

DAVID J. ROXBURGH (ED.)

TURKS: A JOURNEY OF A THOUSAND YEARS, 600-1600

A catalogue published on the occasion of the exhibition with the same name opened at the Royal Academy of Arts, in London, 22 January – 12 April 2005, edited by David J. Roxburgh, one of the five curators of the exhibition.

The exhibition material are lent by museums and libraries in İstanbul, Berlin, Vienna, London, Paris, Konya, Diyarbakır, Cambridge, Oxford, Dublin, New York, Lisbon, Leeds, St Petersburg, Doha and the Hague (376 pieces). Though the cities outside of Turkey outnumber the cities in Turkey in this list, the main bulk of the material is gathered from the museums and libraries in Turkey (248 pieces), among them mostly from Topkapı Sarayı Müzesi (184 pieces). The works of art are numbered in chronological order in the entries section of the catalogue (95 pages). Date, source, holding collection and selected references accompany illustration of each piece together with meticulous description by an expert of Turkish art. The entries section is valuable since greater part of the descriptions collects recent scholarship on the exhibition material. With the chapters on the history, religion, lands and dynasties of the Turks and one or

double page illustrations dispersed among the articles, the book reaches a colossal size, 496 pages.

Sir Nicholas Grimshaw, President of the Royal Academy of Arts, in his foreword to the catalogue, relates the opening of the exhibition to the ongoing “debate concerning Turkey’s relationship with the European Union”. The exhibition then aims at introducing Turkish history and culture to international public through artifacts of various media collected from the lands where the Turks lived or ruled between 600-1600. The exhibition is timely antedating the UK presidency of the EU, 01 July – 31 December 2005, which covers the beginning of negotiations for the membership of Turkey. UK supports the membership, hence the exhibition.

The foreword to the catalogue written by Prime Minister of Great Britain, Tony Blair, gives the main idea behind the project: “The story of the Turkic peoples as they moved westwards over a period of a thousand years, mixing with the other vibrant civilizations they encountered, was to culminate in one of the greatest empires the world has ever known”. The exhibition illustrates this



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story and the catalogue portrays its cultural contexts through articles and entries. The catalogue will be one of the primary sources for the readers and students of Turkish art and culture, because for the first time, the progress ('journey') of the Turks from Central Asia to Balkans through ages is exhibited providing a kaleidoscopic vision of its different segments and information on these.

The book is divided into three main chapters. The first chapter is in the form of an introduction including two articles: "Turks: A Historical Overview" by Peter B. Golden and "Religion of the Turks in the Pre-Islamic Period" by Peter Zieme. Peter B. Golden's chronology of Turkish history follows the introduction. In the second chapter under the general heading, 'catalogue', six articles focus on the main divisions of the exhibition material: "Central Asia, 600-1000" by Marianne Yıldız; "The Seljuks of Iran and Their Successors" by Oya Pancaroğlu; "The Seljuks and Artuquids of Medieval Anatolia" by Nazan Ölçer; "Muhammed of the Black Pen and His Paintings" by Filiz Çağman; "The Timurids and Turkmen" by David J. Roxburgh, "The Ottomans from Mehmed II to Murad III" by Serpil Bağcı and Zeren Tanındı. The catalogue entries and two appendixes follow this

section: "The Ottoman Sultans as Poets" by Mustafa İsen and "The Turkic Languages" by Osman Fikri Sertkaya.

The quality and content of the articles are fine. They help visitors and general reader understand art and cultural history of the Turks. However, a crucial inconsistency in this chapter should be pointed out: Peter Zieme in referring to Robert Dankoff states that "there is no evidence of shamanism in the Orkhon inscriptions or in later documents..."

Whether early Turkic societies had shamans or not remains open to question" (p. 34). Conversely, Nazan Ölçer explains Anatolian Seljuk iconography with the influence of 'Central Asian shamanism' on page 109. This 'shamanism myth' still regrettably dominates iconographical studies on Seljuk art, although challenged by specialists of religion and art history.

As has been customary in the exhibition catalogues on Turkish art, architecture occupies only an indirect and minor place. Seljuk architecture in Iran (pp 73-5) and Anatolia (pp.107-108), Timurid architecture in Iran (pp. 195-6) and Ottoman architecture in Balkans, Anatolia and the Middle East (pp. 267-8) cover only nine pages in the second chapter. The entries section does not contain any architectural piece like an



arch, a capital, a blind arcade etc., which would give an idea on urban and architectural history of the Turks. An endowment deed from Sivas (cat. 93), Timurid-Turkmen roll of geometric decorative patterns (so-called Topkapı Scroll, cat. 223) and architectural decorative fragments from Afghanistan (cat. 39), Iran (cat. 41), Konya (cat. 58-69), Central Asia (cat. 149-50), Bukhara (cat. 151-152), Uzbekistan (cat. 153) and İznik (cat. 327-29) in the form of mainly tiles and sculptures, are far from demonstrating how the Turks inhabited in any of the lands this catalogue puts in the picture.

Urban history of the Turkish groups in Central Asia and Anatolia has no mention as well. Central Asiatic 'city states' is used as a historical term (p. 43), but there is no information on urban characteristics, life, culture and history; no maps, and plans. In point of fact, the catalogue is not equipped with high-quality maps, which are inescapable in such an extensive survey of historical topography. The map on pages 16-17 only gives political borders of the Turkic dominions as do the others on pages 21, 26, 27, 29, 30. One should be reminded that there is no mention of 'art' in the title of this exhibition, which stirs up expectations to find clues on built-environment in Turkish lands. It seems we still have a long way before us to arrive at exhibitions on 'Turkish culture' embracing architecture and urban history.

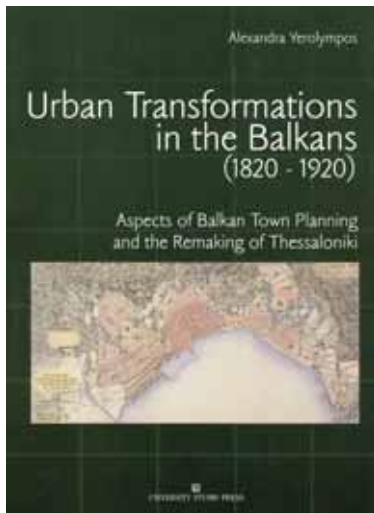
Visitors of the exhibition and readers of the catalogue would ask: Why this

overview of Turkish art and history comes to an end with the sixteenth century? Would the answer be that it is because of the prevailing "decline myth"? Probably so! In the last paragraph of the article by Bağcı and Tanındı, later centuries are portrayed as centuries of economic, financial, military and political setbacks and decline (p. 271).

