamic precepts. As a matter of fact, up to the nineteenth century, Christian and Muslim patrons and builders felt no apparent ideological discomfort in using the same models for plan distribution, relationship to street, and form. Rarely — and only in certain towns and where very large houses were concerned, or in rural konaks and çiftlik — were the houses of the upper class articulated in separate harem and selamlık quarters. We might add that paradoxically it would be far easier to connect the Hellenistic house type or the pre-nineteenth-century houses of eastern Anatolian Armenians to the Islamic precept of harem than it would the houses of Turkish Bursa and Istanbul. Of course, the majority of the town population that contributed to the emergence of the Ottoman house model were Muslims, but their role had more to do with culture than with creed.

Did the Ottoman house type coincide with any Turkish ethnic element? Close observation suggests that culture rather than ethnicity caused differences in house models in various regions. Nevertheless, the dominant Turkish element was a powerful catalyst of housing culture, much more than the Byzantine had been in more troubled times. The existence of a strong Turkish population therefore helped the diffusion of the model, even if this was not always the case. But the assumption that the origin of the type was exclusively Turkish will not stand up to scrutiny. In a limited way folklore or nomadic-tent culture may have strengthened the taste for some spatial conceptions such as the centered symmetrical room, but they could not have imposed the overall form when the Turkish-Ottoman house was being constituted. The complex processes of mimetism and differentiation it submitted to should neutralize the too facile, too clear-cut analogy between the organization of the Ottoman room and the Turkic nomad tent. The hypothesis should also be rejected in the light of urban interactions and the existence of a similar room organization in a long tradition in certain areas of the Caucasus and of Central Asia before nomad penetration.

More convincing is the reference to the Turkish ethnic element for the specific habitat psychology of Asiatic and Eurasian settlement modes. The “open” form of settlement patterns is one; it pertains more to behavioral (cultural) attitudes than to strictly economic factors such as landed property and costs, though these last did inhibit cultural preferences in the larger towns after the last decades of the nineteenth century.

The lack of functional differentiation in the main rooms and the relegation of cooking to an outbuilding have important consequences for the psychological significance of the house and its symbolism. The Ottoman house has no equivalent to the large kitchen and its grand fireplace which, in the Adriatic area, in central Europe, and in Italy have symbolized the
heart of the house and of family union. In the same way, cellars as the locus of family wealth and security (cellars mean provisions and provision for the future) are unknown, reflecting the Turkish distaste for underground structures and spaces.25

Turkish folk influence is very strong in the architectural language — in its open or free composition, in the lack of exterior symmetry, in transparencies and simplicity of rhythm that is distinctly different from both Byzantine complexity and Arab and Armenian geometrical classicism. Free composition and asymmetrical distribution are most frequently found in small towns and in regions distant from the main cities (fig. 36). On the whole, the urban Turkish middle-class elements, far from simply transposing the tent space into the so-called Turkish oda (multi-functional room), linked the heterogeneous contributions of local groups to the imperial style and expressed itself in different ways in different contexts.

The eighteenth- to mid-nineteenth-century Ottoman house can be referred more sensibly to the house types of Hellenistic Macedonia (for example, to the Olynthus house) than to the nomadic tent, not so much as an integral organism as in some of its elements, such as the position and articulation of volumes within the urban tissue, the distinction from and subordination to monumental architecture, the stone-walled ground floor built and used for utilities, the partial or total wooden structure of main living spaces at the upper level, the semi-open courtyard or garden, the sunlight-oriented galleries. As a matter of fact, until the twentieth century, the Macedonian country house, among all other rural types, stood as the closest in form and structure to the Ottoman urban house.

Did Westernization disrupt the Ottoman house type? The West European house in its Venetian and Danubian variants presents aspects which should be taken into account in the study of the Ottoman type as we know it through most of its eighteenth-to-nineteenth-century examples. Since as far back as the sixteenth century, minor craftsmen mostly from West-influenced areas (Epirus, Herzegovina, Ragusa as an "outer gate," the Danube corridor) had been crowding Ottoman building sites and the production of housing appliances. In the so-called Tulip Period (in Turkish, Lale dönüştü) of the first decades of the eighteenth century, the richer houses acquired a certain degree of axial organization of plan, some attention to perspective sequences, sometimes symmetry between inner spaces and gardens: the descriptions made by travelers of Western aristocratic houses and parks struck some chord in the local imagination in general terms but with no real transmission of style or aesthetic meaning. Although we can hardly be positive about the origin of the central sofa hall and of symmetrical plans which might be Western (Venetian or Central European) as well as Oriental (Persian and Central Asian), it can be held that both in the Ottoman house and in late house types in the western Syrian-Lebanese area, plausibly à la mode Western schemes were the more easily assimilated the stronger their resemblance to conceptually and culturally better ingrained (though previously little used) Eastern models. After all, from the Venetian late-Gothic house type to the Persianate Çinili Köşk, and later to the Palladian villas and late Ottoman kiosks and yalis, similar plan patterns had been used over the centuries.26

The economic development of the non-Muslim communities lent homogeneity to towns previously divided into richer and better equipped Turkish quarters and poor, rural looking, mostly Christian, vuanı (suburbs). After the late eighteenth century, Balkan urban housing emerged from its poverty and looked to the better-off Turkish middle classes for models. It also acquired the practice of distinguishing between living and functional spaces, with separate water closets and even bathrooms or hammams. These innovations
had an Ottoman trademark, but were contemporary to many other novelties of Western origin, such as window glazing and stoves. In the first stage, the novelties were of a technical nature. Change in taste came later in apparently superficial elements such as ornamental motifs and, sometimes, through the reinterpretation of some traditional characteristics such as wide fenestration, which acquired a horizontal continuity somewhat like that found in domestic architecture of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The diffusion of the Ottoman house type was in a certain measure stimulated by Western influences which brought about the standardization of typology through a richer home organization by the middle classes (the use of glass is one example; the better water distribution technology that freed the garden court of its functional incum- 

bencies was another).

All through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries processes of both unification and diversification between social classes and geographic regions were at work. The creation of new forms and the substantial homogeneity of domestic architecture in all of the Western regions of the empire were stimulated by the introduction of Western techniques, first by the court, next by Greek merchants, and finally by Armenian and Slavic patrons and artisans. In almost all these stages, the Muslim upper classes were the first to endorse the novelties. House and home culture became a major catalyst of social and cultural unity through the trade in items both imported from the West and of local production, through the intense activity of master builders almost always based in the provinces but attentive to Istanbul taste. This movement of goods, ideas, and know-how ignored ethnic and religious barriers. Appliances and forms, even if Western in origin, were introduced as Istanbul models. Westernization and unification were always filtered through Istanbul and the court.

