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Comparison of Ottoman Era Skopje Bazaar with Similar Bazaars

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Abstract

The formation of the typical Turkish bazaar in cities is directly related to the understanding of "futuwwa" and the tradition of "akhism". As a common-public education organization that trained well-behaved professionals with high moral values, the Akhi organization shaped the bazaars that formed the center of the social life of the Ottoman city.

These cities, which were built according to an understanding that protects unity and integrity while glorifying individuality, are under threat today for different reasons. The aim of this study is to comparatively analyze the social and architectural changes that have taken place over time in the bazaars, which were built in recent history and have a rich cultural diversity even within themselves. For this purpose, based on the Skopje Bazaar, the bazaars of Istanbul, Bursa, Tokat, Korçe (Görice), Novi Pazar, Sarajevo, Monastir and Thessaloniki were analyzed.

Key Words: *Medival Ottoman bazaar, urban heritage, akhism*

1. Introduction

The formation of the typical Turkish bazaar in cities is directly related to the understanding of "futuwwa" and the tradition of "akhism". The Futuwwa, was broadly present in Anatolia from the 13th century onwards, especially through the akhisim in the bazaars. In Anatolia, the Ahi order was transformed into an well organized structure through the social, political and even military struggles of Ahi Evran, a follower of phzlospsher Evhad al-Din Kirmani. Fetâ means "young, valiant, generous" in the Arabic dictionary, while futuwwa means "youth, heroism, generosity" (Ocak 1996, p.261). According to the worldview of interconnected phylosophers such as Ahmet Yesevi, Evhadu'd-Dîn-i Kirmanî, Ahi Evren, Hacı Bektaş, Hacı Bayram, Edebali, people should make a living through manual labor. This means a division of labor at certain points. Akhilik can also be described as a set of norms of this division of labor based on Islamic morality (Barkan, 1942, p. 11). As a common-public education organization that trained well-behaved professionals with high moral values, the Akhi organization shaped the bazaars that formed the center of the social life of the Ottoman city.

In this article, the similarities and differences of the Skopje Bazaar, which constitutes the core culture of the akhi concept in Europe, with other bazaars created in the same period are discussed in the context of cultural continuity. The connection between shops as an architectural unit and crafts as a social unit in the medieval Turkish Bazaar, which spread from Skopje, constituted the most fundamental and determining factor of medival Turkish urban culture.

Turks created a unique identity in literature, art, architecture and urbanization with hundreds of years of accumulation from the geographies they conquered in their westward movement from the 9th century onwards. The Ottoman Empire also started to build its own civilization facilities in the newly conquered lands according to this new way and style. In the cities, an infinite richness of images was created with works that were created using the same materials and did not repeat or deny their predecessors (Ayvazoğlu, 1999, p.25). These cities, which were built according to an understanding that protects unity and integrity while glorifying individuality, are under threat today for different reasons. The aim of this study is to comparatively analyze the social and architectural changes that have taken place over time in the bazaars, which were built in recent history and have a rich cultural diversity even within themselves (Figure 1). For this purpose, based on the Skopje Bazaar, the bazaars of Istanbul, Bursa, Tokat, Korçe (Görice), Novi Pazar, Sarajevo, Monastir and Thessaloniki were analyzed.



Figure 1. Different type of storefront

2. Bazaars

2.1. Skopje Bazaar

In the late 14th century, Skopje came under Ottoman rule and became the center of the Ottoman Empire during the Balkan campaigns of Mehmet the Conqueror (İnbaşı 1995, p.9). In the 16th century, it became an inner region city of the Ottoman Empire, the majority of which was Muslim. Ottoman urbanization in the Balkans, unlike the urbanization culture in the east, is characterized by more frequent and smaller urbanization, forming parts of a larger economic system through the akhilik organization. The development of cities in the Ottoman Empire took place around religious, social, commercial and educational facilities established through foundations.

The Bazaar of Skopje was established in a central area where all roads in the city intersected, close to the castle and on the hilly north side of the river. In the 17th century, Skopje was known as a vibrant commercial center of Europe, but the biggest disaster it suffered was in 1689 when the Austrian army under the command of Piccolomini set the city on fire. The city never regained its former splendor (Ayverdi, 1981, p.84).

