Chapter 8: The Architectural Characteristics

Given its functional and ceremonial importance, the degree to which the Divan Yolu system reflects formal organization or lack of it, is a central question in the appreciation of Ottoman aesthetics and ideology. Wrongly classified as informal, picturesque, and hence lacking architectural control, Ottoman urban aesthetics in towns was deeply rooted in Ottoman environmental consciousness and form psychology, and was undoubtedly connected to structural factors, to the city's being: (a) a *collage* of recognisably individual parts—*mahalles, çarşı, vakıf* compounds, and many other heterogeneous elements—tending to form precincts rather than a common urban spatial continuity; (b) a display of hierarchical distinctions (contrast between types; articulation of each *külliye* into parts of different semantic category, hierarchy, scale and complexity); (c) formed of architecturally distinct public and domestic spheres (both in building materials and in relationship to urban morphology).

This state of things led to certain characteristics of the monumental buildings and ensembles in their insertion in the street: (a) variety and diversification of adjacent elements in size, form and type; (b) development of main façades in all directions, independently of street alignment (street façades being much less a reference for street formation than in Western town architecture); (c) formal complexity and refinement in detailing to resolve the conflict of diversified forms (such as continuous but direction-changing moulding, generously fenestrated walls to define urban voids...); (d) emphasis on corners used as architecturally rich frontage or as 'urban prows' to divide streets; (d) balance of elements of relevant weight and size used as accents or for counterpoint;[158] (e) role of accessorial elements as carriers of innovation on the street front;[159] (f) enclosure

[158] One beautiful example is the Kuyucu Murat ensemble, in which the domes at the two extremes counterbalance the long and low volume, and the corner-facing *sebil* gives the sense of direction (see fig. 29).

[159] While the main buildings of the *külliye* are simpler, more conservative and remain in the background (such is the delicate and relatively small scale architecture of semi-transparent *hazire*

and insertion of individual trees, the recourse to single gardens or *hazire* as autonomous elements of the overall composition.

In the appendix to this chapter we describe some of the typical situations along the axis. The situations and factors described were very marked in the 18th century town, and much less so in earlier periods. However, as far as monumental public space is concerned, the formal principles listed are very different from those of other cultures which have exploited distant visual focuses, symmetry, or, as in the modern Western town, serial iteration of buildings of one type linked by a physically and functionally recognizable common denominator.[160]

The housing fabric, though formed by house types different from those of Western cities in its materials and in the lower building density, nevertheless, formed, in a certain measure, the continuous texture of the street as in the West. It was often interrupted by monuments, and in some points, it inserted itself in small groups into strings of monuments and cemeteries. In the Divan axis, it was not as strong a characterising element as in other quarters of Istanbul: rather, it constituted a neutral backdrop for monumental architecture, or, conversely, brief exceptions for the continuum of monuments and their subsidiary elements.

The street as an architectural scene

I shall try to answer a series of conceptual and iconographic questions that the aesthetic and ideological identity of the Ottoman system, as seen in the Divan axis, raises. Which forms had more power of representation? Which have to be perceived as reciprocally connected?

enclosures, *sebil*, fountains, as in the Nevşehirli Damat Ibrahim Pasha and Çorlulu Ali Pasha building compounds).

[160] Such is the case of the sidewalk, shop windows, or lines of trees or the common height of continuous street fronts which are common and binding denominators in 19th century avenues. The western avenue is serial (types and voids are at regular or similar intervals) and homogeneous (it has dimensional and social similarity of types, one same rule of relationship to sidewalk etc.).

Since some four thousand years the urban street is a basic structure of towns.[161] The street is not the simple outcome of the passive assembly of buildings. Its nature is cultural; every culture or epoch has its own positive and active way of making streets.

The position and relation of monuments to the street in the Divan axis has changed in the course of time. But on the whole, the street system in central Istanbul was firmly anchored in the psychological and cultural implications of traditional Ottoman urbanity, up to mid 19th century in central parts, and up to the very end in the more Turkish-Ottoman quarters.

The description of streets in their architecture and environmental context is a rare event in Ottoman culture. Matrakçı Nasuh, and, even less so the miniaturist of the Istanbul view in Piri Reis, and Velican of the Hünername, do not seem to have perceived streets as an important feature of Istanbul. In Matrakçı's drawing, one can vaguely discern the route of the Divan axis because the buildings, however conventionally represented, do reflect a logical disposition of the street, sequential and in relation to the hand, left or right (fig. 51). The conventional and schematic transliteration of the buildings and their reciprocal siting is realistic though the form symbolical. The streets themselves are not depicted.[162] Matrakçı uses a straight strip of

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[161] But as Kostof writes, it is not a natural form, it cannot be taken for granted, it was an invention (Kostof *The city assembled*, 105). Also, Spiro Kostof, *The city shaped*, London: Thames and Hudson 1991, 189ff., quotes J. Rykwert:"*The street is human movement institutionalized*".

[162] Even where some have seen streets, as Gabriel did, interpreting the two parallel buildings angled toward the Fatih complex as the Direklerarası, which did not exist then (Albert Gabriel, "Les Etapes d'une Campagne dans les deux Irak d'après un manuscrit Turc du XVIº siècle", *Syria—Revue d'Art Orientale et d'Archéologie*", IX, fasc. IV (1928), 346 ff). Walter B. Denny, "A Sixteenth-Century Architectural Plan of Istanbul", *Ars Orientalis*, VII (1968), 49ff, develops a more refined and detailed analysis of the drawing and revises Gabriel's interpretation, rightly insisting on the conventional rather than realistic or fantastic representation of different building typologies (mosques, *medrese* etc.). Strangely enough, though, he attributes an inexistent error in the representation of the Atik Ali complex. He sees in the small

building with serial openings, either rectangular or arcaded, to symbolize typologies of serial nature, such as *medrese* (series of cells) or shops (series of openings on the street). Even where a whole quarter has an orthogonal mesh of streets, as is the case of the Grand Bazaar, he uses symbolically these serial strips to represent the building type and not the space.[163] Street-flow is not even envisaged; serial form is just a shorthand symbol: spatially finite forms are more easily grasped and transferred on paper. We can safely say that the street-flow and serial composition are not referential denominators for Ottoman architectural and urban representation. This reflects on street composition and on the possibility to grasp its unity through focal perspective. Absence of overall symmetry, the technique of narrative composition, and the standing out of certain emblematic forms such as domes and minarets have been constant factors of the mature Ottoman townscape.

building to the right above the mosque a *mescit* patroned in another quarter by Ali Pasha, and presumes that it was mistakenly placed in the larger complex. I believe it should represent instead, the dervish *tekke* of the complex, which was actually an L-shaped series of domed and arcaded cells, but was drawn here, with the same house-like geometry he identifies in other *tekke* or palaces. This would, as a matter of fact, confirm Denny's general assessment of Matrakçı's conventions.

163 Actually, Denny "A Sixteenth-Century Architectural Plan" interprets as Bezesten a courtlike form between Atik Ali and Beyazıt. I believe it represents the whole Çarşı, the structure in the centre being the Bezesten.