We might go so far as to say — as a remarkable Bulgarian scholar claimed for ornamental patterns — that Ottomanization in the provinces went hand in hand with Westernization. Once the type was formed and acquired prestige, its diffusion outside the core area became a matter of taste rather than of cultural or political evolution. In the nineteenth century, even when the Ottoman administration was losing its political hold on some provinces, it penetrated, in the form of the komaks of rich merchants and officials, some of the main towns of eastern Anatolia, of Serbia, and of the Peloponnesus, previously dominated by their specific Mediterranean, Slavic, and Caucasian types.

**TYPOLOGICAL DIFFERENTIATION AND REGIONAL VARIANTS**

Can we really speak of local models of housing within the Ottoman core area? If some regional types are easily identified, in most cases the difference lies in chronology or, better, in the zeitgeist and style dominant in the period in which a given town underwent social and economic development and in which a local bourgeois built significant houses. Otherwise, the factors common to the whole west Ottoman area are far more characteristic than any observable nuances in idiosyncrasies of taste and plan. Some peculiarities of plan or façade, some street-corner solutions regarded as exclusive to a certain region can also be found at very great distances from that region. This is the case of some Plovdiv houses that have a coach portal and portico at the ground level of the house, certainly rare in the Bulgarian area but common in certain Anatolian towns such as Safranbolu, some eight hundred kilometers to the east. What distinguished a prevailing regional house type was the way local craftsmen managed to combine complex and inventive schemes and styles of distant experiences with local taste and needs and convinced local patrons to adopt them.

It would be misleading to assume that all cultural factors would be homogeneous within each area. It was in the nature of Ottoman culture and of its society to knead into homogeneity only some aspects and some strata of its manifestations. Within each cultural area (that is, regions or towns within which urban patterns and house types have similar characteristics) the houses of the rich and the poor, of Muslims and Christians, had more in common with each other than either had with their coreligionists in neighboring areas or towns. In the core area, social differences brought distinctions (though apparently not as marked as in Western Europe) in the size and value of the house but not in the fundamental type. The differences between urban and rural types were far more incisive. The social groups attracted by the Ottoman way of life were almost exclusively urban. With some significant exceptions, the Ottoman town house had little affinity to local rural types even if Ottoman town life, as far as residential organization was concerned, was not wholly dissimilar from country life. In rural Central Anatolia the pre-Hellenic earth-and-straw-brick (kerpi̇c) single-story house dominated; in the Bulgarian plains and mountains simple huts or even wood
(but log not timber) construction had no affinity with town houses. Even in the Bosnian countryside where the steep-roofed two-story house looked familiar to the town dweller, attentive analysis would disclose a wholly different architectural and technical conception. In all these regions, urban domestic architecture was as uniform as it was different from the local rural house. Only in the Macedonian, Thracean, and Marmara areas and partly on the Black Sea coast had there been, at least in the last two and a half centuries, a distinctive affinity (but not identity) between urban and rural house types.

With some simplification, we can distinguish three main models as they had evolved by the last decades of the nineteenth century:

A. The Marmara-Black Sea area model was two to three stories high, with a compact plan, having lost the open galleries of earlier models. Windows were ample and continuous, no longer articulated in two layers. Horizontal wood board cladding was common. The type was at its purest in Istanbul (figs. 37-38) and the Black Sea from Sinop to Ruschuk (fig. 39). The Bursa variant was very similar (figs. 40-41), but usually two stories high. Like other inland northern Anatolian models (e.g., those of Amasya, Sivas, and Tokat (figs. 42-43), its brick infill was plastered and the plan tended to be more imaginative, sometimes with glassed-in sofas. The Plovdiv symmetrical house (figs. 44-45), three to four stories high, very elaborate, almost perfectly symmetrical, with central sofa hall, also had plastered façades and had further developed the Istanbul type, mediating local craftsmanship and Middle European influences. The Edirne single-story variant (fig. 46), also extant in some Bulgarian

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**Fig. 37.** Houses in Istanbul in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Detail of a drawing by Melling.

**Fig. 38.** Houses in Istanbul dating from the end of the nineteenth century. (From L. de Beylié, *L'habitation byzantine: Les anciennes maisons de Constantinople* [Grenoble, 1905])

**Fig. 39.** Houses in Nesebar (Bulgaria). (From Ivan Ivanchev, *Nesebăr i neogrâłe kăşhti* [Sofia, 1957])
towns and sometimes in Salonika and Istanbul, though strictly Balkan, had a perfectly symmetrical and curved or tympanum-shaped high cave over the entrance, influenced as it was by court (sultan yapist) architecture.\textsuperscript{35}

B. The Aegean-Macedonian model\textsuperscript{36} was usually built on two floors and often had a stone basement with horizontal wood binding. It kept the double layers of windows of earlier times for its main rooms, strongly protruding cantilevered eaves, and open or glassed-in galleries on the garden front. The Macedonian version (figs. 47-48) tended to be more symmetrical, had finer stonework, and curving plaster gables, whereas in the Anatolian Aegean version (in Manisa, Birgi, Tire, Muğla, and even further south-east in Antalya) plans were freer and galleries ample and enriched by tahts and kiosks (figs. 49, 50, 51).

C. The Central Anatolian model\textsuperscript{57} assembled some elements of the Anatolian earth or unbaked-brick house with the Ottoman model (fig. 52). In Kütahya and Konya a wooden gable might hide a terrace roof; in Ankara two to four layers of cantilevered beams might carry masonry walls with little or no wood-frame structure, much as in the Roman period. Further east in central Anatolia, mainly in the Kayseri area, the Ottoman model was a very late importation.

Not all house types in all core areas would fit into this oversimplified classification, but it does somehow reflect the main artistic and social trends of a production which was much less spontaneous and "folk-arty" than most seem to believe and deeply rooted in the cultural intercourse between court architecture and bourgeois patronage. The further from the main commercial routes and administrative centers, the less urban the milieu, the stronger were the local variations. In Bosnia, town houses in Saraybosna (Sarajevo) had a peculiarly conservative character (often walled in, very introverted, with less rigidly geometrical schemes) and were quite distinct from the rural types, whereas in small towns houses were influenced by rural types. In Albania and Epirus the tower (kula) and the open central gallery type with the gallery facing the street were dominant for a very long time.\textsuperscript{30} In many Anatolian towns, flat-roofed earth houses coexisted with the Ottoman type. In the Rodope mountain district log and thick plank construction were applied to Ottoman plans.\textsuperscript{39}

\section*{METHODOLOGICAL QUESTIONS AND THE PERCEPTION OF CHANGE}

Although this is not a paper on the evolution or transformation of the Ottoman type, it must be remembered that even in the century and a half in which the characteristics I have described were fairly well
maintained, the type was not static. We can never insist enough on the fact that the study of the Ottoman type as we know it and its relation to the urban context are based mostly on examples from eighteenth-to-nineteenth-century towns, the only ones for which we have a fairly clear perception of all elements both monumental and current, domestic and public.