From the mid-19th century onwards, the city received an intensive Muslim migration following the Ottoman territorial losses in Europe and regained its central position. Intensive infrastructure and transportation investments were made in the city during this period. The railway line, which was connected to Thessaloniki in 1873, was extended to Belgrade in 1888, thus Skopje established a direct connection with Central Europe (Ankay 2015, p.22).

On the other hand, municipal activities were carried out in accordance with the Provincial (Vilâyet) Municipality and Dersaadet Municipality Laws enacted during this period. According to a document dated August 17, 1908, it was requested to reorganize the area by taking the zoning law into consideration in the new planning to be made in the bazaar, and to grant loans for this purpose or to allow the shop owners to build another floor. Therefore, in the Kazancılar Bazaar where the fire broke out, masonry buildings of stone or brick with large height and internal volume were built on a straight line. For large openings in the roofs of these buildings, sheet metal rails were used instead of wood [1] (Figure 2).



Figure 2. In a building built after the 1908 fire using jack arch for roof construction

In 1913, the Ottoman rule in Skopje came to an end. After this date, all the Islamic monuments in the new settlements on the south side of the Vardar River were destroyed over time. However, after the 1963 earthquake, the Skopje Institute of Town Planning and Architecture (ITPA) was established under the auspices of the United Nations and a conservation plan was prepared for the bazaar (Figure 3). According to the plan, the central areas of the city were connected by monumental "walls" and "gates", referring to European medieval city plans (Stefanovska et al. 2012, p.93). According to the 1970 zoning study, the jewelers' texture on the upper side of the Çifte Hammam was replaced by "service crafts" over time, extending to the end of the street where the Bitpazar is located today. On the street lined with stove makers, only one stove maker's shop that has been in the same pro-

fession for more than 100 years has survived to the present day. The places designated for eating and drinking have partially survived to the present day.

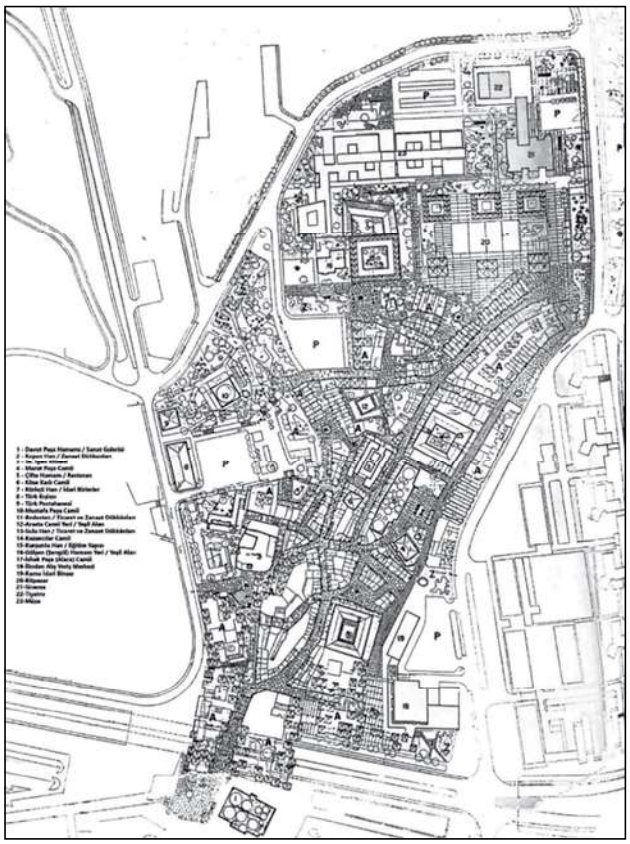


Figure 3. ITPA Plan for the Skopje Bazaar (Arsovski, 1970: 54).

Although some of the souvenir shops have been relocated, a row of shops on the north side of the bazaar, including a chocolate shop, and a few quilt shops have survived from that period. Most of the area marked as "specialized craftsmen" on the map has been lost and only one blacksmith shop has survived. Most of the area marked on the map is today outside the Bazaar Conservation Area. The area where the boilermakers were located has been transformed into an area where entertainment areas are concentrated today (İbrahimgil, 2018, p.134).