The bringing together of finest objects attributed to the Turks and representing them with individual descriptions in a catalogue create admiration for Turks as art patrons and approval of the Turkish reality in history, which were the main targets behind the organization of the exhibition. Until today, Seljuk culture in Iran has been regarded as part of Persian civilization, and religious/dynastic names have always been preferred to the terms 'Turkish' and 'Turk' in art history books. From this perspective, the exhibition and this catalogue single out as being bold attempts to give credit to the 'Turk' in world art history. But, except being an introduction to the beauties of Turkish art and culture, this catalogue lacks insights into the life of people. The exhibition and the catalogue were not based on this concept from the start. Nevertheless, this defect is pardonable, since the splendor of the art works and the enormous work done by the contributors dazzle the eye.

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ALEXANDRA YEROLYMPOS

URBAN TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE BALKANS (1820-1920), ASPECTS OF BALKAN TOWN PLANNING AND THE REMAKING OF THESSALONIKI

The century long period from 1820s to 1920s is characterized by a series of radical political changes that took place in the territories of the Ottoman Empire in general and in the Balkans in particular. New nation-states were born in the Balkans following successive wars of independence against the Empire from the early nineteenth century till the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913. The fervent nationalism and will for modernization were the two driving forces of the nation building process in the young Balkan States. Once the independence was obtained, the reorganization of the existing urban framework constituted an issue of priority. Cities were subject to substantial spatial transformations in this period as a result of deliberate acts of demolition and reconstruction of the urban fabric coupled with the urban regulations enacted. The remaking of the city was perceived by the new regimes as an expression of both the modernization and the construction of their national identities. It was also seen as a means of economic growth in the process of the construction of national economies by the young Balkan states. Interestingly enough, urban regulations aiming at a gradual remodeling of the Ottoman urban fabric according to Western precepts were simultaneously decreed by the Ottoman governments in the framework of the *Tanzimat* reforms and operations on urban space were put into implementation in the cities of the Empire. The modernization of urban space was an integral part of the Ottoman reform movement from its start onwards.

In her book *Urban Transformations in the Balkans (1820-1920), Aspects of Balkan Town Planning and the Remaking of Thessaloniki*, Alexandra Yerolympos draws attention to the similar aspects of the urban remodeling attempts in the different countries of the Balkans. While the first part of the book focuses on the comparative study of the restructuring of cities and enactment of the first "modern" planning laws in the Balkan States, the second part concentrates on the modernization attempts undertaken by the reform-

oriented Ottoman authorities in Thessaloniki (Selânik) and in Adrianople (Edirne) at the turn of the century. Yerolympos particularly stresses the peculiarity of the town planning experience in this part of the world "situated between powerful metropolitan states and colonized territories", and which "provide an intermediate link in the history of town making". Published in 1996, *Urban Transformations in the Balkans (1820-1920)*, is a fundamental source, extremely well illustrated with a rich collection of original plans and documents. It provides the reader with a comparative perspective on the town planning history of the Balkans in the particular context of nation-building and modernization process.

Alexandra Yerolympos, who is professor of urban planning at the School of Architecture of the Aristotle University in Thessaloniki, is the author of books and articles on the planning history of Greece, the Balkans and the Ottoman Empire. Besides urban and planning history, her teaching activity extends from planning legislation to urban design.

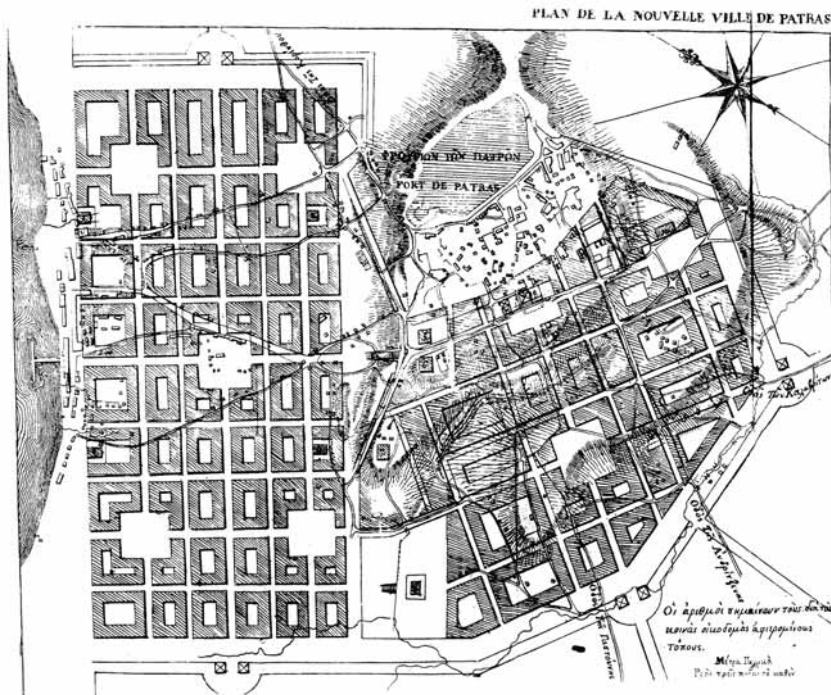
The remaking of the Balkan cities

The book is composed of five chapters, which are originally articles written on different occasions and re-edited by the author under the common theme of "urban transformations in the Balkans" all through the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century. In the Introduction, the author sets the *problematique* on the remaking history of the Balkan cities: Sharing a common past, the fight for political emancipation in the Balkans was driven by a desire for social, economic and cultural progress, i.e. "westernization" and the determination of getting rid of the Ottoman heritage, i.e. "de-ottomanization". All through the nineteenth century, the young Balkan States undertook urban operations to "recompose" their cities as an expression of their "national renaissance", but also as a means of economic growth and social progress.

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New plan for the destroyed city of Patras by S. Bulgari, 1829; p.25.

The second chapter entitled "New Planning Ideals in the Balkans" displays the ideals and models of urbanism adapted in Romania, Greece, Serbia and Bulgaria from the early nineteenth to the beginning of the twentieth century. The author points out the similarity of the objectives set by the national authorities: to erase all traces of the past that reminded the Ottoman rule and to rebuild the cities in likeness with their European counterparts. Yet, each country had its own specificities depending on the level of urbanization of the country and historical circumstances. Serbia had a less developed urban network when it gained its independence at the beginning of the nineteenth century, while Bulgaria disposed of a tightly interwoven network of cities and towns at the end of the Ottoman period. The urban models adopted for reshaping the Balkan cities displayed a variety ranging from the early neo-classical-colonial models to twentieth century schemes of urbanism. However, in all the cases, the urban legislations and projects put into implementation reflected an aesthetical imagery inspired by the European city, i.e. an understanding of urban composition based on the rules of geometry. The national capitals Bucharest, Athens, Belgrade and Sofia were completely transformed according

to neo-classical European models. Provincial cities and towns were also subject to total redesign based on ideal models as in the case of Danubian towns of Romania, or in the case of Nauplie, Patras, Tripoli, Aigion in Greece, remodeled on the basis of Hippodamean plan as an expression of the national identity at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Eastern Macedonian cities, towns and villages, which were integrated in Greece after the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913 and mostly destroyed by the war, were replanned this time according to the early twentieth century schemes of urbanism. Yerolympos points out that, except for the *tabula rasa* applied in Sofia, "more realistic tendencies" in consideration with "local conditions" were developed in Bulgaria at the end of the nineteenth century. The planning of Plovdiv (1891), which contents with the widening of certain main streets and introducing some public open spaces, exemplifies a respectful attitude towards the historical city. The author asserts that the reason for this can probably be searched in the "National Revival" movement in architecture (1840-1878) that emerged in this country, and which reappropriated traditional architectural features as national values.