It must be admitted that at this stage of research we do not know enough about the origin of the typical Ottoman house. The type certainly does not go as far back as the birth of the Ottoman state. Chronicles and early drawings suggest that even in the sixteenth century its prototypes coexisted with the Anatolian and Balkan rural types already described. It came into being and was transformed in many overlapping phases and by many agents. It was born and changed gradually through almost imperceptible transitions, from a model wholly non-European and non-
Fig. 44. Plans of a Plovdiv symmetrical house.

Fig. 45. Façade of the same Plovdiv symmetrical house.

Fig. 46. The single-story Edirne type house.

Fig. 47. House in Verria-Karáférra (Greek Macedonia). (From N. K. Moutsopoulos, *Η λαϊκή αρχιτεκτονική της Βέροιας* [Athens, 1967])
Fig. 48. House in Ohrid, Macedonia.

Fig. 49. View of the konak in Birgi.

Fig. 50. Plans of konak in Birgi, Aegean Anatolia.
Mediterranean to a final product which could easily fit into a Westernized or modern Levantine context. From the eighteenth century onwards it completely dominated the urban scene with some exceptions in the suburbs of provincial towns. Adopted as a mass product, it was gradually refined when the Ottoman society and economy became fully multiethnic and open to Western influence.

In the very interesting transition period from the second or third decade of the nineteenth century to its very end (and in some Anatolian towns, even up to the first two decades of the twentieth century) deeper change came through the evolution of middle-class housing and its adaptation to new urban densities, to new technology and urban ways of life. Single house facades were welded together into continuous and gardenless street fronts, the number of floors increased, the unit was divided up into two or more lodgings, to the earlier introduction of Western ornamentation was added the imitation of European
building elements such as balconies, gables, and porches, gradually transforming the once Ottoman model into a Western-looking one.

The recognition of those processes of change does not contradict the observation that the basic character of the model (insofar as it can be distinguished from neighboring types) did not change, though it adapted very well to urban change, from the end of the seventeenth to the mid nineteenth century in elite architecture and to the very end of the nineteenth century in mass architecture. Plan types did change, however. How important was that change? And did it show a linear evolutionary movement or oscillating variations? Architectural historians have often classified plan types within a progressive and gradualist evolutionary grid. But is this progressive scheme always true?

The evolution of the distribution typology from the open gallery type to the more evolved hayat type and then to the sofa plan types and the reverse evolution from compact central space again to complex hayat-like types, certainly do denote changes in the preferences of patrons and builders and perhaps in functions and social life. But as Farooqi suggests through her analysis of room names in seventeenth-century registers, the reference to galleries appeared and disappeared from registers in certain periods, but not at all in a particular direction. The open hayat type more frequent in early times gradually disappeared, but many examples could be found and were being built both in Anatolia (with the gallery on the garden side) and in Albania (with the gallery on the street front) up to the nineteenth century. Etchings and photographs show the existence of hayat types in the eighteenth and mid nineteenth centuries in Istanbul. There are none in Melchior Lorich’s Leiden drawing or in the sixteenth-century anonymous French artist’s Bibliothèque Nationale scroll. It can be deduced that different plan types co-existed in Ottoman towns even if there was a marked preference for some of them at certain times. In other words, Ottoman urban culture displayed plan variety as much as, if not more than, plan-type evolution. Megas and Eldem have had recourse to geometric categories and classified house types by their plan and distribution schemes as conventional references: the open hayat type, the compact almost square house with central sofa; shallow terrace housing parallel to the street front; houses developed in depth from street to back; L- or U-shaped composite plans developed in free plans along the sides of a garden, etc., are all schematic models useful for analysis but not efficacious in describing the product of the complex synthesis which produced the specific house form in its references to fruition, symbols, aesthetics, links to town and street — everything that makes that house meaningful to its patron and architects.

The evolutionary approach to plan type — that is, the interpretation of architectural history and type history as a roughly linear process of change in plan — is unsatisfactory insofar as it hides the complex interplay of social and individual cultural trends of patrons and architects in which aesthetic attitudes and functional needs are never completely separated or separable in a causal relationship. Changing cultures are much too complex for the method of representation of a model through its plan, in a certain measure more relevant in traditionally static rural areas. It will not fully render the culturally and historically complex interaction of plan scheme, stylistic taste, local artisan techniques, and of the varying rates of change and evolution involved in the different layers of meaning and technique of any architectural construction. It does not account for the richness and complexity of the elements, both regional and Turkish-Islamic, which have gone into making the Ottoman house. Nor does it consider the Ottoman house as the creation of a class of master builders socially, culturally, and professionally not distant from architects proper, with the same tendency to experiment with new combina-
tions or consciously take up earlier models. The plan in itself was not their main concern; it was just one of the many facets of their creative approach.

The reader unfamiliar with the concepts of building type and urban morphology might be disconcerted by my insistence on typological characteristics as the main item of analysis. I assert fundamental typological similarity within the core area where the social historian perceives variety and differentiation in size, value, and use. What, then, is typology? We can define it as the coherent sum of common denominators in a group of individual buildings. Any casual group of buildings would have common denominators, but they would not necessarily be coherent. To be coherent, those buildings would have to have a common historical background and a common set of factors giving shape to their physical form. In a town or an urban culture, style can often change, the economic resources of patrons will increase or reduce the dimensions of their buildings, and still there will be many elements remaining that give a common character and individuality to all buildings of a given function or class. Those selective elements (selected, that is, by the specificity of outlook and conditioning) determine typological character as an aggregation of technological, aesthetic, geometrical data which imply an attitude to building never exclusively economical or functional.\(^{45}\) We might say that typology is the technology of concepts (an idea of plan and distribution, the "right" feeling for the relationship of voids to walls, how to link building techniques to the other decisions) with which the builder has to arm himself before he can make even the simplest decision.

Overall models, in which the single parts interplay in given combinations, rather than analytical processes, are the main actors in all space-building, but it takes generations for a given society or culture to fix the typical elements or the elements that it believes to be essential in its buildings. It also takes generations to abandon or change elements which had been invented as an answer to functional or social needs that no longer exist.\(^{46}\)

Research on the Ottoman house will remain stinted until some fundamental working hypotheses, based on the general principles set forth here, are generally accepted. These are, first, that the Ottoman house or, better, the west Anatolian–Balkan town house, of the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries has been one of the main (of the not very numerous) types that comprise the universal history of domestic architecture. This simply means that it is not merely an aggregate of vernacular modes and implies that in research the study of its general characteristics should prevail in the analysis of occasional and secondary differentiation.