In the 19th century, there were approximately 90 different occupational groups in the bazaar. In the bazaar, where strict craftsmen discipline was practiced, artisans were administered by a legal and administrative structure consisting of Muslim, Christian and mixed classes. The craftsmen belonging to the mixed class were subject to both administrative systems and bore the seal of both religions. This understanding was largely maintained until the 1960s (İbrahimgil 2018, p.142). This shows that the culture of Akhi was continued as a tradition, albeit partially, until recent history.

The shops in Skopje Bazaar came together in three types (Figure 4). The first one is the shops formed by surrounding the monumental buildings, the second one is the type that forms an island of shops back to back, and the third one is the shops lined up in a single row with the emptying of the back over time. There are seven different types along the façade, the most common being ground + 1 storey (Figure 5). The upper covers of the shops are covered with three types of roofs. The most common roof type is the shed roof, which extends backwards from the front façade in a single plane and provides space on the upper floor. 376 (57%) of the shops within the conservation area were built with masonry construction system.

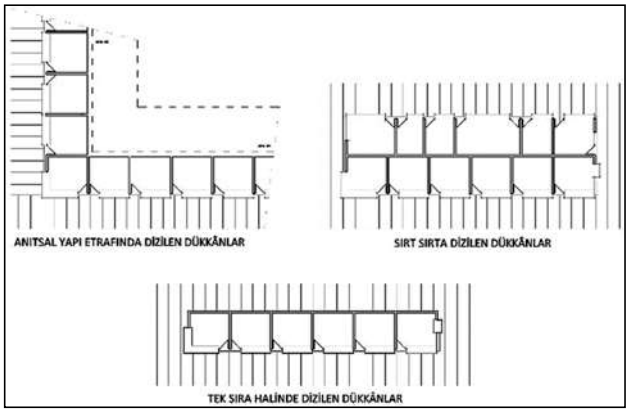


Figure 4. Layout typology of the shops

One of the most important architectural formations in the typology of the medieval Turkish Bazaar is the storefront. The use of glass in the shops, which were initially glassless and shuttered, led to the formation of a storefront typology (Figure 6). Today, a very rich storefront typology has emerged in the bazaar, eight horizontally and three vertically.

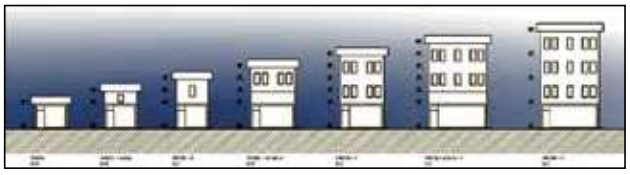


Figure 5. Types of storey heights

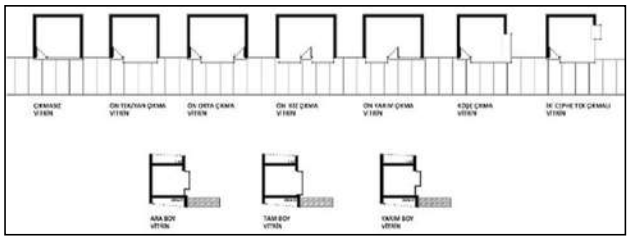


Figure 6. Typology of storefronts in shops

2.2. Istanbul Grand Bazaar

Immediately after the conquest of Istanbul, Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror gave the city its Turkish identity with the zoning and settlement plans he initiated. In order to strengthen the commercial activities in the city, which had weakened during the Byzantine period, he built a bazaar with two thousand shops and two bedestens. The location and position of the Istanbul Bedesten and the bazaar surrounding it were personally determined by Mehmet II. The Grand Bazaar was established to be one of the world's leading economic centers and to repair the defacement during the conquest and to restore the city (İnalcık, 1997, p.125). These efforts were not only based on construction, but in order to restore the social structure of the city, he invited Ali Kuşçu from Samarkand, one of the brilliant centers of science and culture of that period, to Istanbul and put him in charge of the madrasas he established (Aydın, 1989, p.408).