The last part of the chapter is reserved to the Ottoman modernization. Though not explicitly articulated with the general conceptual framework of the chapter, it makes a brief review of the modernization efforts in the Ottoman Empire following the *Tanzimat* reforms. The urban and building regulations successively issued by the Ottoman governments -which Yerolympos qualifies "a very interesting part of the nineteenth century planning history"- aimed at a progressive transformation of the Ottoman cities. These regulations, which imposed a regular urban layout with reference to the imagery of the European city, were gradually put into implementation on the Ottoman urban scene. Cities and towns of the Ottoman provinces in the Balkans, which were more exposed to western influences than other parts of the Empire, witnessed a significant development in the second half of the nineteenth century. New economic and social relations that emerged due to growing relations with the West and "the

dynamism of various ethnic groups" played an important role in this development. The construction of railways and modern port installations created an effective transportation network, which highly contributed to the development of coastal cities in particular. Urban operations based on regular plan layouts were implemented in the Ottoman provinces: the pioneering example of the extension of Volos in 1845, was followed by that of Cavala (Kavala) in 1864, the founding of the new town of Dedeağaç in 1878, the reconstruction of the center of Janina (Yanya) after the fire of 1869 and that of Edirne in 1905. Thessaloniki (Selânik) and Monastir (Manastır) were subject to operations of modernization between 1870 and 1890.

The changing use of city walls and the opening of the traditional city: Thessaloniki

The third chapter entitled "from the traditional to the modern city" focuses on the changing uses of the city walls in the Balkan provinces of the Ottoman Empire in general, and the role they played in the extension of the city of Thessaloniki in particular. It is well known that the demolition of the old city walls played a crucial role in the reorganization of urban space and urban expansion in European cities all through the nineteenth century. According to the author, while the nineteenth century transformations in Ottoman cities can be placed within the same general context, they also stem from certain particularities. The use of urban fortifications in the Ottoman provinces in the Balkans presented some specificity. Their role changed in each case in relation with the geographic location of the settlement and the historical circumstances. Certain towns, which spontaneously developed in the Ottoman period, were never surrounded by walls. Others, which had been fortified since the ancient times extended outside the walls at the very beginning of the Ottoman rule. The districts formed outside the fortifications were called "varosh" –a word used in almost all Balkan cities. A third group consists of cities, which were surrounded by walls since the Byzantine times or earlier, and where any settlement outside the walls was strictly forbidden all through the

Ottoman rule until the mid nineteenth century. Volos, Cavala and Thessaloniki were such cities, all situated on the coast.

The demolition of the sea walls and that of the eastern walls in Thessaloniki (Selânik), in the second half of the nineteenth century, marked a turning point in the history of the city. The first operation was undertaken by the governor Sabri Pasha, who was representative of the influential *vali* figure of the *Tanzimat* period. The demolition of the sea walls came into the agenda as part of the comprehensive project of construction of the port in 1869. The project was put forward almost simultaneously with the beginning of the construction of the port of Smyrna (İzmir). However, in Thessaloniki (Selânik) the construction of the port was undertaken by the Public Works Department of the *Vilayet*, i.e. directly by the Ottoman government, as different from the case of İzmir where the operation was initiated and conducted by the enterprises of foreign capital (1). Yet, the project in Thessaloniki, as similar to the operation in İzmir, brought forth the creation of a strip of urban plots by filling up of the sea, to be sold to private investors by auctions in order to finance the construction of the port. The sea walls were demolished in 1870, and the material from demolition was used for filling the sea. The operation, which started as a success story, confronted, however, many problems going further to the breaking off of the construction. When the construction was completed finally in 1880, a strip of land of 1650 meters with a line of quays of 12 meters wide was accomplished. The author points out that the new Quays of Thessaloniki was "the most important planning operation ever undertaken by the Ottoman administration" in the region. The principal aim of the project was to open the old city to the sea, while providing space not only for the port facilities but also for central activities ranging from administration to financial uses and production. The strip of land created by the demolition of the sea walls and filling of the sea, was sold to the European investors and the rich from all religious communities of the city. With the "attractive buildings" constructed, the waterfront gained a "westernized" appearance, and became

(1) Mübahat Kütükoğlu (2000) "İzmir rihtımı inşaatı ve işletme imtiyazatı", *İzmir Tarihinden Keşitler*, İzmir, 201-207; and F. Candaş Bilsel, "Vers une Métropole Moderne de la Méditerranée", in Marie-Carmen Smyrnelis (ed.), *Smyrne 1830-1930: De la fortune à l'oubli*, Éditions Autrement, Paris (to be published in January 2006).

Sofia in 1878 and after 1880. Traditional layout and new plan by C. Amadier and B. Roubal; p.49.