Second, the Ottoman type will have to be studied with the same procedures for analysis as for other main types, foregoing the too easy temptation of describing it as a peculiar, non-universal case apart, whether on nationalistic or "Orientalist" or "Islamist" grounds. In other words, it should be examined with an eye to the multiple processes that formed its architectural reality, using the same typo-morphological approach as other and better focused cultures, paying attention to the emergence of architectural forms through the slow, long-term processes of sedimentation, and through change both in the elements of town structure and of plan and architectural form. The methods of typological analysis developed for Mediterranean and Western towns will have to be revised to adapt to the Ottoman case. The Ottoman typo-morphological structure suggests a separate but more articulate analysis of its single constitutive elements: its form-determinant factors (autonomous development of house form and plan; urban structure not generated by street patterns because of its "open" character, peculiar volume distribution, abundant greenery, etc.) are very different from those of Mediterranean and Western urban morphology (in this last, compact plots and street patterns coerce building typology and façades; city walls have compacted building and street patterns) which require a more attentive examination of the interaction of their elements.

Third, the specificity of the combinatorial techniques that I have called "syncretism by juxtaposition" — that is, the Ottoman propensity to appropriate selected elements from other cultures, adopting plan, volume, ornament, or technology as separate and separable components not referred to an organic complex of language and meaning, with no deeply felt cultural influences involved — should be acknowledged as a fundamental characteristic of Ottoman culture. A discussion of the origins of the type and of its heterogeneous elements is invaluable, not so much to establish historical truth as to understand fully the role that each borrowed element plays, or was meant to play, in the linguistic and typological structure of the model.

Finally, the paucity of reliable documentary evidence on house types before the nineteenth century (the
result of unreliable representations and plans, fragile urban tissues, perishable building materials, and unstable ownership) suggests a recourse to archaeological research to draw a reliable picture of at least some, if not all, characteristic tissues. But the lack of cellars and deep foundations and the epochal changes ex-Ottoman towns have undergone would limit the success of traditional research through excavation. Other means of archaeological survey, both more methodical and more inventive, will have to be found.47

From the point of view of technology and cultural patterns, the Ottoman house was the outcome of a well focused and remarkably rapid synthesis of the techniques, taste, and ambitions of many, but not all, the ethnic and cultural components of the empire, and it freely borrowed from distant cultures and regions. All this was not the outcome of a melting pot. It was rather a process of deliberate selection which adopted or rejected foreign and native factors according to their suitability for the Weltanschauung, first of the Ottoman court, and later, more and more, of urban society in general.

A first conclusion is that the mainly wooden two-story house type which prevailed in western and northern Anatolia, in Thrace and the Balkans, the very core area of the empire, is an exclusively Ottoman cultural product and that not all the areas we usually define as formerly Ottoman used it, even if they were ethnically Turkish-dominated or of long-standing Ottoman rule. Nor did the ethnicity or religion of its builders and owners influence the fundamental characteristics of the Ottoman type as much as cultural geography did. On the whole, the not very significant differences registered within the core area were due to epoch and social class rather than to region or climate.

We might reasonably assume that the single elements and the urban setting of the Ottoman urban house derived from a synthesis of general regional rural building techniques and, in a lesser measure, of urban house types in the aforementioned areas and partly in Caucasia, but that its peculiar synthesis of all these elements was the outcome of a fairly rapid process, probably over no more than a few decades from the mid seventeenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century.

How the synthesis of the Ottoman house came about has yet to be fully argued, and many doubtful points have yet to be substantiated by further research: who were the master builders of the early periods? How were regional loans "universalized"? Did substantially different plan types respond to functional requirements or to the patrons' diversified taste? The comparative study of types gives a partial answer.

The brilliance and rapidity of the typological synthesis in the Ottoman house and the facility of the recourse to heterogeneous sources, as well as its incapacity to penetrate significantly into neighboring regions, can all be explained by the weak urban system in which it took form. The core area possessed a web of small and medium towns, but did not partake of the ancient and deeply rooted Mediterranean (Arab and southern Greek areas, southeastern Anatolia) or Persian and Central Asian urban traditions. Eastern Anatolian and Arab towns were larger and further apart from each other and had stronger architectural traditions. The Ottoman house type could not penetrate significantly into areas of ancient and solidly Mediterranean urban culture.

Demographically, Istanbul was an exception, but, like much of the remaining part of the core-area urban system, its very large population was mixed and originally uprooted, with a large proportion of deported or immigrant members. This initially rootless population acquired some stability only in the last two and a half centuries of imperial rule. Patrons might have continued to have recourse to an eclectic variety of house types, as it would seem they did up to the end of the classical period, judging from the (unreliable) sketches and etchings of contemporary travelers. But a synthesis, and a brilliant one, came about. It was placed under the sign of court influence which offered with its kiosks and kâshr a model to look to. The lightness of house structures, inexpensive and expendable, accelerated experimentation. The impressive variety of detail and of volume solutions would not have been possible with heavier and more costly techniques. Taste, too — the taste for the imitation, even if in a minor key, of upper class models, for light and joyous structures stubbornly sought, had no small part in this unification. Despite fermans discouraging the use of timber, despite the existence of fine stonemasons and against all logic, in those fire-stricken towns no single private house, except of the very rich and powerful, with well-cut stone basements or portals has survived and perhaps has ever existed.48 The astounding unity and the strong characterization of the seventeenth-to-nineteenth-century Ottoman house, against all odds over a vast and ethnically and geographically
variegated region, can be explained only as a willful (and even stubborn) construction, a product of culture and not of mere material circumstances and passively accepted tradition. The ideology of daily life — not the ideology of religion or philosophical thought — and of an attitude toward town life and toward house and garden, the only ideology and attitudes that such heterogeneous social, ethnic, and professional groups could have in common (and for two centuries were successful in maintaining), played a large part in that construction.

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APPENDIX: BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

The sources for the study of the Ottoman house include a huge number of surveys and drawings, most of them by architects, but some also by historians and ethnographers. With a few exceptions they are merely — even if, sometimes, beautifully — descriptive. Some are little-known, and usually badly printed, doctoral dissertations or university publications, modest but invaluable for the photographs and plans they contain. A good number, partaking of the modern nation states that replaced the provinces of the Ottoman Empire, suffer from the regional and nationalistic bias discussed in note 1.

As very few Ottoman type houses survived the urban transformations of the first sixty years of our century, we have to depend on old photographs and local publications with very often non-professional plans and drawings. Most of these studies consist of the description of housing in a single town or microregion. We would not be anywhere near achieving an overall idea of the Ottoman house or of Ottoman urban culture were it not for these works which provide descriptions even though they may not be convincing in the interpretations in their texts.