The Turks expanded and developed the commercial area of Istanbul from the extension near the Hagia Sophia Mosque, centering on the Grand Bazaar, to Sirkeci, Eminönü and Tahtakale. The area around the Beyazıt Mosque and the Old Palace (now the university headquarters) limited this part of the bazaar (Cezar, 1985, p.78). Thus, the roads coming from Hagia Sophia, Edirnekapı, Yedikule and the Golden Horn would converge at Beyazıt Square (Sönmez, 1993, p. 3). In this neighborhood, which constituted the most crowded district of the city and was mostly based on shopping, professions were divided into sections and different professional groups settled together (Cerasi, 1999, p.81). For example, even today, the locations of bookbinders and booksellers in the Grand Bazaar have remained almost unchanged for five centuries (Ayverdi, 1985, p.219).

The Grand Bazaar was built around a fifteen-domed bedesten structure. Inside this bedesten, small compartment shops lined up adjacent to the walls and vaulted shops were built on the walls facing outwards. When it was first built, it was in the form of streets with poles and shops lined up behind the poles (Eyice,1992, p.510). When the endowments related to the Grand Bazaar are examined, 849 shops were built immediately after the construction of the bedesten, and 265 more shops were added to the bazaar after the construction of the second bedesten a very short time later. In addition, nearly 800 more shops within the bazaar area were built during the reign of Mehmet II (Sönmez, 1993, p.7).

The Grand Bazaar reached its highest level in the 17th century, but took its final form after the earthquake of 1894. In the early 1900s, the shops consisted of 6-8 foot narrow and small spaces called cabinets, consisting of a section where the seller sat and closed shelves behind him. The doors consisted of shutters that moved up and down. Since the use of glass was very limited, there were no showcases and the goods were hung on shutters or kept on shelves (Eyice, 1992, p. 511).

2.3. Bursa Bazaar

Bursa is the most typical example of Turkish urbanism not only in terms of the bazaar but also in its entirety. It is the most important city in the Turkish city that best reflects the layout of the bazaar, where the buildings with different functions are fused with each other with a placement order and neighborhood formations are exhibited (Cezar, 1985, p.90). The proximity of the bazaar to the castle provides security, topographically it is on the threshold between the mountain and the plain, and in terms of the development status of the city, it is on the ring road (Cezar, 1985, p.57). The construction of the bazaar was shaped around the vaulted "Uzun Bazaar" extending in a straight line from the bedesten, the core of the Ottoman Turkish bazaar, westward to the Koza Han gate (Cerasi, 1999, p.81).

In addition to monumental buildings such as inns, caravanserais, mosques and baths, other bazaars, some of which were in the form of arasta, were also lined up around this Uzun Çarşı Street (Figure 7). Madrasahs, on the other hand, were often excluded from the bazaar, but with the enlargement of the bazaar, they remained in or near

the bazaar (Cezar, 1985, p.98). According to archival records, the Bursa bazaar underwent many changes over time due to fires and earthquakes, and some places that were previously closed were opened and some places that were open were covered (Ayverdi, 1981, p.130). Bursa inns are generally two-storey masonry buildings with a courtyard in the middle. The inner courtyard of most inns is surrounded by porticoes.

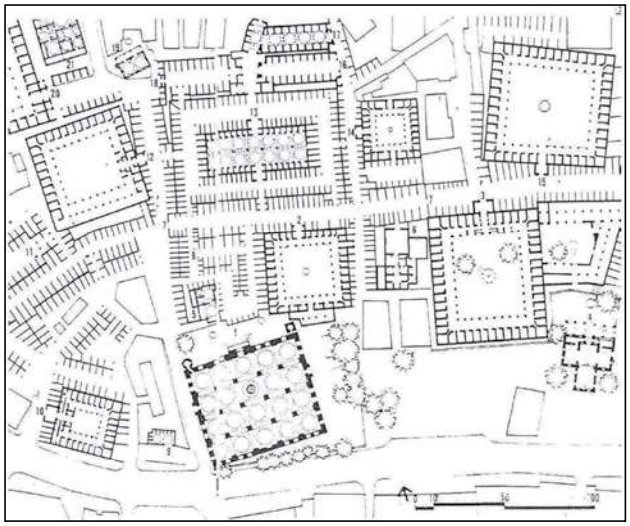


Figure 7. Plan view of the buildings in the inn district (Kosifoğlu, 2000, p.176)

2.4. Tokat Bazaar

The bazaar of Tokat began to form during the Danisment period, became more prominent during the Seljuk period and developed during the Ottoman period. Being located on caravan routes in the middle of Anatolia, its proximity to mineral deposits and silk weaving and silk-based weaving made the city a commercial center. Tokat's bazaar developed longitudinally in parallel with the topography of the land on the southern slope of the castle built on the top of a steep slope. The main part of the Tokat bazaar, consisting of the Bedesten, the adjacent arasta, the nearby inns and shops, is an important example of the "Long Bazaar" street formation, even in a city built on a faulted area, in terms of both proximity to the castle and the effort to fit the topography and to settle in the central part of the city (Cezar, 1985, p.65).