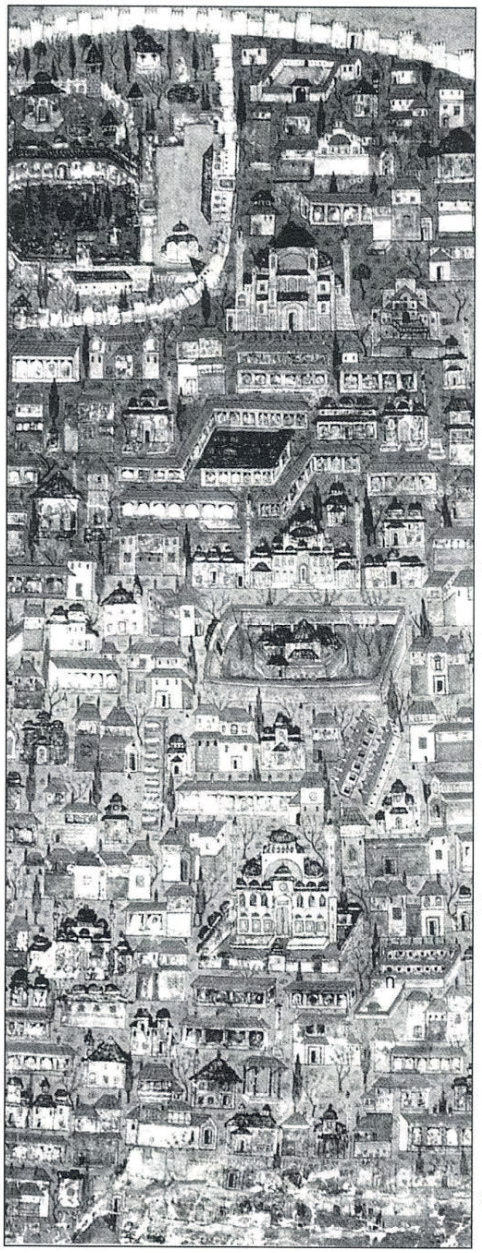


Fig. 51: *The Divan axis in the Matrakçı Nasuh representation of Istanbul (1537). Along the Divan axis can be seen: A Ayasofya, B Çemberlitaş, Atik Ali mosque and, further left, the Grand Bazaar, C the Beyazıt mosque, D Eski Saray, E Saraçhane market, F the Fatih complex, G the Adrianople gate in the city walls.*

Urban perspective

Perspective is a paradigm of urban form and of the mentality which built the town and established reciprocal interrelations between spaces and forms.

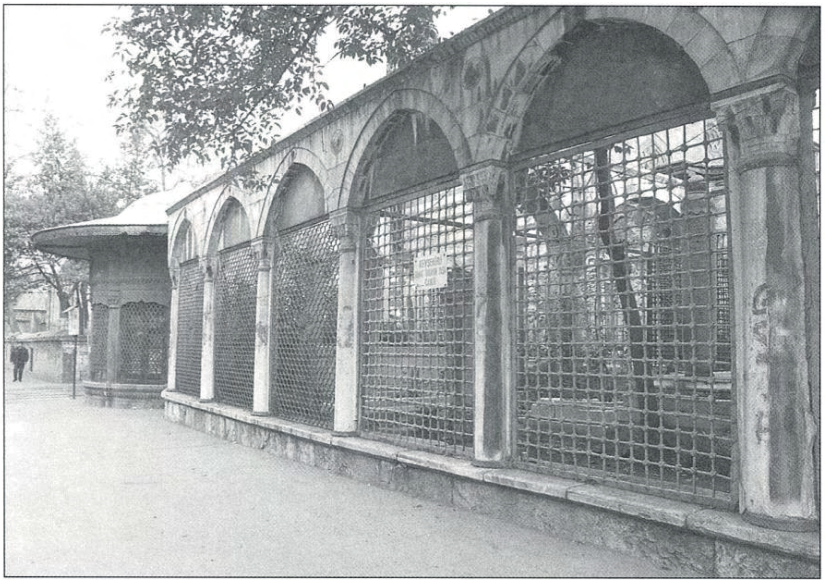


Fig. 52: *The* sebil *and the* hazire *grill of the Damat Ibrahim* medrese *and arcade street complex.*

In the Renaissance and post-Renaissance West, urban perspectives and straight streets have been associated to motion and promenades, none of which were quite congenial to the urban way of life in the Ottoman area.[164] Also, from the point of view of Western urban aesthetics, the street-and-thoroughfare system called Divan Yolu is inconceivably narrow and surprisingly deprived of hierarchy. Even a very central and important part of the axis—say that around Çemberlitaş as it appears in certain etchings—could have margins defined by barracks. On the opposite, other tracts of minor relevance—say around the Nişancı mosque only a few decades ago—could be a neat and nice sequence of gardens, cemeteries, small houses, monuments. Earlier, in the 18th century, there had been a

[164] See: Della Valle *Viaggio*, 242:"..*perché i turchi non usano mai passeggiare, anzi l'hanno per cosa da matti...*"

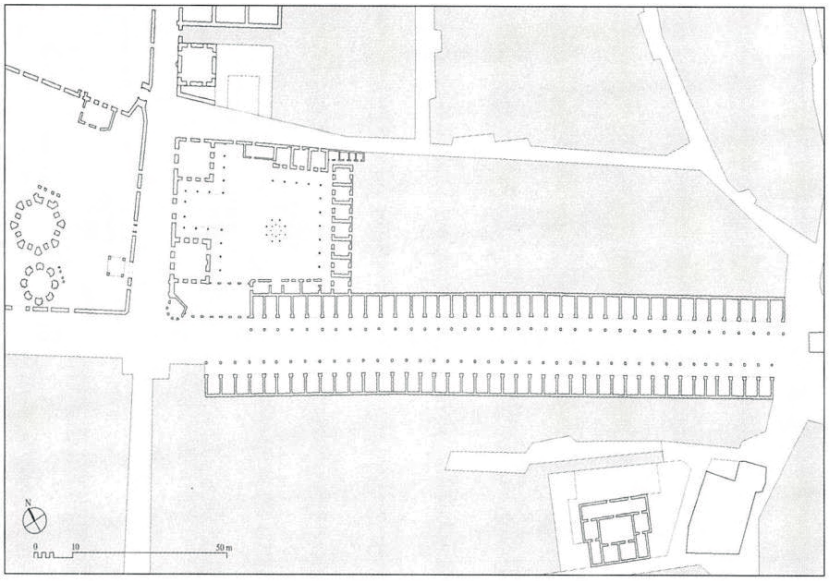
short-lived experiment in functional continuity through spatial flow and movement in space in the arcade street of Direkler Arası near Şehzade. But this tentative was never repeated again.[165]

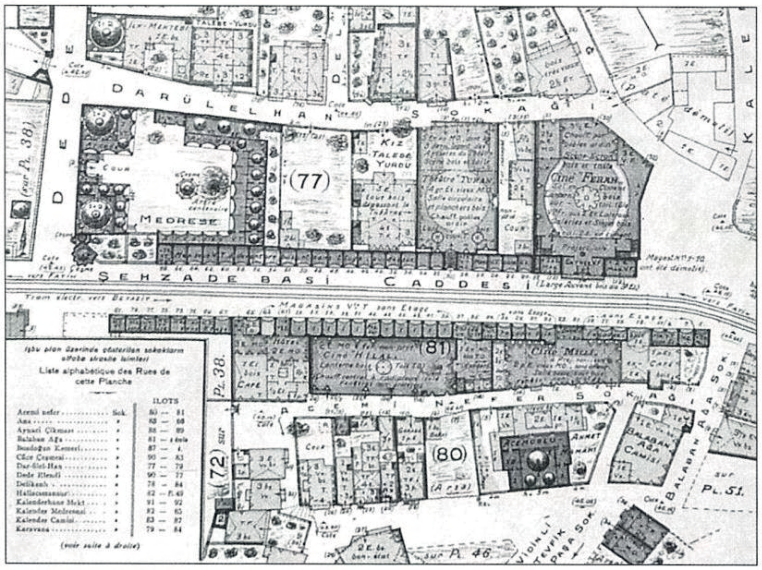
The Damat Ibrahim medrese *and arcade street complex.* Fig. 53: *The arcade surviving in the late 19th century.*