Of course, there are many exceptions of very good quality. But, unfortunately, awareness of the issues and methods developed in the field of typological and urban analysis outside the field of Ottoman studies is rare even in the best of them. Eldem and Moutsopoulos, despite their impressive and invaluable work, seem uninterested in overall urban culture or in the general mechanisms of type formation. Megas, who obviously has the wider culture and greater methodological insight, deals with Balkan types, not with the

Ottoman period, though his work does have some implications for research on the latter. Kuban, usually acute and well aware of general cultural processes, deals very cursorily with house-type formation. I know of only one significant attempt at systematic interpretation of the Ottoman house type in its general aspects, and that is Ayda Arıl’s Osmanlı konulu geleneklendirme tarihşel sorunlar (Izmir, 1982).


E. A. Kömürcüoğlu, Das alttürkische Wohnhaus (Wiesbaden, 1966), and Önder Küçükerman, Anadolu’da bu geleneksel Türk evinde mehân organizasyonu acısından

Among the travelers and chroniclers. Della Valle (seventeenth century), D'Ossoon (eighteenth century), Boou (nineteenth century) have left some descriptions of Ottoman houses and building practice. Draftsmen who have drawn fairly precise views, and sometimes plans, of contemporary Ottoman houses (unfortunately all active no earlier than the three decades spanning the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries) are the Frenchmen Dupré, Cassas, Melling, Fauvel, Huyot. Earlier drawings, however fascinating and useful, as in the case of Melchior Lorich, have to be interpreted with great caution. The drawings, engravings, and paintings that abound from the second half of the nineteenth century (Meyer, Walsh et al.) suffer from an overdose of romantic interpretation or are excessively simplified. After the forties of the nineteenth century Robertson's photographs and Fossati's drawings offer excellent, if incomplete, documentation of the Istanbul house type which, however, had much changed in the meantime.

For a more comprehensive bibliography on the Ottoman house type and its relation to urban site, see my La Città del Levante: Civiltà urbana e architettura sotto gli Ottomani nei secoli XVIII-XIX (Milan: Jaca Book, 1988). chapter 8. Since then typological surveys and studies on Ottoman housing (and also on the neighboring or related areas with a few exceptions for the Arab and the Afghan areas) seem to have come to a halt.

My research for secondary sources in the Harvard and M.I.T. libraries and especially in the Widener and Fine Arts libraries have confirmed the impression that since the 1980's, research on housing has come to a halt all over the world (the splendid work of the French school in Cairo and a few other works on the Arab area are exceptions indeed). The reasons for this shift in tide which has affected almost all research on house typology in all areas and for most historical periods, pertain to cultural history and are too complex to go into here. For each region I shall recall with footnotes some of the names of the authors of the more complete works.

After I had finished working on this article, András Riedlmayer, the Aga Khan Bibliographer at the Fine Arts Library, who read this note, kindly brought to my attention the work of Ahmet Hadrović, Gradski kućni orijentalnog tipa u Bosni i Hercegovini (Sarajevo, 1993), as well as other materials on the diminishing Bosnian-pre-modern architecture (see, for example, Splitska Municipality, Crimes in Split: Splitska Municipality—1992-94 [Mostar, 1996]. I think they should be mentioned that they may document the savage destruction of the Bosnian heritage of Ottoman-period houses and monuments.

NOTES

Author's note: My project as visiting scholar in Cambridge in 1985 was to collect material on house types in areas neighboring the Ottoman territories for my comparative studies. The Aga Khan sections of the Harvard and MIT libraries and the regional sections of the Widener Library gave me a unique opportunity to concentrate into two months work what would have been impossible to do in the field over an even longer period. I am grateful to the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture for giving me that opportunity and for the very interesting discussions I had with its members Professor Gulru Necipoglu and Nasser Rabbat, and to its director Professor Attilio Petruccioli for his great help and for giving me the opportunity to participate in discussions and polemicize (much as I am doing in this paper) about typology in the "Typological Process and Design Theory" seminar he organized in April 1995 at the Department of Architecture, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, under the auspices of the Aga Khan Program.

1. Nationalism is often imaginative if not imaginary. National perspectives did stimulate the production of a huge number of invaluable surveys and inventories, but they imposed fictitious boundaries for typological classes of buildings. The misunderstanding of the specificity and fundamental unity of the Ottoman type is closely linked to the geographical and hence national limits of study areas scholars impose upon themselves. All criteria of objective analysis and all real understanding of cultural phenomena come to a dead end if we use modern post-facto borders to define the supposedly "natural" perimeter of historical entities. One century of classification and description using national standards and thereby geographical boundaries anachronistic for Ottoman history - in other words, of applying misleading political criteria to historical cultural entities - certainly poses a problem of methodology and of correct instrumentation for the adequate comprehension of the products of that particular civilization.

2. The questions I have put in this paper have a methodological impact that only a comparative approach to the Ottoman house can answer. I cannot develop thoroughly and exten-
sively in this paper all the premises on which my theses stand.
They had been argued in the previous work cited in these endnotes.

5. For example, in nineteenth-century Sarajevo most lots were no larger than 10 by 15 meters, and houses rarely covered more than 150 square meters (my measurements are from the 1882 town map by the Königliche-Kaisersche Militär-Geographischen Institut zu Wien). In Afyon, Tskhat, and Ankara, plots had a mean area of 90-120 square meters. See Sergei Akhile, 19. yasîyî tomanda Anadolu kentî mehandîsel yopî şehirlerini (Ankara, 1978).

6. Suryai Faroqhi, Men of Modest Substance: House Owners and House Property in Seventeenth-Century Anatolia (Cambridge, 1990), admirable in its treatment of patrons and social residential patterns — its main theme — is not as convincing when it tries to establish causal relationships between social facts and physical space organization to house types and forms. As in other cultures, the causal link does not exist, or at least is almost always indirect. It also has to be born in mind that the period Faroqhi examines leaves off at the very beginning of the period analyzed here. Some assumptions coincide with mine, as, for example, the absence of strong differentiation between the housing preferences of Muslims and Christians even earlier than typological studies would suggest. It is also sensible that the differentiation should be noticeable when non-Muslim, patently more open to Western contacts, imported models strongly contrasting with the Ottoman one. But this came very late.