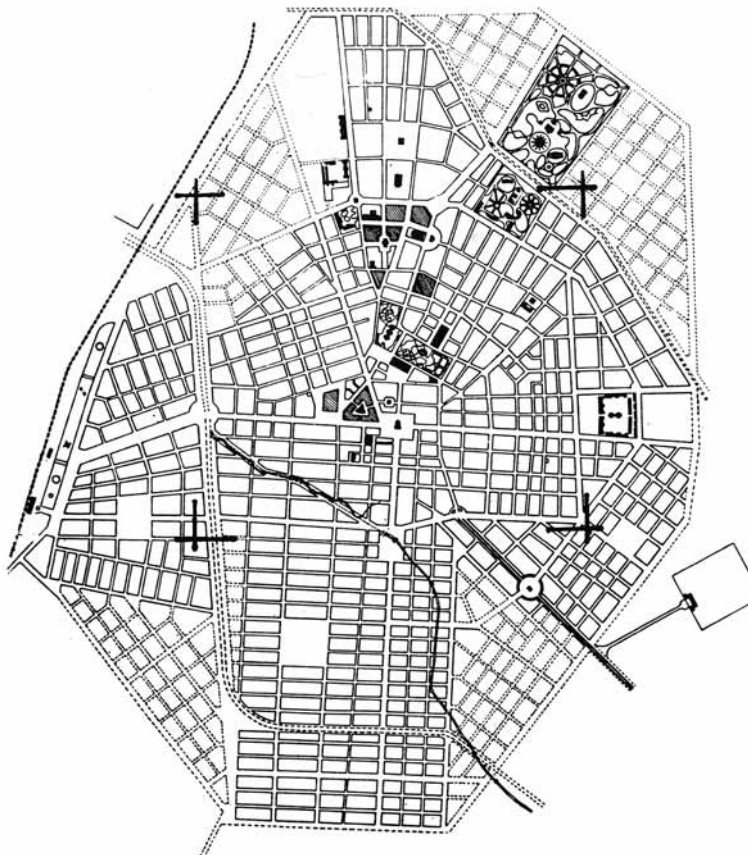
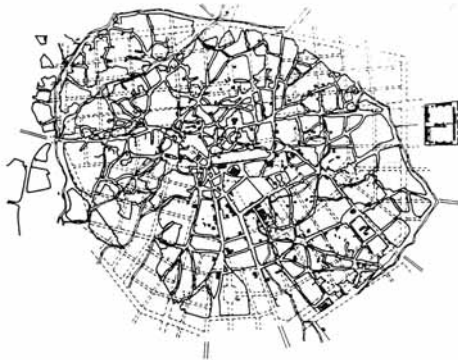
"the center of the economic and social life of the city", as Alexandra Yerolympou conclude. In this part, the author compares the history of the operation in Thessaloniki with that of the port of İzmir in particular. Indeed, a comparative in depth analysis of both cases will certainly provide valuable information on different aspects of the Ottoman urban modernization project and its actors, as well as models developed in this objective.

The second operation concerns a significant residential development project in which the Sultan himself was

directly implicated. In 1879, even before the demolition of the east wall of Thessaloniki, a project was developed on the area occupied by the wall, the strip of land belonging to the imperial family and the adjacent properties to religious *waqfs*. The project was designed around a boulevard, 18 meters wide and planted with trees, called the Hamidiye Boulevard after the name of the Sultan. It extended between the White Tower on the south and a square on its upper end. The development project included other perpendicular streets of 12, 9 and 7.5 meters in conformity with the urban regulation of 1864, and regular rectangular blocks. The houses built on the imperial property were designed identically according to the plans prepared by the architects sent from the capital. Called "*Sultanik*" (originally "*Sultanî*" probably), they became very popular amongst the rich European and Christian inhabitants of the city. This pilot operation, which the author presents in its details, was significant in two respects: First, it was an exemplary project that officially allowed the planned extension of the city outside the walls. Secondly it was a housing development project in which the Ottoman Sultan was directly involved. The houses, as in the case of Akaretler in Istanbul, were designed by the imperial architects, and built to be rented in order to bring income. The project of Hamidiye Boulevard in Thessaloniki certainly constitutes an important case for the history of urbanism and architecture of the late Ottoman period.

Edirne in the second half of the nineteenth century: the "decline of a traditional city"

The fifth chapter is a monographic study on the city of Edirne and the transformations that took place in the intra-muros city at the turn of the century. The administrative and commercial center of the Thrace, Adrianople (Edirne) was one of the most important cities of the European Turkey until the first decades of the nineteenth century. The Russo-Turkish war of 1828-29 and its occupation by the Russian army in 1829, by the French army during the Crimean war of 1854-1856, and the Russian invasion in 1877,



caused disruption and unrest in the city. At the end of the Russo-Turkish war of 1877-78, Edirne became a frontier city having lost an important part of its hinterland. Although it was the first city connected to İstanbul with the construction of the Oriental Railway line in 1869, this situation did not stop its economic and demographic recession. The growing maritime transportation with the opening of the Suez Canal contributed to the development of the port cities in the region, Thessaloniki, Cavala, Dedeağaç, while the urban centers inland notably regressed. Thessaloniki (Selânik), surpassed Edirne in population and economic activity in the second half of the nineteenth century.

After having set the geographical-historical context, Alexandra Yerolympos concentrates on the study of the socio-spatial morphology of the city of Edirne, making use of the written and graphic sources. The *Plan d'Adrianople*, dating from 1854, is an invaluable cartographic document that represents the urban fabric with exactitude. It is a plan prepared by Osmond, *chef d'escadron* in the French army, which occupied Edirne during the Crimean War. It was probably prepared for a project of fortification around the city. The Osmond plan of Adrianople drawn in 1:10 000 scale, has an index of 200 buildings, mosques, churches and synagogues included, hence giving clues about the ethnic-religious topography of the city in mid-nineteenth century. The index of the plan is organized in two parts: the city *extra-muros* and *intra-muros* (*Kaleiçi*). The regular plan layout inside the city walls contrasts with the "informal" layout of the surrounding districts. The grid-iron street layout of the ancient Adrianopolis survived although the city was destroyed by multiple fires and earthquakes, and reconstructed many times all through its history. *Kaleiçi* is inhabited by non-muslim communities, the Greeks, the Armenians and the Jews in the mid-nineteenth century as the number of old and new churches and synagogues witness. The presence of mosques and the names of streets point out that the muslims had lived also in *Kaleiçi* in the previous periods, but they moved to the surrounding districts outside the walls. The author studies the social topography of the districts of both

Kaleiçi and *Kaledişi*, dwelling on the Greek, Armenian and Jewish quarters in particular. It is interesting to note, however, that although the quotation from the French geographer Elysée Reclus indicates that Bulgarians were present in Edirne and formed an important community, Alexandra Yerolympos does not mention anything about their districts in the city.

The second plan of the city which dates from 1885 is drawn by Mehmed Selâmi, who was professor of drawing in the Military School of Edirne. Alexandra Yerolympos notes that there appear very little changes in the urban fabric when the plans of 1854 and that of 1885 are compared. Only the Karaağaç district, where the railway station was constructed, extended, but there is no other major development that occurred in these thirty years. This can certainly be explained by the economic and demographic recession of the city in this period.

In August 1905, a fire devastated the greatest part of *Kaleiçi* –the *intra-muros* districts.

A plan for the reconstruction of these districts was prepared by the municipal authorities, in conformity with the urban regulations of 1891. The mayor Dilâver Bey directed the works. Reconstruction of the districts destroyed by fire was perceived, by the reform oriented Ottoman authorities, as an effective means of regularizing the urban fabric. Regular reconstruction plans in conformity with urban and building regulations were implemented in İstanbul and other cities of the Empire since mid-nineteenth century (2). The same method was also applied in Edirne for the reconstruction of *Kaleiçi*. The Roman grid-iron layout of the *intra-muros* city was recreated in a sense with open streets intersecting perpendicularly. However, Alexandra Yerolympos points out to an "interesting feature" of the 1905 plan: the urban blocks were planned much smaller in comparison to the original ones. This was probably an outcome of the over fragmentation of properties and the necessity of planning all the parcels on streets, as the regulation did not permit to locate parcels in the middle of urban blocks.