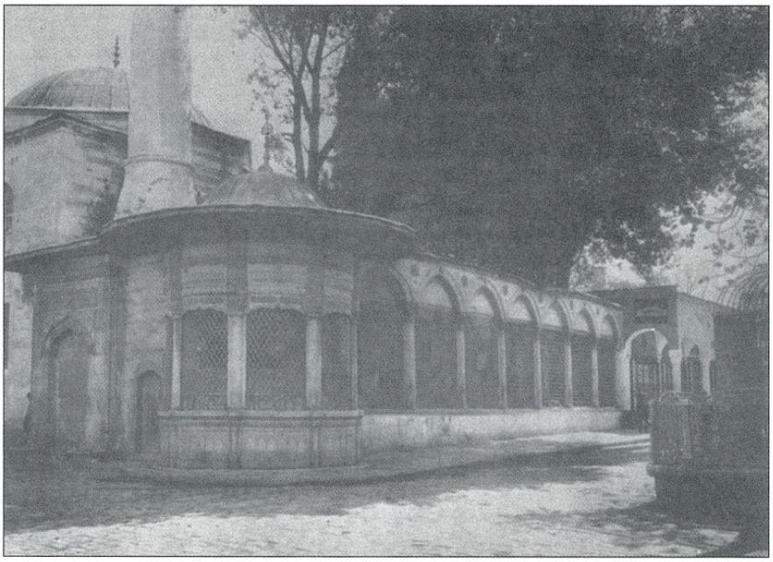
On the following two pages:

Fig. 54: *Reconstructed plan of the complex.* Fig. 55: *The complex and the remaining shops in the early 20th century Pervititch map.* Fig. 56: *The* sebil, *prayer hall and* hazire *in a 19th century photograph.* Fig. 57: *The* sebil, *the Şehzade mosque and some arcades around 1830-40 in a Thomas Allom engraving.*

[165] Three decades later, the shop arcades on the north-western margin of the Nur-u-Osmaniye complex. The idea could be Western influenced, and yet their scale and the form of their constitutive elements (capitals, arches, intercolumnal rhythms) recall rather, modest Byzantine examples and the central arcade of 7th century Anjar, the only arcaded town center in Islam. That had been an attempt, no matter if unconscious, of East-West synthesis.





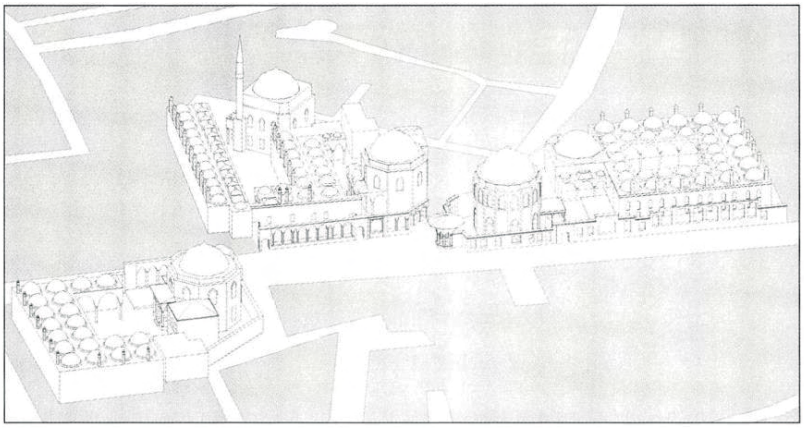


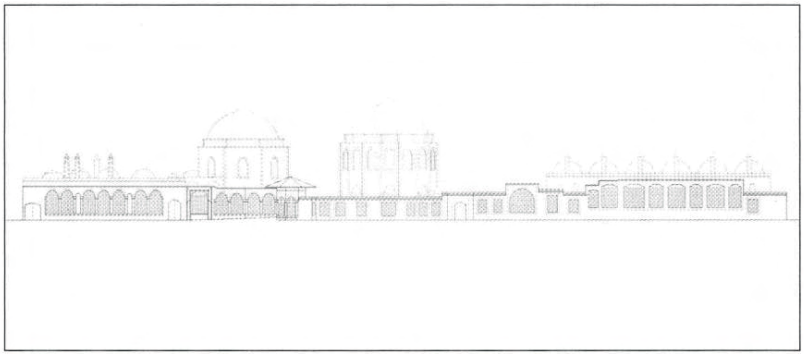
Lack of focal perspective did not mean lack of mutual references in buildings standing in a common urban setting. What we might call Ottoman perspective grouped closely some units in a scene or composition, distancing or ignoring others. It used techniques of enclosure or aperture, which changed much in the course of time but always enhanced the effects of estrangement/definition, so important in the Ottoman sense of monumentality. A fenestrated precinct wall puts a greater distance between the objects it encloses and the

context and, at the same time, framing and selecting some objects (for example, tombs and epitaphs) draws them nearer. A flowing moulding binds heterogeneous building parts; the technique of simple geometric forms juxtaposed in various modes gives unity and yet depth... Consider the mutual formal reference of neighbouring groups, such as that of the Çorlulu Ali Pasha, Kara Mustafa Pasha and the Koca Sinan Pasha *külliye* facing each other, and the very interesting formal interrelations resulting thereof on the Divanyolu (as well as in may other sequences in central Istanbul and Eyüp). Was it the result of a conscious awareness of urban aesthetics? Or, on the contrary, was it the casual product of chance or only of common symbolical, social and economic factors?

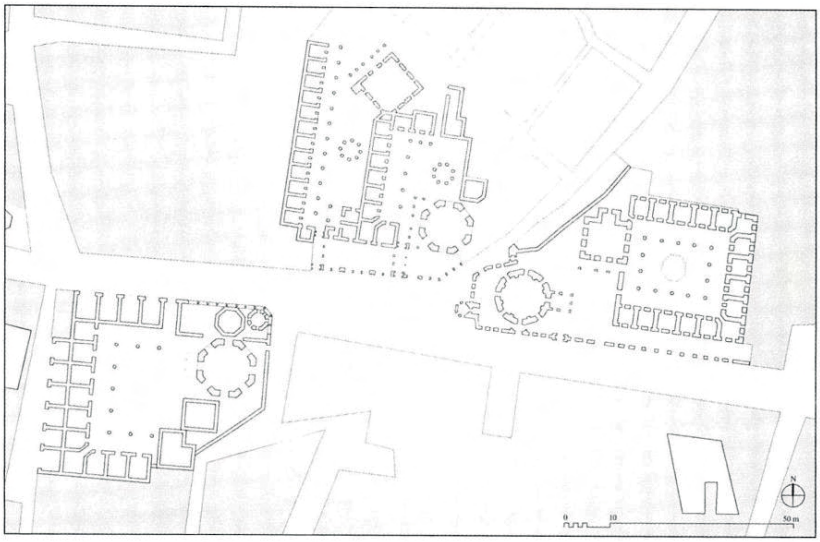
The significance of the urban scene as a whole was obtained through static views, through variety and casual sequences. I believe that a deliberate urban aesthetical strategy was present. Those constructions were meant to create a common background. Their localization on the Divan Yolu derived motivation and prestige from their being a collective endeavour, somehow independent from the court.

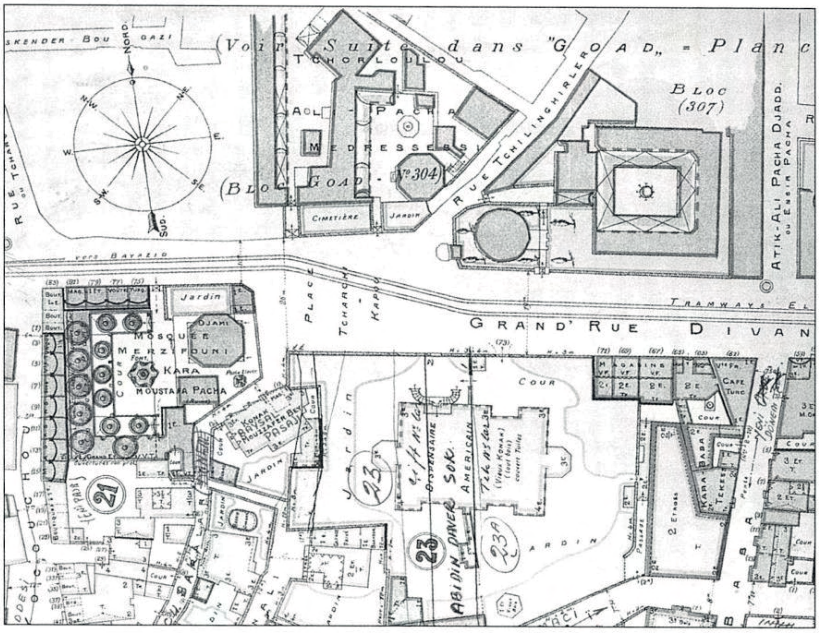
Those monuments can be seen as autonomous constellations held together by a system of slack and fluid relationships. Each one had changing borders. Which were the borderlines which define the single architectural unit-complex? Which elements were incidental, which fundamental for the aesthetic structure of the unit. Is a richly decorated *sebil* an organic part of an austere *medrese* mostly composed of bare and simple masonry? Given its functional and aesthetic separateness could it not be placed in any other point of the building compound or of the street? The *medrese* and the *sebil* belong to one and same foundation act. Functional priorities of economy and space may have obliged juxtaposition. But the point is that both the donor and the architect did not impose separateness or homogeneity as an *a priori* question of principle but derived an evident pleasure from the play of contrasts and from the polyphony hence derived.