Very important are the quantitative aspects of Faroqhi's work on costs, number of rooms and stories, etc. A less haphazard understanding of the housing structure of the Ottoman town can be built up from it as well as from that of Todorov and Stoianovich for the Balkan towns (see, for a reasonable compendium of their very considerable work, Traian Stoianovich, "Model and Mirror of the Premodern Balkan City," Studio Balcanica 3 (1970), and Nikolai Todorov, The Balkan City, 1400-1900 (Seattle and London, 1983). It is to be hoped that such quantity surveys can be extended to all periods and that the data of single towns will be rendered using a single standard for useful comparison. But caution is still needed in correlating social and economic data with cultural-architectural factors. For example, the correlation of house cost to social class where typology and custom impose stonework (e.g., Kayseri) would naturally be quite different from that of a town where they impose Ottoman type timber and brick or keşif infill (e.g., Ankara). Hence the caution and bewilderment expressed by Faroqhi in correlating the financial standing of house owners to materials used. Another point is that even common terms like sofra, avlu, bıkhıe, cardak mean different things in different typological contexts and periods. Here, too, the road from archival data (tax registers and kadi records) to conclusions on typological form is steep indeed. The social historian is certainly justified in comparing social and economic conditions in two towns so near each other, using common parameters. The historian of types and architecture should recognize their divergent typological context and cautiously use common parameters only within the same typological area.

This is an issue I have dealt with in detail in other articles and books, e.g., Maurice Cerasi. La città del Levante: Civiltà urbana e architettura volto gli Ottomani nel secolo XVIII-XIX (Milan, 1968), chap. 8. and "Il tessuto residenziale della città ottomana (secc. XVII-XIX)," Storia della Città 31-32 (1964).


8. For the Caucasus. I have drawn on plans and surveys in G. M. Alikazizov, Narodnaya zodchistvo Azerbaidzhana i ego Progresivnye traditsii (Baku, 1963); Arthur Byhan, La Civilization anatolienne (Paris, 1936); Arkadi Federovitsch Gol'dshtein, Bashna v gorah (Moscow, 1977); O. Kh. Khalipzehchian, Gruzianstvo zodchestvo Armenii (Moscow, 1971). Sargis Ghahki Matevosyan, Gyumri zahqavariyan charartapletutune (Erevan, 1985); Azerbaidzhani S.S.R. Arkhitektura Ishleri İdarəsi, Azərbaycanın malvaz qabadır — mədəniyyət məməlîyyət (Moscow, 1946), and Azərbaycanın Arkehitəktura abidələr — Mədəniyyət həlliş (Baku, 1946); Vakhtang Tsvetazde, Tbilisi: arkhitektura starogo goroda i zailie doma pervoi poloviny XIX sotletiya (Tbilisi, 1958).

Erzurum is a town on the border of the area of transition between the core and the central Anatolian topographical areas and the Caucasian types. See Akın Gürkut, "Laterenendeckenhäuser in Ostanatolien," Architektur 19 (1989), which, however, extends the area in which lanterndomed central rooms can be found surprisingly, and perhaps conceptually, far into central Anatolia to the Kayseri Corum line. For Central Asia and the Turkic regions I have drawn on V. M. Dmitriev, Voprosy ispol'zovaniya arhitektury uzhekskogo narodnogo zhilisheka v sovremennom praktike (Tashkent, 1980); Vladimir Alekseevich Lavrov, Grazhdanstvo naroda Srednego Azia i drevnikh vremen do vtoroi poloviny XIX veka (Moscow, 1950); S. Mamadzhanova and R. Mukhmin, Entsalopploka pamiatnikov srednevekovogo zodchestva Turkıkhkistanı (Dushanbe, 1993); D. B. Piarveev, Arkhitektura Kalmukhıı (Moscow, 1975); G. A. Pugachenkova, "Baktirskie pridos dom,' Istori i kultura narodov Srednei Azii (Moscow, 1976); V. L. Vorninin, Narodnye traditsii arkhitetkury Uzbekistanı (Moscow, 1951), and the section on domestic architecture in Arkhitektura respubliki Srednei Azii (Moscow, 1951). For all these areas, very useful documentation is contained in various publications of the regional branches of the USSR Academy of Science.

THE FORMATION OF OTTOMAN HOUSE TYPES

Habitat, Architecture and Rural Society in the Gilan Plain (Northern Iran) (Bonn, 1989); Niels Gutschow, Newar Towns and Buildings (Sankt Augustin, 1987).


11. No economic explanation of this attitude is convincing: many a patron had spent as much on the ornaments and interior woodwork of a less costly wooden structure as he would have spent on the entire structure of a more austere stone building. It was very rare for stone-masonry dwellings or annexes to be ornate. The Ottoman mentality, it would seem, associated stone work with grandeur and austerity (see also n. 4, above). Serim Deneli, Batıslamaya sırverilen İstanbul’dan tasarruf ve dış mekânları dağılımı ve medeniyeti (Ankara, 1982) reports that timber construction was cheaper and faster but that the wages of carpenters and bricklayers in 1812 were exactly the same! Filiz Yenicherlioglu, “L’Architecture domestique ottomane: évolution historique et étude de deux exemples situés à Istanbul,” in L’Habitat traditionnel dans les pays musulmans autour de la Méditerranée (Cairo, 1988), vol. 3, mentions various ferman orders mandating the use of masonry in houses and shops “as is done in Damasco, Aleppo and Anatolia,” but never obeyed. G. Olivier, Voyage dans l’Empire Ottoman, l’Égypte et la Perse, fait par ordre du gouvernement pendant les six premières années de la République, 6 vols. (Paris, 1801-1807), 1: 230-33, insists on the Ottoman preference in house building for ample windows, shallow foundations, and timber construction despite the abundance of stone and bricks in the region. Pietro della Valle, Viaggio di Pietro della Valle il piligrimo . . . d’Italia da lui medesimo (Rome, 1650), p. 12, describes Constantinople in 1614 as a magnificent vision from the sea, with its houses “tetto ornati di gronde assai belle, grandi e capricciosi . . . dipinti di vari colori in foggie vaghe e strane . . . veroni sparsi, cint d’ogni interno di gello-
20. This is certainly the case of cantilevering on small brick arches supported by stone corbelling, of distant Roman derivation, never applied to the Ottoman house proper but present in other public or court residential-oriented architecture (hamam, hünkâr kervansaray, palaces) and in some Greek houses for the rich in the Fener district of Istanbul.

21. As no town housing has survived that can be dated earlier than the seventeenth century, scholars refer instead to palatial kiosks and to two well-known hünkâr kervansarays, those of the Yeni Valide and Sultan Ahmet mosques. In Lucienne Thyssen-Tscherak, “The Yeni Valide Mosque Complex in Eminönü, Istanbul (1597–1665).” Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1994, the weight of the innovative role of female royal patrons in determining typological specificity seems overemphasized, but the linkage to domestic or kiosk architecture is certainly well demonstrated. See also Zeynep Nayar, “Osmanlı mimarlığında Sultan Ahmet Kâlibeyi ve sonrası, 1609-1690.” Ph.D. diss., Istanbul Technical University, 1978. Eldem has repeatedly inserted and analyzed the elements of hünkâr kervansarays, kervansarays, and kiosks in all his work on residential architecture.