In the bazaar of Tokat, monumental buildings are located close to each other in the bazaar area due to topographical conditions. Sulu Street is the long street of the bazaar (Figure 8). The bedesten adjacent to the arasta is located in the middle of this street (Aksulu & Kuntay, 2013, p.33). Most of the large and small inns, madrasahs, baths and mosques built in different periods are on this line. Most of the buildings were built with rubble stone or cut stone.

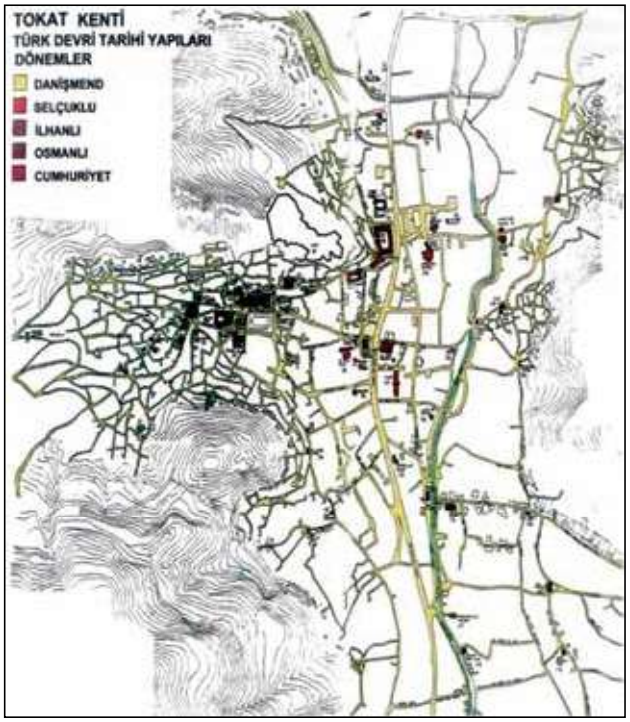


Figure 8. Tokat Castle and city development (Aksulu ve Kuntay, 2013, p.33).

2.5. Novi Pazar Bazaar

Novi Pazar was founded in the mid-15th century by Isa Bey, the son of Ishak Bey, the conqueror of Skopje, as a Turkish city south of Eski Pazar (Pazarişte / Trgovişte). The city is located in the mountainous region of Sanjak, a crossroads where all roads intersect between Sarajevo, Dubrovnik, Zeta, Skopje and Niš, especially in the east-west trade of the Balkans through valleys and plateaus. The foundation of the city was laid around a small garrison building on the plain where the Joşanica River flows into the Raşka River, with mosques, inns, baths and shops built on both sides of the water (Aruçi, 2008, p.100). According to the travelers who visited the region, the buildings in Novi Pazar, one of the most populous cities of the Balkans, were made of mudbrick and stone (Figure 9). However, after the Vienna Defeat (1683), the city was burned

and destroyed. The region, which was exposed to plunder and attacks many more times after that, lost its commercial importance with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina by Austria. On the other hand, Novi Pazar was included in the Ottoman European railway project for the commercial revival of the region, which remained under Ottoman rule until 1913 (Premoviç, 2014, p.12).

Starting from the period of Gazi Isa Bey, many monuments have survived in the city. The core of the bazaar is formed by the foundation monuments built on both sides of the Joşanica River west of the Raşka River. The bazaar extends from this point towards the castle and the Altun Alem Mosque. The bedesten within the bazaar is currently used for accommodation and shops.



Figure 9. Shop windows and stalls in Novi Pazar (Premoviç, 2014, p.122)

2.6. Görice (Korçe) Bazaar

Located in the south of Albania, Görice was an early Ottoman city, incorporated into Ottoman rule by Mirahor İlyas Bey in the early 15th century.