The Kara Mustafa, Çorlulu, Koca Sinan group of medreses. Fig. 58: *Axonometric view of the group.* Fig. 59: *Street elevation of the Çorlulu and Koca Sinan ensembles. On the following pages:* Fig. 60: *Reconstruction of the general plan around 1850.* Fig. 61: *The three* medreses *and their surrounding in the Pervititch and Goad maps (1905 and around 1920). Note the large* konak *with garden in the centre (Cfr. 40).* Fig. 62: *Part of the Çorlulu ensemble and the Koca Sinan* sebil *along the Divanyolu.* Fig. 63: *Assembled photographs of Koca Sinan complex along the street.* Fig. 64: *Assembled photographs of the Kara Mustafa complex along the street after demolitions for street widening and displacement of* sebil *and* hazire. *The blank wall on the right is a result of the demolition of the shops on the* medrese *front.*





The role of minor building elements: 'short linkages'

The fragmentation and discontinuity of the urban scene has been described in various chapters of this study. In this chapter, we shall underline how fragmentation, diversity and differentiation became positive instruments of composition. The complexity and heterogeneous aspect of its building types demanded adequate techniques of unification. On the other hand, that complexity and that variety suggested a solution. The necessity to master heterogeneity produced peculiar compositional devices.[166] The

[166] Note how the heterogeneous buildings, some of medieval bourgeois typology, others in idealised Renaissance types, in the Urbino and Baltimore panels attributed to Luciano Laurana and wrongly called "Ideal City views", are tamed into unity by the common spatial reference offered by focal perspective.

ensembles or the individual buildings were disarticulated into conventionally conceived elements (series of domes, height and volume geometry adapted to different functional classes).

Diversity was the result of the nature of the urban fabric and its elements. The main prayer halls of the religious compounds had to face southeast in the Mecca direction whatever the street alignment.

Minor elements such as fountains, small burial grounds, precinct walls became, with the fall in size of *vakıf* building after the classical period, allimportant for the urban scene and were designed with refinement and conceived to establish cross-references at short distance among heterogeneous architectural elements. They gave form and distinction to late Ottoman urban space,

For example, the contrast of diverse geometrical volumes became a linguistic expedient rendering richer and more interesting the street scene; mouldings and wall- or volume-coping became the common link of connected building parts heterogeneous as to height and form; the hiatus created by the gaps of the *hazire* voids was overcome by their very interesting fenestrated enclosure walls, and turned the drawback into an asset. Those enclosures, easy to rebuild, allowed adaptation of the ensembles to change in street alignment, to new architectural taste. Thus, new junctures could be formed, voids due to the demolition of obsolete buildings filled in, new building parts inserted. The method was obviously easier to apply to accessorial elements than to the main buildings.

Another example is the aesthetical climax and emphasis reached in comer or crossroads situations. It is present both in the architecture of the Classic period (after all the Kuyucu Murat ensemble's is late classicism) and in current town housing. But it is very rare in the cultured architecture of the West before the last decades of the 19th century. So it is as much a characteristic of Ottoman town formation as the principle of collage of small-scale typological elements. The rotating comer column of the precinct wall in the Şehzade ensemble, probably a Sinan invention, is a significant example.

These expedients were not used to mould the whole urban space. It is only towards the beginning of the 17th century that they acquired force and refinement and were used as the main architectural resource of architectural street forming towards the end of the 17th and all through the 18th. The combinatory experimentation of the Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha complex and the small Kuyucu Murat

Pasha complex, which, as I have already mentioned, stood at the sharp bifurcation of streets, with its *sebil* as a prow dividing the waves, are typical forerunners. In other situations in which the crossroads were less obtrusive, the whole armamentaria of detailing and niceties of height differences were used to underline and dramatize the corner position. This composition gambit, very common in Ottoman town culture and rare in the West before the 19th century, is as important as the principle of *collage* of small scale typological elements.

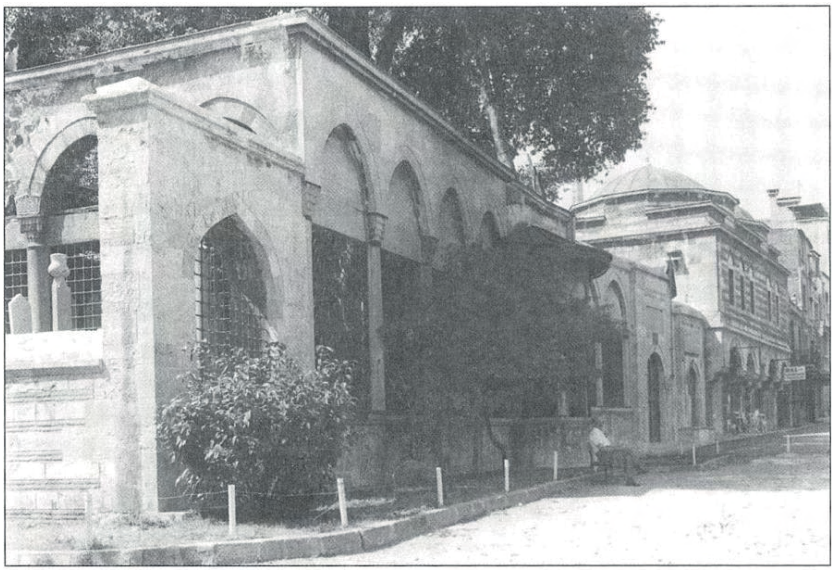
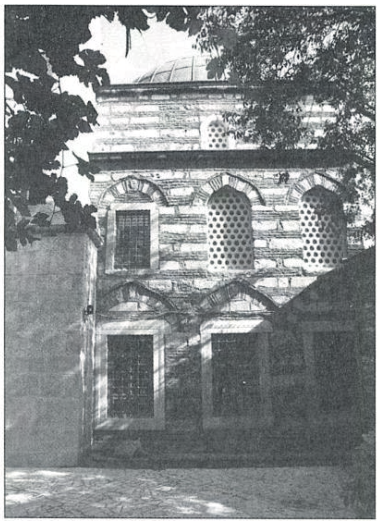
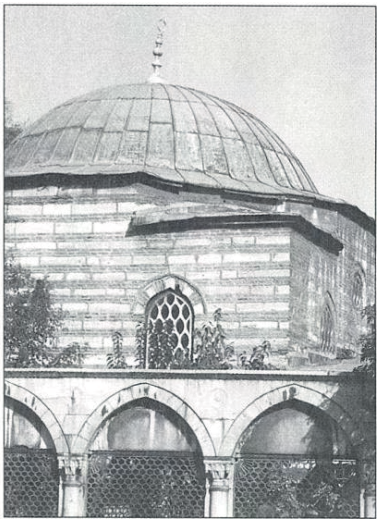


Fig. 65: *The Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha complex (around 1700).*

The sedimentation of many autonomous forms and layouts (*hazire*, orientation to Mecca of tombs and prayer halls, different scale of elements) did not admit a common street alignment and was not based on perspective, symmetry, iteration, as it would have in a Western town. The Divan axis constructed its architectural and spatial unity in a very peculiar way through a complex web of short linkages; that is, through formal composition stratagems aimed at establishing harmonious cross-references among neighbouring but heterogeneous elements, interrelating reciprocally parts standing at a short distance from each other, no matter if within the same architectural design or within neighbouring designs.