22. The geographical approach articulates human settlement patterns in culturally homogeneous types. It affords a firmer ground against which to read the flux of social and economic change and stylistic modes. It has always been applied with better results to static rural or nomad societies. Urban systems are usually complicated by migrations and cross influences that do not make sense if analyzed only by the type standards of human geography — on the other hand, neither does a fluctuating image of social evolution and architectural style. Another problem is that the approach — especially of German Kultur-Geographie which flourished in the two or three decades around the turn of the century — has met with increasing suspicion because of its propensity to apply type classification to vast areas, which encourages racist and amateurish interpretations. The works of Batsch, Busch-Zantner, Byhan, Gesemann, von Hahn, Hiebcher, Louis, Nopca, Passarge, Schier, Schultze-Jena, Strzygowski, and Wilhelmy have to be used with caution.

It is almost impossible to explain the diffusion of specific ways of urban life and of house types by other than homogeneous cultural models covering vast areas, as the fortunate results of many studies by scholars of the French historical-geographical schools of the same period (Blanchard, Brühnes, Demangeon, Fustel de Coulanges, Xavier de Planhol, Vidai de la Blanche among others) as well as of other schools (Cvijic, Lavrov, Megas) would suggest. All these scholars have in common the advantage that they could observe materials directly and did not depend as much on written historical documents and that their observations were tempered by an uncommon sense of history.

The question of cultural patterns, that is, of the uniform diffusion of types in a given area, not directly or solely determined by economic, functional, or social events, is of the utmost importance for the study of domestic architecture. Certainly, remote economical, functional, or social factors, quite different from those of their patrons and users, had affected the origin of settlement patterns and architectural models. But they were no longer influential and had either little or only an indirect effect on their actual acceptance and adoption.

23. François, baron de Tott, Mémoires du Baron de Tott sur les Turcs et les Tatars (Amsterdam, 1785).

24. The historical memory of ancient pre-Ottoman contacts might be one other explanation. There could be a general affinity transmitted by folk culture or by Asiatic craftsmen. Carpenterly, much more than stone masonry, was the domain of the ethnic Turks. The analysis of the cultural geography of house types does point to a quasi-continuum of the timber beam and strut type and of corresponding architectural forms running through part of northern Persia, Luristan, and Nepal into the Chinese regions (see n. 8). But these areas had lost their connection to Ottoman cultures many centuries after the Turkish tribes had penetrated into Anatolia. Nothing in the long chain of local timber folk tradition from Macedonia to the Caucasus through the Anatóolian Black Sea region would suggest such an Oriental-influenced development of native architectural expression. Structural clarity and practicality of the building operations, rather than the almost ideological assumption of ephemeral qualities and of transparency were the basis of the native architectural character, nor had regional vernacular architecture any tendency to exaggerate the interplay of volumes and minor architectural elements, as can be seen, among other examples, in the Osman III Kiosk. Could it be, then, that Turkish carpenters and master builders simplified and sublimated the form of the Persian kiosks, just as the Japanese did with the Chinese elements? But taste and proportions here are quite different and the Ottoman kiosk style has too strong and too articulate a character to be the simple byproduct of a process of simplification.

25. Even the stone masonry houses of Erzurum and Dünrek (see nn. 9 and 38) had little cellar space. Up to the last decades of the nineteenth century, kitchens were usually in outbuildings. The lantern-like covered space in the houses of Erzurum were called toruk rooms because of their central hearth, an exception clearly derived from Armenian and Central Asian models. See Haşim Karpuz, Türk İslam mimarlığında Erzurum evleri (Ankara, 1993) and Güngör “Laternendachenhäuser in Ottomantürkei.”

Can there be a correlation between the psychological lack of heaviness and absence of symbolism in the Ottoman house and the size of the average Turkish family which to European observers of the eighteenth and early nineteenth century seemed much smaller than in the Slavic areas of the empire and even in most European countries?

Curiously, until the seventeenth century in the Janissary regiments, kitchens and the word asin (cauldron) had a symbolic meaning that did not exist in the terminology of the Ottoman house. The word osun (hearth) referred more often to associations, groups, and Janissary regiments than to a homestead.

26. Paradoxically, we do not find symmetrical plans with a central hall in Çiovo-Kampo where the settlement pattern is almost identical to that of the Alban and Samarqand upper-class suburbs of Gorna. The Genoese influence could have easily adapted the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Genoese villa plan type to similar to the more conventional
Palladian central plans introduced by Palladio's contemporary Alessi. Quite the contrary, the articulate plans as well as some aspects of the stylistic elements of the Kampsos villas partake more of the ancient pre-Renaissance Genoese, and of the more recent Cappadocian and Syrian models, curiously intermingled with residual Ladin-Genoese memories, than of contemporary Western models. See A. Arel, "Gothic Towers and Baroque Mihrabs: The Post-Classical Architecture of Aegean Anatolia in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," Muqarnas 10 (1993): 215-18. My view, considering the specific language of the architectural elements we observe, is that the flow of architectural and typological ideas ran in both directions: from and to southwestern Anatolia and Cappadocia, on one hand, and Chios, on the other. with perhaps also the southeastern Adriatic region (EPirus, Albania, Dalmatia) involved in the exchange of models and motifs.

27. See Cerati, "Late Ottoman Architects," p. 91.

28. The phenomenon was complex and ran both eastward and westward and was very early. Even though limited to the Balkan region, see Verena Han, "Les courants de styles dans les métiers d'art des artisans chrétiens au XVI° et durant les premières décennies du XVIII° siècle dans les régions centrales des Balkans," Balkenoria 1 (1970): 288-74.


30. The new but still Ottoman imprinted konak of the ruling house in Belgrade in the first half of the nineteenth century and a few decades later the creation of the so-called "Plodív (Filibe) symmetrical house" type, both in a context of greater political independence from Istanbul, are good proof of the relative indifference of cultural patterns to political influence. Even in Cairo, Mohammad 'Ali built against all clastic logic an Ottoman style pavilion with wide fenestration!


32. Ivan Ivanchev, "Nessebari i regnicase kăstili" (Soﬁa, 1957), reports typically Black Sea coast housing very similar to some Istanbul models. For the coastal and Turkish Bulgarian plain, see Raschel Angelova, Shumenštî vârzhenski kăstili = Houses of the Time of Bulgaria's National Revival in the Town of Shumen (Soﬁa, 1965); Bulgarian Academy of Science, Architektura na bulgarskoto vârzhahane - materials (Soﬁa, 1975); G. Kozhukhov, Bulgarski kăstili ot epokhata na vârzhahane (Soﬁa, 1953); Kh. D. Prey, Studia vârzhenska arhitekturna (Soﬁa, 1959); Stefan Stumov, Bulgrarska tiholizhna arhitektura, XV-XIX sek (Soﬁa, 1989); T. Zlatarski, Bulgarskata kăstil pre quesovata na vârzhahane (Soﬁa, 1953). For the Anatolian extension of this type, see Reha Güney, Örenkolu Surlarında evler ve ahşap m. (Ankara, 1981).