(2) The author studied the issue in her article, Alexandra Yerolympos (2002) "Urban space as 'field' : Aspects of Late Ottoman Town Planning after fires", in Geneviève Massard-Guilbaud, Harold L. Platt, Dieter Schott (eds.), *Cities and Carastrophes, Villes et Catastrophes*, Peter Lang, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, Bern, Bruxelles, New York, Oxford, Wien. See also Stéphane Yerasimos (1993) "Istanbul ou l'urbanisme par le feu", in Stéphane Yerasimos and Frank Friès (eds.), *La Ville en Feu, in Recherche Cahiers*, Laboratoire de Théorie des Mutations Urbaines, Université de Paris VIII - Institut Français d'Urbanisme, *Cahiers*, n. 6-7, septembre-décembre 1993; 26-36.

The author concludes her study on Adrianople/Edirne by mentioning briefly the population exchange between Greece and Turkey at the beginning of 1920s. The multiple social structure of the city, as that of the others in the region, has completely changed with the new political picture (p. 84):

"The few remaining Greeks fled out in search of new homes in national territory. Somewhere on the road they might have crossed the Turks leaving the Macedonian cities, Thessaloniki, Serres, Cavala. For some of them, without their knowing, there might have been a mutual exchange of homes. The colourful polyethnic cities in the area would continue to live with new homogenous populations".

I would rather argue that in fact, the process of homogenization on the basis of national identities, which had begun with the creation of the first nation-states in the Balkans a century before, was being completed with the end of the Ottoman Empire.

Remaking of Thessaloniki after the fire of 1917

The last chapter of the book consists of an in depth study of the unique process of planning and reconstruction of Thessaloniki after the fire of 1917, within a very special political conjuncture (3). Following the Balkan wars of 1912-1913, Thessaloniki which had been at the center of disputes among different Balkan states, was

finally integrated within the territories of Greece. A few years later, the fire, which began in the north-west edge of the city center, rapidly spread and devastated most of the old city, an area of 128 hectares, including its center of commerce and business. The bazaars and modern shopping areas, banks, hotels, warehouses, three Byzantine churches, ten mosques and sixteen synagogues, European consulates and many school buildings were completely destroyed. 70.000 inhabitants found themselves homeless.

The rapidity and determination with which the Greek government acted for the reconstruction of the city can certainly be explained by its being a question of the highest national importance. The policies of the Liberal Government headed by the prime-minister Eleftherios Venizelos determined not only the decision of directing the reconstruction on the basis of planning but also the whole process of its implementation. Alexandra Yerolympos finds the process of planning and reconstruction of Thessaloniki unique in many respects. First, the government decides to proceed by obtaining a master plan. The author asserts that at that point, the convictions of the government to the possibility of achieving social progress through socio-economic development coincides with the social reformist bases of the town planning movement that conceives total reorganization of urban space as an effective tool for social progress. The planning of Thessaloniki constitutes a pioneering experience of town planning in Europe besides the colonial experiences of the same period.

Thessaloniki before the fire presented the aspect of a "medieval" city, although certain transformations had begun in the late Ottoman period. It was a "multilingual, multi religious society" formed of Christian, Jewish and Muslim communities organized in separate neighborhoods. Although new forms of social stratification based on socioeconomic differentiation emerged in the new quarters outside the city walls, the old city remained intact also in its age old social structure. The fire of 1917 which burnt down most of these old quarters, it offered the occasion to change the existing social relations, to dissolve the community structures

Plan of the historical centre of Thessaloniki by Ernest Hébrard, 1918; p.96.



(3) The author has a comprehensive book on the history of urbanism of Thessaloniki. Alexandra Yerolympos (1995) *The Replanning of Thessaloniki after the Fire of 1917*, University Studio Press, First edition, Thessaloniki, (2nd edition).

tightly bound to the urban space and its configuration. Fires had devastated the city's neighborhoods many times in its history. But each time they were reconstructed by their inhabitants, in the same way they had been, reproducing the existing community relations. The project of modernization of the Liberal government in Greece concerned not only that of the urban space in its totality, but that of the social relations in particular.

The first decision taken by the government was to prohibit the owners to rebuild their houses and buildings. It was decided "not to let Thessaloniki to be built on the same lines as before". The whole system of landownership as well as the preexisting patterns of land-use and occupational patterns in space were meant to be changed. According to the author, the conviction of the Liberal government in the necessity of detaching the inhabitants from their traditional environment in order to induce them to become competitive individuals, in other words "to realize their full economic capacity under competitive conditions" (p. 102) was the driving motive behind the decision of replanning the city.

The government decided to form a commission of Greek, French and British architects and engineers for the preparation of the planning scheme. The French architect-urbanist Ernest Hébrard, who was already in Thessaloniki as the head of the Archeological Service of the French Army -while the First World War was continuing- was finally commissioned at the head of the planning team. The team was composed of Joseph Pleyber, French military engineer, Aristotle Zachos, the Greek architect, and eighteen young French architects. The appointment of Hébrard for this task was certainly not a coincidence. He was a member of the circle of French architects who founded the Society of French Urbanists, and contributed to the activities of the *Musée Social*, association founded upon the ideals of social reformism, which worked for the institutionalization of town planning in France.

The planning of Thessaloniki did not only consist of a reconstruction plan. It was conceived as a master plan drawing the basic lines of the future urban

extension. It was conceived as a plan for a population of 350.000 while the existing population of the city was 170.000. The master plan was defining the major traffic arteries, the general types of land-use for each "zone" of the city and specific types of land-use within each "zone", decided upon population densities and the intensity of development (p. 109). The urban area was organized around a single center - to be reconstructed on the old city. A ring road with a green belt defined the limits of the city. Alexandra Yerolympos notes, at this point, an interesting feature of the plan: Although it designates land-uses such as "workers' housing", "middle and high income-group housing" -which is typical of the "zoning" understanding of the French urbanism of the period- or neighborhood centers, industry etc., it does not impose "zoning regulations". According to the author, these were "expected to result from the fixed land values, the subdivision of the land and the proposed building systems".

In the replanning of the central city, the planning commission studied the ancient grid system of the historical city and decided on keeping its essential elements. The three main streets lying parallel to the sea, including the Roman Via Egnatia, were integrated in the plan. A number of perpendicular main streets intersected these in right angle. The one which lies at the center was distinguished from the others with its design and the administrative uses gathered around it. Conceived as a green axis, which crosses the city from north to south, the "Boulevard Civic" was an invention of the planning team. While the plan referred to the ancient past of Thessaloniki by incorporating the Roman grid and Roman structures, it was also characterized by the diagonal axes -typical of the French urbanism of the period- integrated with the grid.