Accessory and minor elements—fountains, mouldings, walls—had an indispensable role in giving form to late Ottoman urban space as a means of introducing cross-references where such short distance relations link heterogeneous elements. The principle of collage of small-scale typological elements is as much a characteristic of Ottoman town formation as the dome and minaret.



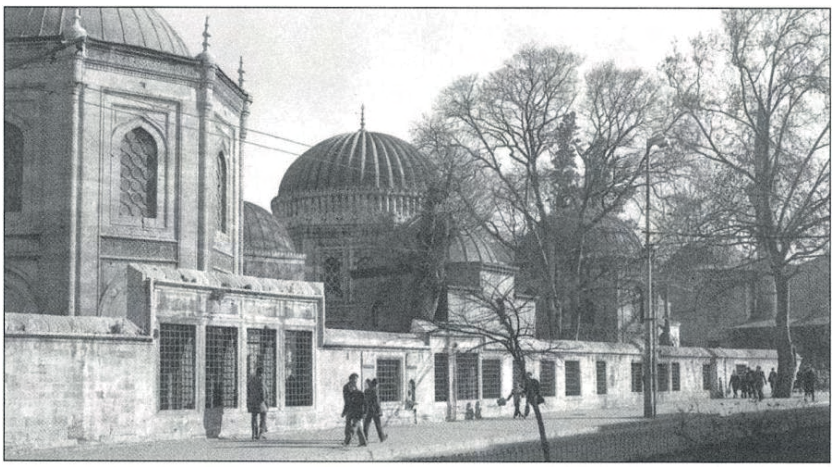


The conservative inner architectural elements contrasting with novel street architecture. Fig. 66: *The* tekke *volume of the Çorlulu complex.* Fig. 67: *Library volume of the Damat Ibrahim complex.*

Significantly, in its finesse, Eighteenth century public space made recourse mainly to those minor elements. The urban image of Istanbul was no longer that of the classical period. The new *vakıf* building compounds were smaller and variegated. There was a substantial balance in their size and form with the new house type, in timber and expendable and yet more elaborate than in the past. The functional type array also was much more complex and articulate. Hence, the Classical Ottoman method of aggregating clear-cut volumes of diverse geometrical form had to be reformed. It is my opinion that European Baroque and Mannerist models were at this stage intuitively absorbed to link the contrasting forms of the diverse parts of each compound and to soften the visual impact of the urban

elements between themselves.[167] This was easier to apply to the subsidiary elements than to the main buildings like mosques that would attract conservative reaction to innovation. Semi-transparent *hazire* enclosures, *sebil*, fountains, and even of small houses and *konaks*, were carriers of innovative architecture and dominated the street front, while the main buildings of the *külliye* were simpler, more conservative and remain in the background. This can be seen in the Nevşehirli Damat Ibrahim Pasha and the Çorlulu Ali Pasha compounds in which the prayer hall and other major building elements inside the court had none of the Tulip period novel ornamentation.

The street scene was chiefly formed by those subsidiary elements. The fenestrated *hazire* walls, so placid and regular in precedent centuries, brought a great variety and inventiveness in the form and details of individual openings. The *hazire* walls and epitaph placing show great refinement aimed at obtaining maximum visibility and transparency from the street (see figs. 68 to 80).



The Şehzade precinct wall on the Divan axis. Fig. 68: *South-eastern wall and mausoleums.*

[167] For the clever but wholly un-Western use of Baroqus and Westen concepts to enhance the fundamentally Ottoman roots of 18th century experimentation in Istanbul see Maurice Cerasi, "Un Barocco di Città: trasformazioni linguistiche e tipologiche nel Settecento ad Istanbul", *Quaderni di Storia dell'Architettura* 3 (2000), 81-102.

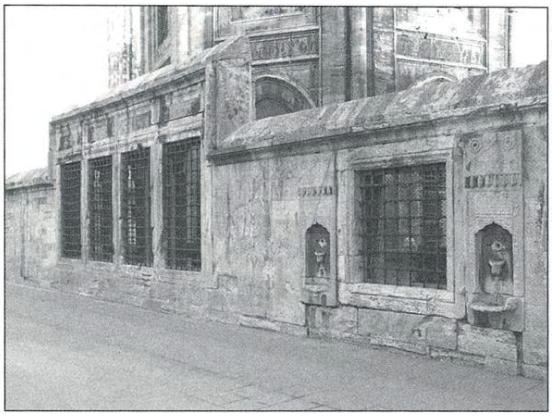
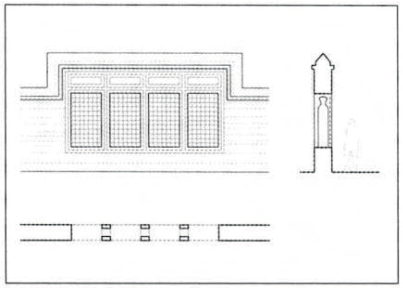


Fig. 69: *The 'rotating column' o the corner opposite the Damat İbrahim complex*. Fig. 70: *Detail of 68*.



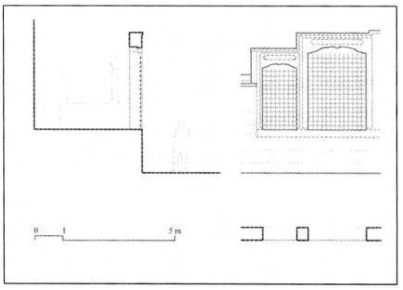
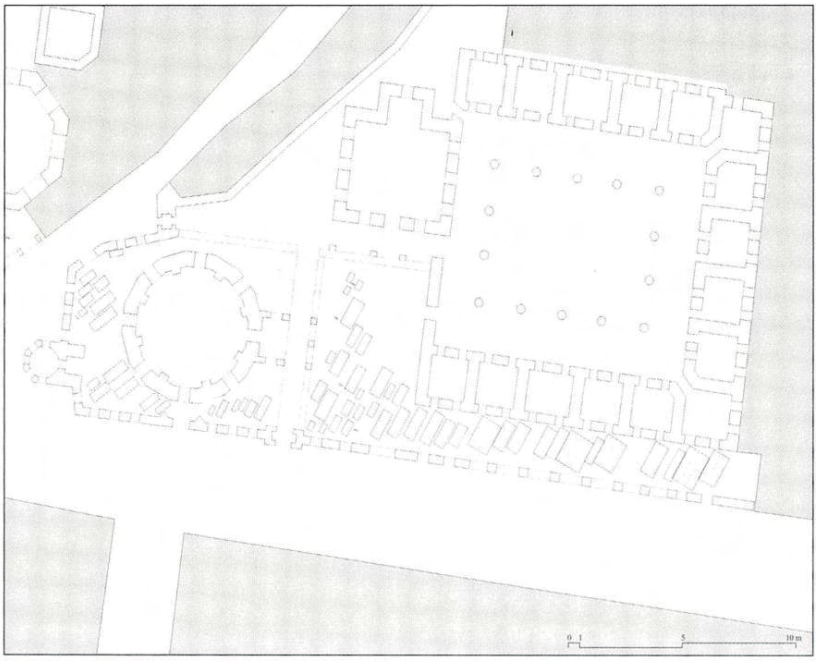


Fig. 71: *Elevation and section of the Şehzade precinct wall openings to the hazire*. Fig. 72: *Elevation and section of the Koca Sinan* hazire *openings modified in the 18th-19th centuries (Cfr. Fig. 74)*.



Tombs and hazire *walls*. Fig. 73: *The disposition of tombs in the Koca Sinan* hazire.