33. For other Balkan regions (ex-Yugoslav regions), see Aleksandar Deroko, Polderna arhitekture i jugoslavij (Belgrade, 1984) and Narodno nasledstvo = Architecture folklorique, 2 vols. (Belgrade, 1988); Kadić, Staromka svaka kula; Grabrijan, Bosnian Arhitektura u Sarajevu; Hielscher, Jugoslawien, Henry Minetti, Osmanische promonturiale Baukunst auf dem Balkan ein Beitrag zur Begegnung des Balkans (Hannover, 1923). For a better understanding of the structural elements of the northern Ottoman house, it is useful to consider its rural counterpart; see, for example, Orhan Öğümer, Köşki mimarı - Doğu Karadeniz = Village Architecture - Eastern Black Sea (Ankara, 1979).


36. The Edirne single-floor house type (Gündüz Özdem, Edirne (Istanbul, 1950) and Söylev Üñver, Dr. Refat Osman's går Edirne evleri ve konakları (Istanbul, 1983)) is clearly affiliated to sultaniya types in the Bulgarian plain (Zlatarski, Bulgarska kăstil pre quesovata na Vârzhahane (Soﬁa, 1953)) and to the kiosk of the imperial palace of Edirne (Edirim, Köşk ve kăstilars).

37. For the Aegean area and the southwestern coast of Anatolia, see Eldem, Köşk ve kasıtlar and Türk evî, which survey many buildings of that region or their single elements. For Macedonia proper, see Boris Čipan, Stara gradška arhitektura vo Ohrid (Skopje, 1982); Dušan Grabrijan, Makedonska kula, istorija od staro orantska do sovremena evropska kula (Ljubljana, 1955); Leonard Schub-Reja, Makedonien: Landschafts- und Kulturtäler (Jena, 1927); Krum Tomovski, "Architecture in Ohrid and the Ohrid Region," Macedonian Review 5 (1980); Tomovski, Tokorev Voinic and Hadžiev-Aleksyevska, Krajevno=Architectural and Urbanistic Contents (Skopje, 1980).

38. For northern Greece: Agis Anastasiadis, Theologitiki. Old Town (Athens, 1990); N. K. Moutsopoulos, Hi tâske arhitektis tis Vounas (Athens, 1967), and Contribution to the Typology National Technical University, Selected Specimens of Greek Domestic Architecture during the Ottoman Period (Athens, 1986).

39. For the central Anatolian plateau, see M. Akok, Ankara'nın eski evleri (Ankara, 1950-51); Celal Berk, Konya evleri (Istanbul, 1951); N. Barhan Bilgic, Sinov evleri (Ankara, 1993); Karpuz, Türk ... Evresim evleri, Sakaolo, Dönuş.

40. For Albania, see Emin Riza, Qetë-muazë Gjrokastër (Tirana, 1981), and "Trots të la kretë popullare deri l'habitacion urbaine albanaise," Monument 1 (1982); Nopcaz Albeni.

41. See, for example, for the relationship between provincial semi-rural models and the Ottoman urban model: Borislav I. Stoianov, Stariia rodopica arhitektura (Soﬁa, 1964); also B.A.N. Architekturaita.
construction with wood techniques and tile roofing in Bursa and Anatolia.

41. See Cerasi “Late Ottoman Architects.”

42. Farroghi, Men of Modern Substance, pp. 214-15; also 75-76, 88-89, 102-3.

43. Megas, The Greek House and “Überlieferung und Erscheinung in der Volksarchitektur,” pp. 74-80, for the pastak and ibahas gallery types.

44. Ibid., Eldem, Türk ev plan tıpleri and Kışık ve haslarlar for their synoptic plan drawings.

45. The concept of type was first applied to architecture and building by Quatemére de Quincy in 1852 and later by historians of towns and of town architecture (Fustel de Coulanges, Lavedan, Von Gerkan, Roland Martin) and by urban geographers (Dickinson, George). See also above n. 21. Historians of architecture such as Cantner and Pevsner have used the concept of building types as a complex of formal, spatial, and linguistic attributes and not simply of plan organization as it had been previously used by their colleagues. The typological concepts developed in Europe in the fifteenth and sixties in the field of architectural studies (Saverio Muratori, and later the Milanese-Venetian school with Aldo Rossi as its leading theoretician; in France, Bruno Fautier, etc.) have taken up nineteenth-century positivism in cultural geography with a new outlook more pertinent to the processes which make architecture: they dwell on the relationship of town structure to building types, underlining the emergence of architectural forms through long, slow processes of sedimentation, both cultural and physical. In some cases they have futilously established a relation of cause and effect between town structure and changes in single urban elements and undervalue the ease with which ancient lemotives have been revived in the architecture of all times and all civilizations.

46. For a current discussion, see the forthcoming proceedings of the “Typological Process and Design Theory” seminar, April 1995, held at the Department of Architecture, M.I.T., under the auspices of the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture, and see there my “Type, Urban Context and Language in Conflict — Some Methodological Implications.”

47. That is why a given typological tradition is not automatically abandoned when needs and techniques change and why typological concepts can be borrowed or unconsciously crop up from dead cultures or from cultures perceived as hostile. Social history, even at its best and even when it has recourse to the refined analysis of symbolism and mentality, will not fully explain the concrete evolution of architectural types. Single cases — religious commandments, the functions these types fulfill, climatic conditioning — will explain only a very small part of their formation and significance. The processes of type formation are a splendid mirror of each culture: they run through social structure and daily life conditions as rivers run through the land. Like rivers, however, their physical history does not coincide exactly with the land they run through. Their color is determined by the soil through which they have already passed, the soil they are running through will not determine their color until they are further downstream. Hydraulics react to soil conditions but have their own laws. So does typology. The myth of climatic differentiation of house types is doubtless true in the long run of millenary formation processes, but spurious as an explanation for change that occurs over a few generations.

48. Many a Balkan historian and chronicler records the envy of Christian subjects living in warp suburbs and in rural houses at the houses of their Ottoman masters. That envy was transmitted into current building practice by the end of the eighteenth century; by the second half of the nineteenth century, the imitation of ruling-class Turkish housing had become a common sign of social advancement. In Anatolia, too, in a different key, with no ethnic or religious connotations, social advancement seemed to come through the transition from rural crude brick models to the wooden, or even wood-clad, and tile-roofed models.

49. Some exceptions of careful stone details in the basement of Ottoman-type houses do exist in Epirus and Albania, that is, in regions where stone arches and stone masonry were commonly used in pre-Ottoman times.