The surviving Görice Bazaar developed between the Ilyas Bey Mosque and the inns. The bazaar runs parallel to today's city square. The four surviving inns in the city face the market square of the bazaar (Figure 10). Görice inns, which are larger than other inns in Albania, show traces of the vibrant commercial life of the past (Sulo et al. 2014, p.144). The texture and shops of the bazaar, most of the monumental buildings of which have been demolished, show typical 15th century bazaar characteristics.



Figure 10. Korçe Bazaar and inns (Sulo et al., 2014)

2.7. Saraybosna Bazaar (Başçarşija)

Sarajevo was conquered by Isa Bey, the grandson of Pasha Yiğit Bey, the conqueror of Skopje, in the 1460s. From a small town, it became an important cultural and commercial center of Europe after the Ottoman conquest. The city experienced its main development during Gazi Hüsrev Bey's sanjakbeylik in Bosnia (1521-1541) (Šabanović, 1959). The Başçarşija also developed around the Gazi Husrev Bey Complex (Mujezinoviç, 1985). In this period, many craftsmen from Bursa, Skopje and even Tabriz were settled in these regions through the akhilik organization in order to revive trade and create the social fabric in the newly conquered regions or existing cities. The "inverted T-plan" or "zaviyeli" mosques, which are common in this geography, met the temporary accommodation needs of the ahis until they established order in the bazaar. The akhi imam, who was assigned to this type of mosque, directed and managed the akhis who came to the city, and the imam performed the worship services in the mosque.

Sarajevo, just like Skopje, was captured by the Austrian Army for a short period of time after the Defeat of Vienna and the city suffered great

destruction (Figure 11). However, thanks to its rich foundations, Sarajevo was able to recover in a more vibrant way in a short time and was called Başçarşı, meaning the crown of the bazaars (Bejtić, 1952, p. 232).



Figure 11. Ali Paşa Mosque and Bedesten (Alić et al., 1999, p.12)

Bosnia-Herzegovina was annexed by the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1908. In 1914, it would go down in history as the place where World War I would be ignited. From that date until 1995, the city turned into a site of genocide, the intensity and method of which continued to increase. On July 20, 1945, the Sarajevo City Council decided to demolish the shops of the Old Bazaar and within three days, a part of the core of the bazaar was demolished. Subsequently, the demolition was halted by a general decision taken by the Belgrade Assembly and it was decided to preserve the monuments. Thanks to this decision, the bedesten, madrasah and inn of Gazi Husrev Bey Complex were saved from demolition (Alić et al. 1999, p.9).

Sarajevo, which in many ways shares the same fortunes as Skopje, was planned as a modern city in the 1970s, immediately following Skopje. The Başçarşija, like the bazaar in Skopje, was built on the riverside and covered an area of 14 hectares, half the size of today's Skopje bazaar. The urban fabric of Başçarşı is shaped by the intersection of many narrow streets filled with craft workshops, shops and warehouses, as well as some monumental foundation monuments with specific public functions (Kudumovic, 2020, p.529).

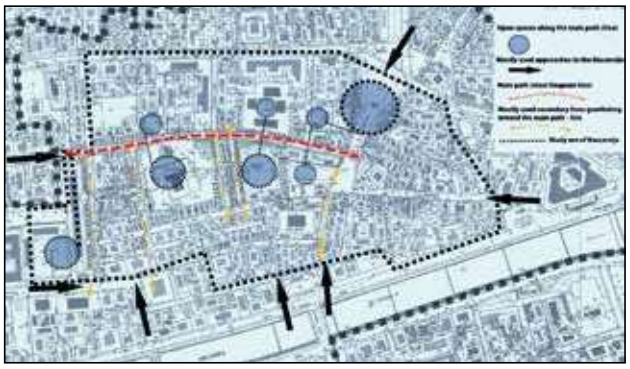


Figure 12. Most frequent path of Bascarsija (Kudumovic, 2020, p.533)

While Başçarşı represents the position of an important trade, culture and art center of the Balkan geography for 600 years, it also reflects this rich cultural environment from the past today. Within the authentic texture of Başçarşı, it continues to be a meeting place for people from all walks of life in the city with the daily habits of traditional life (Figure 12).