Fig. 74: *Detail of the Koca Sinan* hazire *openings.*

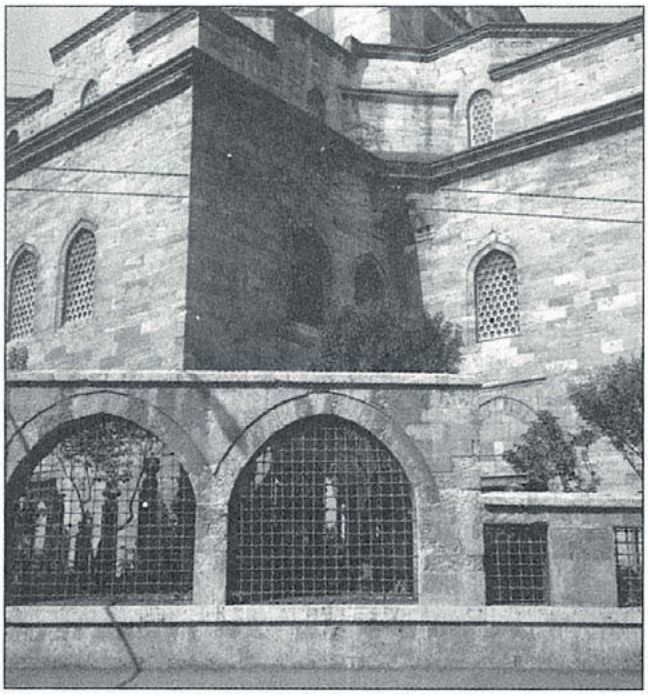


Fig. 75: *Detail of the Atik Ali* hazire *openings.*

Figs. 76-77: Detail exterior and interior views of the Çorlulu Ali Pasha complex hazire *openings.*

Fig. 78: *Interior view of the Nişancı Pasha complex* hazire.

Figs. 79-80: *Nineteenth century funerary architecture on the Divan axis. Left: the Nakşıdil* sebil *and* türbe *near Fatih (1818). Right: Hattat Rakım Efendi* türbe *and* hazire *in Karagümrük (1825).*

Nature, open views and non-serial composition

The loose, open-space oriented typology of Ottoman architectural complexes and housing, catastrophic fires, frequent change, the many cemeteries bordering the street, the existence and even prevalence of semi-rural voids in the city fabric in late Byzantine times, the option of Fatih's Pashas to decentralise urbanization settling thair donations and *mahalle* all over the urban territory, and above all, ambiguously

both cause and effect of all the preceding factors, the Ottoman propensity for towns of open character, semi-urban and/or semi-rural, had a determinant effect on the structure of the Divan axis and accounted for the gaps. It was the very constitution of the town and building types, and its daily way of life that weaved itself into such loose a fabric. In all its parts, central or marginal, minor or monumental, the axis was a sequence of void and built-up spaces. Its grammar was that of agglutination and collage. Its five kilometre long course could recall that of a highway across a vast and multifarious territory, or the course of a river meandering through that territory, sometimes changing its bed and running in parallel streams.

The vision of nature, in the Western idea of town and architecture used as terminal scene for a perspective or as all-embracing context opposed to man's artefacts, has a very different appeal to Ottoman psychology. The Divan axis was much appreciated for its panoramic overtures. Thanks to its geography, and to the scale and nature of its architectural elements, it afforded deep views on both sides to the Golden Horn and to the Marmara Sea. Busbecq de Ghislaine wrote of that from the *han* in which he was practically under arrest (certainly the Elçi Han) he could see the distant sea, though *"..le devant donne sur une rue, qui conduit au Sérail du grand Seigneur: c'est celle par laquelle il passe tous les Vendredis, pour aller à la priere au Temple de Saint-Sophie"*.[168] Moltke, in his article on Mahmut II, describes his mausoleum as having very open views on both seas, and that—the dead Sultan's close collaborators told him—Mahmut had chosen the site for that very reason.[169]

The non-serial insertion of natural elements—trees, as well as views—was incorporated individually but not casually.[170] Seventeenth

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[168] Busbecq *Lettres*, II 17.

[169] Graf Helmuth von Moltke, *Unter dem Halbmond—Erlebnisse in der alte Türkei—1835-1839*, Tübingen, Basel 1979, 345.

[170] Contrarily, Goodwin (Goodwin *A History*, 367), although referring to a specific case seems to propend for the casualness of juxtaposition of tombs, buildings and other elements *"simply because tradition and the exigencies of the terrain dominated the organization of the complexes"*. However, he adds: *"Nonetheless, these stone thickets and copses skirting the foundations along the Divan yolu or, in particular, at the Amcazade complex are highly foils to masses of masonry, and form a transition between natural growth, above all trees, to man-made structures*."

and Eighteenth century Ottoman builders had perfectly mastered the individual insertion of elements. The general episodic or narrative character of urban form easily led the way to consider natural elements individually, and to place them—for example, trees—with a precise feeling of composition, certainly not in a haphazard way. The recourse to double tree-rows or the conclusion of a perspective on some distant panorama or architectural object, so common in both Western and Persian and Mughal cultures, were practically ignored. Their introduction in the early 19th century by European architects and gardeners involved the Divan Yolu no earlier than the Eighteen-sixties.

Much like Islamic carpet design and muqarnas ornamentation that derive their fascination from repetition and from the narration of variations in form, the composition tool of 'short linkage' in a context of richly variegated volume, type and of varying void and building, recalls the procedure of narration. It produced a '*forma urbis* without form'.[171]

The Divan Yolu can be interpreted as a loose route through architectural and urban events, some clustered, and others diffuse. It is the nearest we can find in the urban culture of all times to space used as a path through events and forms, utterly distinct from the serial and homogeneous conception of the Western avenue. One of the last examples of narrative composition in the Istanbul public space, not a form or idea of a town comprehensible at a glance (as the form and idea of a *külliye* did, or as the whole town in its organic composition might suggest in many other pre-industrial civilizations), its was an idea of form running through all the parts visible from urban space. When he referred to a *"...longue rue des Mosquées, qui forme l'artère principale, et qui aboutit aux grands bazars... admirable, la nuit surtout,*

But the point is that architectural aesthetics is not the result only of the architect's wilful search for form, but also, and perhaps much more so, of what he willingly accepts and of what he rejects. Focal symmetry (after all, very easy to organize) was rejected, loose group composition (no less skilful than English Romantic landscaping) was accepted.

171 Unfortunately, that 'form' has been rendered fragmentary and unintelligible by urban regularization procedures applied after the 1865 fire, for the very reasons recalled in Chapter 10 and its Appendix.

à cause des magnifiques jardins, des galeries découpées des fontaines de marbre aux grilles dorées, des kiosques, des portiques et des minarets multiplies... inscriptions dorées... ", Gérard de Nerval[172] acknowledged the thoroughfare as a concentrate of events exposed and narrated, in no way comparable to the French avenues. The Ottomans, too, were perfectly aware of its potential. We can see it in the grandiose, and not at all casual, combinations of the *hazire* walls of varying design. We can see it, a hundred steps off the Divanyolu, in the brilliant solutions of the accessory elements of the Nuruosmaniye complex—the sequence of gate and enclosing shops and their upper floor quarters, the north-eastern margin with its collage of shops, mausoleum, *hazire*, and library.

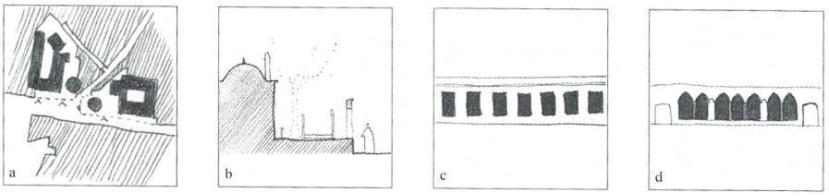
(MC)

[172] Nerval, *Voyage* [8th edition (1875)], 192.

Appendix to Chapter 8: Architectural Form in Some Typical Situations

This appendix identifies some aspects that characterise the urban route, analysing the most recurrent and emergent elements and architectonic techniques used in the monumental buildings along the Divan axis.

The fenestrated boundary walls of the monumental complexes. The fenestrated precinct walls of the monumental complexes towards the street are most important actors in the urban scene (a). Their openings render the wall transparent, and allow passers-by to see the sequence of elements inside the complex: the cemeteries, the mausoleums, the trees, the main buildings and invites them to stop in front of the tombstones for a prayer (b). The addition of architectonic elements for public use to these walls also gives them greater volume articulation. The constructive sophistication of the masonry and the rich and complex composition of the openings are aspects of great interest for the architecture of the street.