Outside the historic city, the planning team proposed residential developments in the form of garden suburbs. These were conceived as "workers' housing" on the east and "housing for middle and higher income groups" on the west. The latter were separated from the central city with a large green area reserved for the future university. It is interesting to note that the old neighborhood on the north -the

Vardaris quarter spared from the fire of 1917- was to be conserved and incorporated into the organic garden suburb layout of the new residential district proposed by Hébrard, as representing the “Byzantine style”.

Alexandra Yerolympos dwells particularly on the model of financing and the implementation process of the plan. The model adopted by the Greek government for financing the reconstruction of the city is certainly one of the most significant aspects of the whole process. The aforementioned goals that the Liberal government put forward at the very beginning seem to have determined the course of actions in the reconstruction of Thessaloniki. The preexisting landownership pattern of the old city was ignored on purpose in the planning. The author sees the reason of this in the determination of the political authority to dissolve the preexisting traditional community relations by transforming the patterns of spatial occupation. This was realized through the foundation of the Property Owners’ Association that aimed at gathering all the properties under the control of a single authority by bringing the landowners together as shareholders on the basis of the fixed value of each property. The new building plots defined by the plan, was to be sold off by open tender. The Association was founded by law in 1918. Although at the beginning, the transfer of these shares was prohibited to prevent monopolies to form, later it was allowed in order to overcome the resistance of certain communities –as in the case of the influential Jewish community who perceived the whole operation as a threat for their presence in the city. Such adjustment in the legislation allowed the authorities to lead the operations more effectively. Investors, not only from Thessaloniki but from all over Greece and the world were interested in the operation, and contributed to the reconstruction of the city. The operation brought an important capital flow to Thessaloniki. However, many of the old landowners who did not have the capacity to afford the increasing prices in the central city opted for selling their shares. The preexisting property relations were completely changed and the old community relations were dissolved. The social topography of the urban space was completely

reorganized according to a new social stratification based on economic criteria.

Although the central city was reconstructed at a significant speed, the master plan of Hébrard could not be realized in its integrity. However, the author asserts that the mode of space production introduced in Thessaloniki has become widespread in the urbanization of Greek cities.

It is interesting to note here that a similar model of financing the reconstruction was applied in the reconstruction of İzmir in 1930s (4). After Thessaloniki, İzmir was destroyed by a devastating fire in 1922, at another critical moment in the political history of the region, i.e. the end of the Greco-Turkish War. The municipality of İzmir addressed also to French urbanists Henri Prost, René and Raymond Danger for the preparation of a master plan (5). It is not impossible to think that the “success” of the model put into implementation in Thessaloniki, inspired the municipal authority in İzmir to overcome the financial problems it faced in the realization of the plan. With the exchange of population between Turkey and Greece after the Lausanne Treaty in 1923, an important number of population amongst which influential people originated from Thessaloniki were settled in İzmir. They were present during the operations in Thessaloniki and probably played a significant role in the transfer of the model to İzmir a few years later.

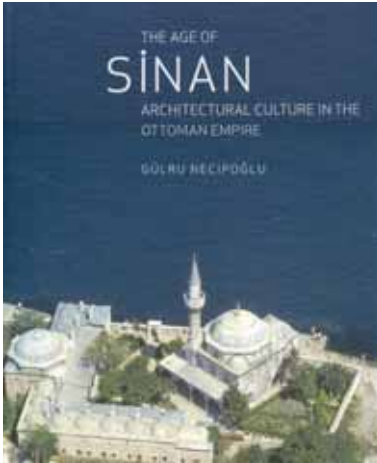
Alexandra Yerolympos’ comprehensive work on the “Urban Transformations in the Balkans” in the nineteenth and early twentieth century points out the importance of comparative studies in understanding parallel and diverging processes that took place in the past in the geography that once occupied by the Ottoman Empire. The history of the Nation-States which were founded on its heritage, also display similar ideological positions which outlined their policies as well as similar trajectories in their struggle for modernization and social progress.

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(4) On this issue, see Erkan Serçe (1998) *Tanzimat’tan Cumhuriyet’e İzmir’de Belediye (1868-1945)*, Dokuz Eylül Yayınları, İzmir, and F. Cânâ Bilsel, “Une ville renaît des cendres: la création de Smyrne la républicaine”, in Marie-Carmen Smyrnelis (ed.), *Smyrne 1830-1930 : De la fortune à l’oubli*, Editions Autrement, Paris (to be published in January 2006).

(5) F. Cânâ Bilsel (1997) “Ideology and urbanism during the early republican period: two master plans for İzmir and scenarios of modernization”, *METU Journal of Faculty of Architecture*, vol. 16, 1996, n. 1-2; 13-30.



GÜLRU NECİPOĞLU

**THE AGE OF SİNAN:
ARCHITECTURAL CULTURE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

Gülru Necipoğlu in her latest book focuses on Sinan. It is the product of a decade's work and provides a fresh perspective to a historic figure and his works, that have been overexploited in architectural historiography. It is possible to evaluate Necipoğlu's work in various ways but in this review, I would like to dwell on interpretation of Sinan as a historical figure.

Both in national and international scales, studies on Sinan generally refer to his unique, near-modern architectural creativity which challenges his cultural context. In historiography of world architecture, it is easier to write a monograph on Sinan than include him in generic chronological analyses (1). Sinan as a subject is appealing to a limited group of audience who are specifically interested in architectural products of non-Western cultures. Except for Spiro Kostof's influential textbook *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals*, it is hard to find a world-scale analysis of architectural history that undertakes Sinan's buildings elaborately within cross-cultural comparisons (2). In the national scale, it is not an exaggeration to say that historiography of Sinan continues to be in a sacrosanct mode; Sinan, being the 'Grand Architect', is either the favorite theme of memorials held every year or he is an exceptional premodern historical problematic through whom one should be cautious not to make universal assumptions about Ottoman architecture (3). In either case, Sinan is an autonomous genius who uses his creativity with freewill in his works; he is rational and experimental in the modern sense (4). The stability of his structures, his architectural forms in which the exterior reflects the interior, the architectonics of his buildings not being over-burdened by ornamentation, are among sufficient reasons that make him the *ahistorical* symbol of modernity of a nation that has suffered a great deal about modernization.

Necipoğlu grounds the theoretical concern of her book on the basis of a critique of these general assumptions. She challenges both marginalization of Sinan's architecture by monolithic-

Orientalist attitude towards Islamic architecture, and the reduction of Sinan himself into a symbol in the national discourse which separates him from his cultural context. Moreover, she argues that a linear-chronological history model that mainly relies on Sinan's funerary mosque complexes in and around İstanbul is a prevalent way of disconnecting the architect from his context. These evaluations reiterate stylistic debates based on form, and thus create a secular narrative of architectural history in which buildings are seen as ends in themselves rather than the outcomes of cultural production (p.15).