2.8. Manastır (Bitola) Bazaar

The city of Manastir (Bitola) was founded around the Drahor stream at the slopes of Mount Pelister in N. Macedonia. Although most of the surviving monuments in the city were built in the 16th century, it has come to the fore as an important center in Ottoman political history, especially since the second half of the 19th century. According to the 1875 salnames, 45 of the 119 mosques in the sanjak were located in the Central Sanjak of Manastir. This number was 22 in the Sanjak of Prizren, 8 in the Sanjak of Debre, 30 in the Sanjak of Skopje and 44 in the Sanjak of Iskodra (Sarı, 1996, p.102). Even after the wars and World War I, according to the census conducted in 1919, approximately 16,000 of the city's population of 40,461 people were Turks. Consulates of many states were opened in the multinational city. From 1919 to 1921, the Turkish population in the city decreased dramatically and the city's population dropped to 28,000 (Prifti, 2003, p.562).

As the headquarters of the Ottoman III Army after the Russo-Turkish War of '93, Manastir be-

came one of the fastest modernizing inland cities. The city, which developed faster than other cities in the Ottoman hinterland with the effect of the railroad connected to Thessaloniki, closely reflected the architectural development of the last period of the Ottoman Empire (Figure 13). During the last period of the Ottoman rule in the Balkans, two types of urban development are noteworthy. One is the modern construction of that period, led by Thessaloniki, and the other is the traditional construction seen in Skopje and other cities in the inner region and less populated cities (Stilinovic et al., 2013, p.927)



Figure 13. Monastery, city plan (Stilinovic et al., 2013).

Shaped in the late 19th century, the Bazaar of Monastir was shaped by the rows of shops lined up around a wide and long road starting from the Drahor River, passing through the Military Idadi and extending to the train station (İbrahimgil, 1999, p.111) The formation of the Turkish bazaar transformed from "Long Street" to "Wide Street". The shops lined up on the Wide Street are brick masonry buildings with a much larger area than the traditional shops. In this type of building, which has very few similar examples in Skopje, volta flooring was used especially for large openings in the upper cover. The traditional bazaar developed around the Davut Pasha Bedesteni, which formed the core of the old bazaar on the opposite bank of the Drahor Stream. The old bazaar continues along the river to the west and extends to the castle to the east. The surviving monumental Ottoman monuments are also located in this area. The covered bazaar with 900 shops mentioned by Evliya Çelebi has not survived (Çayırlı, 2000, p.27).

2.9. Selânik (Tessaloniki) Bazaar

Although Thessaloniki was first conquered in 1387, the actual settlement took place after 1430. Following the conquest, extensive reconstruction and settlement activities were undertaken, and populations were moved here from many places to make it a commercial center (Delibaşı, 1987, p.89). By the end of the 15th century, it was the city where most of the Andalusian Muslims and Spanish Jews who refugeed to the Ottoman Empire were settled (Sambanopoulou,2008, p.217). In 1910, with a population of 150,000, it was the most populous city in the empire after Istanbul (Keil, 2009, p.352).



Figure 14. Thessaloniki's evolving urban fabric in history

In 1867, the city's sea walls were demolished and the coastline was reorganized. In return, the city walls were strengthened. During this period, many new public buildings, military buildings, hospitals, schools, hotels, theaters and large commercial buildings were built in the rapidly industrializing city (Aktsaoglou, 1991, p.36). Steel was used as a structural material in these new buildings, and although many different architectural styles were seen on the facades, Eclecticism and Art Nouveau style were generally adopted (Traskosopolou, 2008, p.220) During the reign of Sultan Abdülhamid II, new residential areas were planned opposite the Vardar Gate and Kelemer Gate, the main gates of the castle (Patieridis, 2009, p.16).

Since its foundation in antiquity, Thessaloniki has developed on nine axes. Three of these are Vardar Street, Mithat Pasha Street and Military Rüştiye Street, which run parallel to the coast from the center of the castle, and Eski Tophane Street and Gümrük Street, which run along the coast (Figure 14). These horizontal avenues intersect with four roads, two of which are outside the city walls and two of which run perpendicular to the coast. Most of the city's important buildings are on these nine roads. In the city, where a few mosques, baths and late mansions are still standing today, the bedesten was built at the intersection of Vardar Street and Sabri Paşa Street. Vardar Street is a long straight street with a multi-part road layout on the south side. While the organic texture has been preserved in the old upper city area of the city, the old lower city area has the appearance of a planned city.