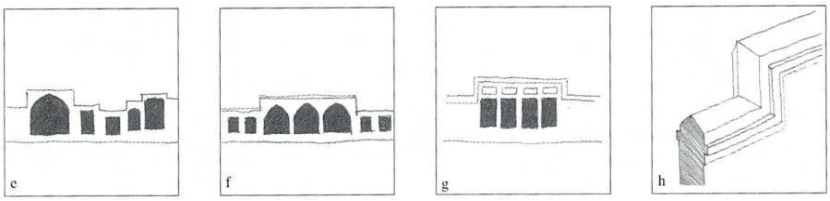


The precinct walls contain various kinds of openings and a variable composition of blank wall sections and voids. In the Atik Ali Pasha, Koca Sinan Pasha, Kara Mustafa Pasha (fig. 64), Şehzade, Gazanfer Ağa (fig. 27), Nişancı Mehmet Pasha (fig. 26) complexes, the wall features a fenestration with rectangular openings, framed by a slight moulding; it is associated with a double sloped wall crowning, emphasised on its lower side by an overhanging moulding. This type of opening was consolidated in the classical period and its use also continued after the 16th century. In the boundary walls of the Atik Ali Pasha mosque and of the Gazanfer Ağa *medrese* the classical fenestration is repeated with a constant regularity, determining an overall sequential uniform composition of full blank walls sections or pilasters and voids within an unvarying wall height (c). The boundary wall of the Şehzade (fig. 68) complex has a freer composition of

fenestration, it is not sequential, and has a harmonic rhythm due to the succession of openings of different sizes, several being grouped together. It has a variegated scansion of voids and the wall height varies continuously.

In the Damat Ibrahim Pasha (fig. 52) and Çorlulu Ali Pasha (figs. 76,77) complexes, the boundary walls have pointed arch openings set on capitals and pillars, shaped as half-columns on the street front. In the boundary wall of the Damat Ibrahim Pasha *medrese* this type of opening is set in sequence, obtaining very high transparency, the mass of the wall being reduced to a rhythmic pattern of half-columns and arches, rising from a continuous wall base and ending with a coping of unvarying height. In the fenestrated wall of the Çorlulu Ali Pasha complex, the arched openings in the main section of the street, are alternated with smaller filled-in sections, producing a coherent whole and a symmetrical composition: AABAAABAA (d).

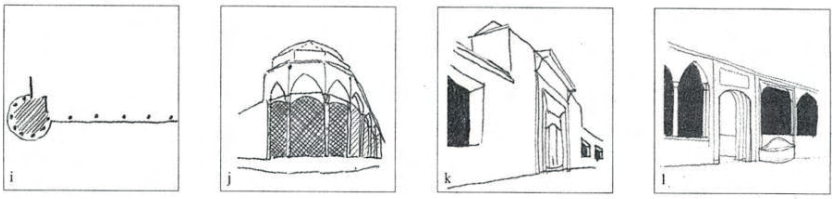
The Koca Sinan Pasha *medrese* boundary wall has various types of fenestration with varying rhythm: classic openings, a large arched opening, rectangular fenestrations characterised by their larger size and baroque style ornaments and mouldings, probably replacing previous types (e) (fig. 74).



Some openings, or groups of these, stand out through a change of scale or because of the special care taken in their detailing. In the boundary wall of the Çorlulu Ali Pasha complex, a single, larger rectangular opening (fig. 62) interrupts the repetition of arched openings and stands out for its elaborate moulding frame profile and for the small fountain at its base.[173] The extensive fenestration, opening onto the cemetery behind it draws the attention of the passers-by towards the tombs inside the boundary wall; some of the tombs identified in the survey include that of the donor Çorlulu Ali

[173] The fountain was originally situated under the present level of the street surface. Not presently visible, it is represented in a 19th century etching (fig. 1).

Pasha and his son. In the central part of the boundary wall of the Atik Ali Pasha mosque (fig. 75), a group of three large arched openings provides an impressive increase in the height of the wall, producing a kind of 'display' effect towards the cemetery behind the wall (f). In the boundary wall of the Nişancı Mehmet Pasha complex three openings, of the same kind and size as the other openings, but set closer together, form a group underlining the *türbe* of the donor. There is no increase in the size of the opening or a higher wall here, but there is special treatment of the jambs (fig. 78), that are very deep, similarly to the adjoining ones, but are hollow in their central part, thus increasing the visual breaks and the sense of lightness of the wall. The Şehzade complex has many groups of openings along the *hazire* stone wall. The height of the wall varies proportionally with these, and the double sloped crowning of the wall and the lower moulding subsequently move, vertically following the changes in height (g, h). The fenestration corresponding to the position of the *türbe* behind the wall (figs. 70, 71), have hollow jambs common to two openings, as in the Nişancı Mehmet Pasha complex.

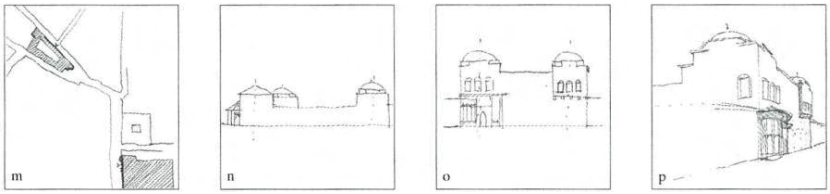


On the fenestrated precinct walls are inserted *sebil* and fountains. In the Gazanfer Ağa (fig. 27), Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha, Damat Ibrahim Pasha (fig. 56), Koca Sinan Pasha (fig. 62) and Sultan Mahmut II (fig. 82) complexes, the *sebil* are in continuity with the masonry of the fenestrated wall but form advancing volumes into the street, contributing to the overall articulation of the funerary memorial precinct walls. In the Gazanfer Ağa, Damat Ibrahim Pasha, Koca Sinan Pasha complexes, the *sebil* is on a corner, and becomes an overhanging and conclusive element of the boundary walls, taking on an important role as the junction of several roads (i). In the Kara Mustafa Pasha *medrese*, even though the *sebil* is on the corner of the complex, it does not jut out from the line of the street. It continues evenly the rhythmic progression of voids and fenestration sequences of the boundary wall (j).

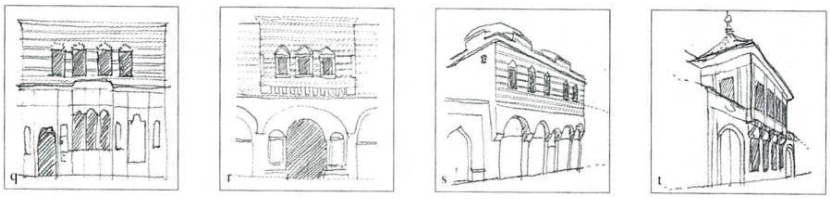
In the Atik Ali Pasha complex, a fountain is present in the boundary wall of the mosque, in correspondence with an increase in height of the wall, originally caused by the presence of the *şadırvan* at this point inside the complex (k). The large fountain breaks the sequence of windows in the fenestrated wall. It is positioned close to the complex entrance and extends inside the bulk of the wall itself, jutting out from it through the mouldings of the jambs and of the crown. The fountain in the Damat Ibrahim Pasha complex, which is also large, concludes the boundary wall, between the body of the *medrese* and the corner *sebil*. Its crown juts out onto the street and is aligned with the adjoining *sebil*. In the Şehzade complex, apart from the large fountain at the northern entry, there are two small fountains situated along the fenestrated wall, at the sides of an opening and can be perceived in association with the central fenestration (fig. 70).