Necipoğlu in her book takes on a new look to Sinan's architectural style by favoring cultural significance of architecture. She maintains that style is not a matter of chronology in Sinan's case but a matter of location and patron's intentions. Thus, she renders architectural production not as a conceptualization process of the autonomous architect but as a cultural production shaped by contextual parameters such as institutional, political, social, economic, cultural and aesthetic practices. *Decorum* is the conceptual key in Necipoğlu's approach that elaborates Sinan's religious monuments as different representations of a standardized vocabulary of repetitive canonical forms expressing the status of their patrons. However, she further argues that the concept of *decorum* is not a fixed straightjacket serving to form another monolithic reading of Ottoman architecture. On the contrary, it is subject to changes in circumstances revealing contingencies and different self-expressions (pp. 20-21).

Therefore, Necipoğlu in her re-interpretation of Sinan unveils a panorama of Ottoman architectural production through the example of funerary mosque complexes that served as the legitimate symbol of Ottoman Sultans' and elites' power. In this panorama, architect Sinan is undertaken both as an individual and as an institution through the context of the Corps of Royal Architects (*Hassa*

1. As example, see Godfrey Goodwin (1993) *Sinan: Ottoman Architecture and Its Values Today*, Saqi Books, London.

2. Spiro Kostof (1995) *A History of Architecture: Settings and Rituals*, Oxford University Press, New York.

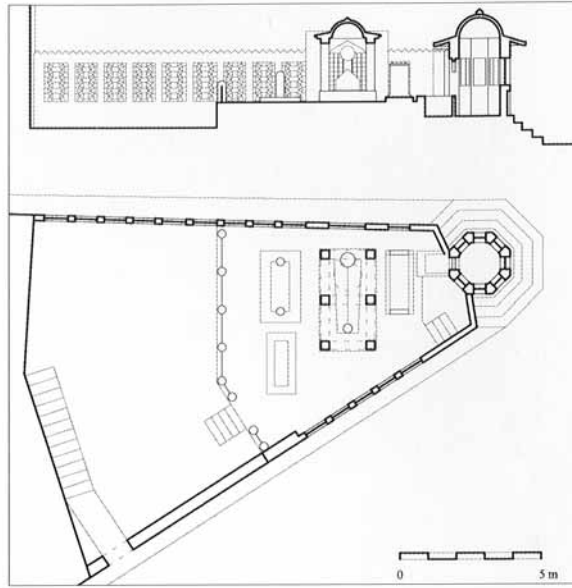
3. For a critique of Sinan historiography in Turkey see Uğur Tanyeli (2005) *Klasik Osmanlı Dünyasında Değişim, Yenilik ve "Eskilik" Üretimi: Bir Grup Sinan Türbesi Üzerinden Okuma*, in *Afife Batur'a Armağan: Mimarlık ve Sanat Tarihi Yazıları*, ed. Mazlum, Ağır, and Cephanecigil (2005) *Literatür Yayıncılık*, İstanbul; 25.

4. Kuban's work is exemplary of this kind of approach. Doğan Kuban (1997) *The Style of Sinan's Domed Structures, Muqarnas: An Annual on Islamic Art and Architecture IV*; 72-97; Doğan Kuban (1997) *Sinan'ın Sanatı ve Selimiye (Sinan's Art and Selimiye)* Tarih Vakfı Yurt Yayınları, İstanbul.

GÜLRU NECİPOĞLU
**THE AGE OF SİNAN: ARCHITECTURAL
CULTURE IN THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE**

(London, Reaktion Books, 2005)
Architectural drawings and photographs of Sinan works by Arben N. Arapi and Reha Günay, illustrated, 592 p.

ISBN 1-86189-244-6



Plan and cross-section of Sinan's tomb enclosure, İstanbul, with a baldachin over sarcophagus on a raised prayer platform and an octagonal domed water dispenser at the corner, p.150.

5. See Kuban's preface to recent critical editions of these texts in Turkish. Sai Mustafa Çelebi (2002) *Yapılar Kitabı: Tezkiretü'l-Bünyan ve Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye (Mimar Sinan'ın Anıları)*, ed. Hayati Develi Samih Rifat, Arzu Karamani Pekin, Koç Kültür Sanat, İstanbul; 7-9.

Mosque of Nurbanu Sultan, Üsküdar, interior view of the domical superstructure, p. 291.



Mimarlar Ocağı). Construction industry and processes, the duties of the chief imperial architect as a designer and a builder, cost estimations, changing intentions and passions of the patrons are all represented within a historical narrative. The aesthetic tendencies of the age are given as a natural part of the larger socio-cultural expectancies. In addition to prominent examples of mosques in and around İstanbul in which Sinan's personal interventions are explicit, Necipoğlu explores smaller projects in remote parts of the Empire in detail in relation to their patrons.

Apart from the lively historical narrative of Ottoman architectural

culture condensed above, Necipoğlu's innovative approach to previously published and unpublished historical evidence deserves particular attention in order to highlight her re-interpretation of Sinan. To illustrate, in her reading of Sinan as an individual, she gives a central role to Sinan's biographies penned by Sai Mustafa Çelebi. Ranging from several drafts as well as five different versions, autobiographical memoirs were commissioned by Sinan himself to his poet-painter friend Sai Mustafa Çelebi in the late sixteenth-century. Different versions of the texts have different names such as *Tuhfetü'l-Mi'marin* (The Choice Gift of the Architects), *Tezkiretü'l-Ebniye* (Biographical Memoir of Buildings) and *Tezkiretü'l-Bünyan* (Biographical Memoir of Construction)(p. 127).

Necipoğlu argues that despite Sinan's assertive voice in the texts and his aspiration for global fame, his self-description is confined to a laconic overview of his career through a list of promotions without disclosing much at all about his personality. Nevertheless, she accentuates the uniqueness of these texts in Islamic architecture and their potential for evaluating Sinan's self-image. Despite the lack of architectural treatises written by Sinan, Necipoğlu argues that building lists at the end of each of the four memoirs further mark the architect's anxiety to assert authorship over his buildings which would otherwise remain anonymous (pp. 128, 135).

In contrast with the mainstream approach that sees these biographical texts as average examples of Ottoman Court Literature enmeshed with poetic clichés that should be perceived with caution in a historical analysis, Necipoğlu forces the barriers of interpretation (5). Furthermore, she attracts attention to their similarity of intention and objective with the Renaissance *vita* genre written for Italian artists and architects. She maintains that the expression 'divine' (*divino*) used by Manetti for Brunelleschi and by Condivi for Michelangelo is not much different from Sai's expressions for Sinan such as 'divine maestro' (*aziz-i kardan*) and 'divine architect' (*mi'mar-ı mübarek*). As his memoirs suggest, Sinan is not unlike his Renaissance contemporaries by his God-given architectural skills.