3. Evaluation

The Ottoman Empire, which spent all its energy on conquering the West with a religious fervor since its foundation and throughout its existence, created a political and social structure in the cities as envisioned by Islam at the peak of its power. One of the most important characteristics of Islam is that it transforms the people and societies it reaches, creating new and decisive commonalities among them that did not exist before. The Ottoman Empire was faithful to this understanding and designed the bazaars, the space where everyone's needs were met, as an area of social encounter on the largest scale. The final point of this form of construction, whose characteristic features became evident during the reign of Sultan Mehmet the Conqueror, can be considered as the Grand Bazaar. It is known from various historical documents that in bazaars with a shopping frequency above a certain level, the main bazaar axis was transformed into a closed street over time. These 15th century Ottoman bazaars, or Traditional Turkish Bazaars, reflect not only local and architectural richness with their monumental structures and traditional bazaar texture, but also social diversity and colorfulness that encourages the coexistence of different cultures. In this respect, bazaars are a cultural meeting ground for different tradesmen and users even at the individual level. In addition to this, the historical past rooted in the Ahlism in the bazaars has influenced everyone who trades here, creating common behaviors and lifestyles among people.

The traditional bazaar type in Ottoman cities was gradually abandoned with the municipal law of 1856, and Western-type bazaars began to form along the same axis. This can be observed especially intensely in port cities and cities with railroad connections. This type of construction, which enabled industrial production, negatively affected foundation institutions and craftsman guilds. However, since this negative impact took place over a long period of time, craftsmen could be protected from the spreading capitalism and foreign economic exploitation. The image of the 15th century Ottoman bazaars, with their red hipped roofs, domes, minarets, small and densely built silhouette, carries a sentimental meaning of the past. Yahya Kemal expressed this in his poems as "architecture that blends into the life of the nation".

4. Conclusion

For the Ottoman Empire, Skopje was the most important center point of urban reconstruction and human regeneration in the Balkans. The architectural formation seen in the Skopje Bazaar can be observed in other Rumelia cities, albeit at different scales. Since the halal earnings of individuals in the Ahi culture were based on direct labor, the size of the shops was also based on individuality. This means that the bazaar, among the foundation works, should be interpreted as a form of construction in which a large number of independent craftsmen engaged in their own crafts independently.

These city bazaars, which gained a unique identity in the cultural environment of the Mehmet II period, were established near the castle or, if it was a large castle, within the castle, between neighborhoods, on a connecting road that formed a trade axis in the city center. The bazaar developed as an axis on the caravan route. From the second half of the 15th century onwards, Istanbul developed as the center of the most powerful state in the world with a population exceeding half a million. The Istanbul Grand Bazaar, the most prominent commercial space in this environment, represents the most refined form of other city bazaars in the Ot-

toman geography. Among the common characteristics of these bazaars is that they were formed in such a way that a certain branch of tradesmen could coexist, and that they were ordered according to a certain size among the foundation works. Commercial activity was not allowed within the residential area.

Today, all of these bazaars are under threat, albeit for different reasons. Especially old city centers in the Balkans are direct targets of identity conflicts. While most disasters in the built environment can be repaired, in cities caught in the middle of identity conflicts, genocide, deportation, burning and destruction of sacred symbols, in essence, attacks on identities have begun to build a new identity by destroying an identity and cultural heritage. On the other hand, uncontrolled growth and tourism pressure threaten these bazaars, which have social and physical authenticity, from a different direction. In the processes of reconstruction of the bazaars, the social fabric is often neglected and the traditional construction turns into a décor. As a result, bazaars, which have very deep social and architectural roots, are affected by emotional accumulations according to periods, turn into a showcase of history and fail to reflect their values.

In order to preserve the cultural continuity of these bazaars, which are the product of a unique cultural environment, and to pass them on to future generations, public awareness should not be based on enmity or gain, but on the bazaar culture where even individual differences show solidarity. In addition, in order to preserve the traditional shop unit that glorifies individuality, very sensitive conservation plans should be prepared and design guidelines should be created for simple repairs.

Endonotes

[1] COA, TFR 1 A File No: 39/1; Rumî 4 August 1324 / Gregorian 17 August 1908

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