In exceptional cases the entry gate to the monumental complex can become an element that articulates the boundary wall. In the Gazanfer Ağa *medrese*, the entry is gate that juts out from the boundary wall, because of its greater height and elaborate construction. Entry is through a monumental gateway also in the boundary walls of the 19th century memorial stone complexes of Sultan Mahmut II and Nakşidil Sultan. But normally, in the boundary walls of the Atik Ali Pasha, Nişancı Mehmet Pasha, Koca Sinan Pasha, Kara Mustafa Pasha, Çorlulu Ali Pasha monumental complexes, entry is through an opening in the current masonry walling, underlined by a slight increase in the height of the wall or quite a large headway that on the map corresponds to a thickening of the wall, but usually does not jut out from the other elements of the fenestrated wall (1).

Articulation of the boundary walls situated on the street front, in the monumental buildings with only one body. In the monumental buildings made up of a single building body aligned with the street front, the architectonic elements facing onto the street are more complex. The entrance gate, the fountains, the *sebil*, the shops, all become part of the boundary wall of the building and are situated in the foreground of the urban space (m). The domes, the cornices, the protruding upper-floor rooms also contribute to the volumetric articulation of the building and give the boundary wall facing onto the street a three-dimensionality and complexity that suggest a dynamic perception well beyond the simple bi-dimensional interpretation of the façade.



The building corner on the main street or at crossroads is where architectonic elements of public use or volumetric protrusions are most commonly situated. In the Kuyucu Murat Pasha *medrese* (fig. 29), at one end of the building, there is a *sebil*, aligned with a small entrance and with the body of *türbe*. This point of the building becomes a kind of urban watershed between two streets, one of which is a lane of the Divan axis. The protruding volume of the domed hall situated at the other end acts as a counterweight to the concentration of architectonic elements present on this corner. On the main street, the central part of the building has a regular series of shops that shut off the inner courtyard of the *medrese* on the street front. It is lower than two the corner bodies it stretches between. The continuity and lack of stringcourses in the masonry emphasises this variation in height between the ends and the central part (n). In the Seyyit Hasan Pasha *medrese* (fig. 30) there is an increase in height at the two ends of the building on the street side, due to the presence of two domed halls situated on the first floor. The asymmetric architectonic and volumetric elements jutting onto the street add to the verticality of these corners of the building (o). The cantilever of the *dershane* on the first floor, at one end, counters the overhang of the *sebil* and its large, jutting out roof, at the other end (p). Furthermore, the movement of the cornice and the dovecote situated in the top part of the corner of the *dershane* facing inwards to the courtyard, emphasise the importance of the corner and the way it is perceived from the street. In the Ekmekçizade Ahmet Pasha *medrese* (fig. 28), at a point where several streets meet, the side margin of the building has an increase in the height of the classroom and of the *türbe* volumes. There is also a *sebil* at this point of the building, at street level, and near it, a small *hazire*.

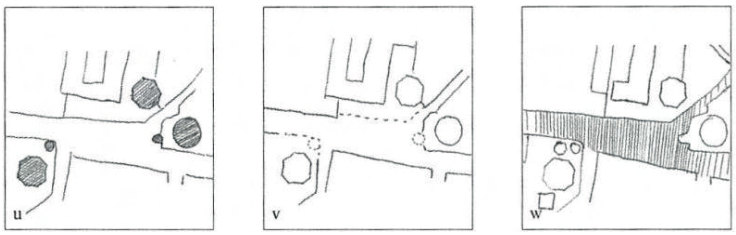


In some 18th century monumental buildings, can be seen a substantial differentiation in form, use and building techniques between the ground and upper floors on the street side. In the Seyyit Hasan Pasha *medrese*, some shops, a fountain and a *sebil* are situated on the ground floor, having a public function and direct use from the street; on the first floor we find the classrooms of the *medrese*, used for lessons and prayer. The street level was built in squared blocks of stone, the *sebil* and fountain in richly gilded marble, while on the upper floor, terminating with a jutting brick cornice, alternate rows of stone and brick were used. The contrast in the constructive simplicity of the upper floor with the formal showiness of the public elements on the ground floor is striking. In the Recai Efendi primary school (fig. 44), too, the plinth on the street has an elaborate marble facing, modelled on the convex surface of the *sebil* in the centre with at its sides fountains and entrance similarly moulded and profiled. The construction of the the first floor classroom masonry is simple and basic: the façade is in horizontal layers of stone and brick and the window lintels and jambs are squared from single blocks of stone (q). This difference in the treatment of the walls on the side of the building facing the street, with stone on the street level floor and a stone and brick first floor is also found in other monumental buildings, such as in the Hasan Pasha Hanı *han* and in the *mekteb* of the Amcazade Hüseyin Pasha complex. (r, s). In both these buildings, the shops are situated on the ground floor, and the upper floors hold the rooms where the actual functions of the building take place. The Cevri Kalfa school (fig. 43), a 19th century building, revives the formal distinction of the street façadefloors, not by differentiating the masonry treatment, but through the cantilever of the room on the first floor on the plinth of the lower floor, where a fountain and door are symmetrically placed on the sides of the main building (t).

Relationships between neighbouring monumental buildings. In the eastern part of the Divan axis, the proximity along the same section of street of three *medrese*, Koca Sinan Pasha, Çorlulu Ali Pasha, Kara Mustafa Pasha (figs. 58, 59, 60), which share architectonic lexicon and rules

(dimensions and heights, relationship between street section and elevation, building materials and techniques, composition and ornamental elements), gave rise, within a common urban space, to the formation of visual and formal relationships between these monumental buildings. In their present state, after the demolitions in the late 19th century and the widening of the street in the 1950s,[174] there is a partial alteration of the architectonic and perception relationships between the three monuments. The urban space we refer to therefore precedes these urban transformations, but the fact that these three complexes have been well-preserved makes it possible to verify the considerations regarding the distinctiveness of this site.

The three *medrese* were built over slightly more than a century. The street limit is defined in all three monumental complexes by the fenestrated boundary wall and the main bodies of buildings remain behind this. The *türbe*, present inside every complex, and the *sebil* on the corner of the boundary walls, generate a perceptive connection between these elements in the urban space since their form and volume makes them stand out. (u).



The connection between these architectures, which have a bearing on their common urban context, is due to shared linguistic elements, such as the arches set on semi-colonnades/pillars in some sections of the fenestrated boundary walls and in the *sebil* (v), to the common use of materials, freestone masonry and the lead roofing of the *türbe*. It ensues that in the perception of this architecture from the street, the sum of formal relations gives a sense of unity to the urban space enclosed by the three monumental ensembles (w).

The concentration of several monumental complexes in other sections of the Divan axis lead us to suppose that similar relations may have existed at other points along the route. But the

[174] See Appendix to Chapter 10.

transformations and destructions caused by urban planning operations and by the degradation of the buildings, limit the possibility to develop an exhaustive analysis on other urban contexts along the axis. The mid-19th century etching by Thomas Allom (fig. 57) might legitimate the hypothesis that similar situations may have existed, near the Damat Ibrahim Pasha *medrese*, in the mutual links between the Direkler Arası arcade, the *sebil*, the fenestrated *hazire* wall and the entrance to the janissary barracks. The demolition of most and the lack of sufficient documentation prevents full verification.

Fig. 81: *View of the Kara Mustafa, Çorlulu, Koca Sinan group of* medreses *before street widening operations in the 19th and 20th centuries (reconstruction).*

Serial timber housing on the background of or within monumental sequences. Now almost totally disappeared, typical Ottoman timber housing, up to the end of the 19th century was an almost prevalent architectural background along the axis for monumental architecture.

In some tracts, timber houses, in small groups of houses or singly, were placed between neighbouring monumental buildings (x). This is

particularly evident in the Pervititch maps for the Zincirlikuyu quarter (see also fig. 39 and houses in the background in fig. 1).

We have almost no photographic documentation of long curtains of timber houses in such quantities as to create a very characteristic and dominant background where monumental architecture and commercial buildigs were sparse (y). They certainly existed, as registered by maps and by photos of the Valens aqueduct that show some timber houses, but they were replaced by masonry houses and office buildings very early in the 20th century.

The Pervititch maps and some rare photos show *konaks* which were free-standing and had wall-enclosed gardens (z). They were not frequent but did exist, especially in the eastern tract of the axis (see also fig. 40).

(EB, SD)