Parade of glaziers, from İntizami's *Sûrnâme*, folder 402r, p.163.

Indeed, the common *topos* employed in three distinct biographies (Sinan's, Brunelleschi's and Michelangelo's) is that of the misunderstood genius-protagonist who struggles to pursue his projects within a web of envious rivals that mostly lack skills and enough understanding to cope with them (p.137). Highly speculative and panegyric in nature, these texts work to mystify their subjects with their claims of authorship and originality. Necipoğlu does not make such comparisons for achieving hasty conclusions or reductions regarding Sinan; she rather uses them to express the complexity of the historical context she undertakes by highlighting its uniqueness through similarities and differences with other contexts (6).

Another historical document Necipoğlu employs to interpret Sinan's persona is his endowment deed (*waqfiyya*). Apart from guaranteeing the future of his belongings and investments for the benefit of his relatives and the society, his endowment deed is evidence of Sinan's deep sense of piety shaped by his *sünni* inclinations. For example, Sinan allocates half an asper each to thirty pious chanters of the Süleymaniye

Mosque in order to recite *Ikhlâs* sura three times and the *Fatiha* once at his tomb daily. The endowment deed is full of budgets reserved for such religious rituals and commemorations whose time and space are specifically determined. Moreover, unlike the endowment deeds belonging to previous chief architects such as Atik Sinan and Acem Alisi, as a result of the *sünni* influence rooted in the reign of Süleyman the Lawgiver, Sinan's endowment deed does not include a dervish convent. Another curious theme mentioned in the endowment deed is Sinan's civic consciousness; he commands several fountains to be built for the benefit of the society and he reserves special budget for the maintenance of sidewalks for pedestrians (p.152).

By deriving from these clues, Necipoğlu convincingly interrogates the legitimacy of undertaking Sinan as the misunderstood genius of architectural rationality in a society caught in medieval mentality. As she shows through his biographies and the endowment deed, Sinan is exactly the man of his time. Moreover, from sultans' praiseful decrees to various historical sources penned by authors and Ottoman historians such as Eyyubi, Celâlzade Mustafa and Gelibolulu Mustafa Ali, we see that Sinan was appreciated and celebrated highly in his age and in later Ottoman periods as well (p. 146). These evaluations on Sinan's identity and age are crucial to understand both the architect and his architecture; because claims of objectivity in historiography are essentially shaped by the presumptions and the prejudices of the contemporary interpreters.

To sum up, Necipoğlu's book is replete with re-interpretations that interrogate generic assumptions and prejudices regarding Sinan and his architecture as exemplified by two groups of historical sources in this review. Besides opening new avenues in studies of Ottoman architecture, it provides an enjoyable reading not only for Ottoman historians but also for those who are interested in Ottoman culture and architecture in general.

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6. For a detailed comparison of Sinan's biographies with Renaissance *vita* examples, see Selen Morkoç (2005) Celebration as a Historiographic Tool: Example of Architect Sinan, in *Celebration: XXII Annual Conference of the Society of Architectural Historians Australia and New Zealand*, ed. Andrew Leach and Gill Matthewson, Napier, New Zealand; 261-67.



HENRY SANOFF

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION METHODS IN DESIGN AND PLANNING

With "Community Participation Methods in Design and Planning", Henry Sanoff provides the readers with a compact extract of his work on the conceptual and practical development of participatory design and planning. It is crucial to point at Sanoff's – strategically located – first sentence in the preface of the book: the conception that "community design" is an umbrella term, embracing community planning, community architecture, social architecture, community development and community participation. With this very first step, the author clarifies his approach to design and planning, while initiating a series of very important lessons to those who are either new to the field, or to those who embrace "prima donna"s as the masters of their professions. His starting point is that, in any medium of decision-making about communities, including their built environment, people must have a voice. This approach puts planning, architecture and other built environment related professions on the same camp (!), and focuses on the act of making informed decisions based on users' position(s).

In other words, Sanoff argues that in a community, instead of the minority (almost always an "expert") or the majority (almost always a group of people that vote univocally) deciding on the future, a consensus among different stakeholder groups should be sought. The body of the text is really an attempt to explain this notion to the audience by first noting the objectives of participation in decision-making, second introducing systematically the methods of participation, and third clarifying how this can be done with examples.

The first chapter of the book takes the readers back to 60s and 70s, and introduces the idea of participation in decision-making with references to key figures such as Saul Alinsky and Paul Davidoff. The rest of this chapter, after discussing the current views of community participation, dismantles and analyzes the phases, role players and outcomes of participatory processes. In fact, the first chapter of the book makes the tough job of introducing the idea of participation

from the social, cultural and behavioral perspectives look real easy: newcomers to the field will (and I have witnessed, did) benefit enormously from this step-by-step introduction. The second chapter only complements this introduction with clear and straightforward explanations of participation methods. This chapter also brings a much-needed series of clarifications to the field, at a time where the use of the terms such as "charrette", "workshop", and "visioning" have turned almost arbitrary, or at least "fashion" driven. This, again, is extremely advantageous not only for newcomers, but also for those whose minds have been blurred with the "terminology stew" pouring mostly out of architecture schools around the globe.

The last three chapters of Sanoff's 2000 output focuses on participatory approaches that have been implemented in the last three decades in the context of educational facilities, housing and various urban environments. These chapters in fact demonstrate the design and implementation of participatory decision-making instruments in architecture and planning, while providing showcases of how participatory processes can be initiated, sustained and successfully completed.

Being an extract of Sanoff's work of more than three decades, the book can be instrumental in introducing basic methodological issues in environment and behavior research, particularly visual research methods in planning and design. Sanoff's book also comes in handy in the current state of confusion about concepts and terms, particularly in architecture, but not sparing planning – especially with the "introduction" of New Urbanism. While elaborating on participatory approaches and participation methods, Sanoff shows that participatory design is a complex process, one certainly exceeding the scope and content of what is usually referred to as "community building charrettes" by New Urbanists. The same display stands almost like a fire alarm considering more recent uses of the term charrette, referring to information exchange among architects, by the

HENRY SANOFF
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IN DESIGN AND PLANNING

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hardcover, 306 p.

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architects. Obviously not much can be said once such “charrettes” themselves are pointed at as examples of participatory design. Nevertheless, may be this is simply fair game, in a period where personal opinions presented as research give those conducting empirical research heart attacks...

Henry Sanoff’s proposal that the professional will benefit from developing solutions from “a continuous dialogue with those who will use his or her work (p. 12)” is not a new one, but is one that receives

considerable confrontation in design disciplines, particularly in architecture. With its systematic introduction of the concepts, methods and instruments of participatory design, his latest book demonstrates that as opposed to causing an erosion, participation reinforces the professional’s power, as well as his/her level of received trust and respect. Could *this* be the time for us to listen?

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