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ISTANBUL: AN ISLAMIC CITY

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CONQUEST AS AN ACT OF FAITH

The Prophet himself is said to have ordered the first military action of Muslims against the Byzantines, namely in Palestine in the year 624.[1] A mere twenty-six years after that, a Muslim army approached the gates of Constantinople. In some sense, from a Western viewpoint, the forces of Islam may be regarded as having espoused the ancient struggle of Sassanid Persia against the Greek empire. However, among Muslims it was a conviction, from the time of the Prophet onward, that the conquest of Constantinople was predestined for them by God. The Ottomans adopted that conviction as their own. Altogether the Muslims had organised twelve separate expeditions against the Byzantine capital before Mehmed II eventually took it in 1453.[2]

Constantinople was so powerful a symbol of resistance to the expansion of Islam that a whole series of *aḥādīth*, some authentic and some not, as well as legendary and folk-epic material, spread about the future Muslim conquest of the city.

The Ottomans would recall, and cite on every appropriate occasion, one of these *aḥādīth* which said: 'One day Constantinople will definitely be conquered. What a good amir and what a good army is the one that will accomplish this.'[3] They claimed to have found the tombs of many Companions of the Prophet who had taken part and fallen in the sieges of Constantinople under the Umayyads. Following the conquest, they constructed mausolea for them which became the most venerated places

[1] See Abū Bakr Muḥammad b. Aḥmad al-Wāsiṭī, *Faḍā'il al-Bayt al-Maqdis* (ed. Isaac Wasson, The Magnes Press, Jerusalem, 1979) 52–3; E. Sivan, 'Le caractère sacré de Jérusalem dans l'Islam aux XII–XIII siècles', *Studia Islamica* xxvii (1967) 149–82.

[2] M. Canard, 'Les Expéditions des Arabes contre Constantinople dans l'histoire et dans les légendes', *Journal Asiatique* (1926), 61–121.

[3] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyāhatnāme* (Istanbul 1314/1896), vol. i.

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in and around the city.[4] In the Ottoman tradition, the number of Companions who had actually fallen came to be multiplied by as many as seventy (a sacred figure).

The most venerated of these Companions, the Prophet's standard-bearer, Abū Ayyūb al-Anṣārī,[5] became the patron saint of Ottoman 'Islambol'. That Abū Ayyūb was indeed one of the Prophet's companions and did take part in and die during the siege of Constantinople in 668 is historically attested.[6] Mehmet II chose Abū Ayyūb as the patron saint of the conquered city, perhaps because he had declared himself the standard-bearer of the *ghazā'* in the whole Islamic world.[7]

Mehmed the Conqueror believed that the conquest would be the work of Allah, a miracle of His providence. The Sufi Şeyh Aq-Şemseddīn, a follower of the famous mystic philosopher of light, 'Umar al-Suhrawardī, became *murşid* (spiritual guide) to the Sulṭān and his army during the siege. The young Sulṭān asked the *murşid* to go into religious retreat in order to know the divine decision of the exact date of the conquest. The conquest did not occur on the date the *murşid* gave, rather the Christians recorded a naval success on that day. The letter written by the Şeyh to the Sulṭān after this event has been discovered in the Palace archives.[8] In it the Şeyh acknowledges that rumours about the failure of his prayers and the Sulṭān's lack of wisdom and authority had spread to the army. He attributes the failure to the fact that many soldiers in the Ottoman army were not true Muslims, having converted to Islam under pressure. But, being a practical man, he at the same time advises the Sulṭān to severely punish the commanders responsible for this disgraceful situation. He adds that when he went back to sleep after reading the Qur'ān, God revealed to him the good news of ultimate success. From the *gesta et vita* of the Şeyh[9] we learn that, during the final attack, the saints (all clad in white robes and led by the Prophet of miracles, Khiḍr) guided the Sulṭān's army to victory. Aq Şeyh claimed

[4] See Süheyl Ünver, *Ilim ve Sanat Bakımından Fatih Devri* (Belediye Press, Istanbul, 1948), i, 108–11.

[5] Paul Wittek, 'Ayvansaray, Un sanctuaire privé de son héros', *Annuaire de l'Institut de Philologie et d'Histoire Orientales et Slaves* (Brussels, 1951), 505–26.

[6] 'Abū Ayyūb Khālid b. Zayd b. Kulayb al-Nadjdjārī al-Anṣārī', (E. Levi-Provençal), EI², i, 108–9.

[7] Feridūn Aḥmed, *Munsha'āt al-Salāṭin* (Istanbul 1274/1858), i, 236. *Cf.* A. Ateş, 'Fatih Sultan Mehmed Tarafından Gönderilen Mektublar ve Bunlara Dair Gelen Cevablar', *Tarih Dergisi* (Istanbul, 1952), iv–7, 16.

[8] See H. Inalcik, *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar* (Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 1954), 217–18.

[9] *Manākib-i Aq Şemseddīn* [Shams al-Dīn] by Seyyid Husayn Enīsī; many copies in the MS collections in Turkey and Europe, see Mustafa Faya, *Aq Şemseddin*, Ph.D. thesis, Faculty of Theology, University of Ankara. I used here the MS in the Nuruosmaniye Library, Istanbul, no. 2175.

that the conquest was the work of providence through the prophet Khiḍr and Faqih Aḥmed whom he called Qutb-i 'ālem, the pole of the universe.[10]

The role and influence of Aq Şeyh in the events leading up to the conquest were further amplified in folk imagination. According to popular traditions related by Evliyā Çelebi, Aq Şeyh had revealed the impending conquest in 1444, long before the siege itself, when Mehmed was not yet the Sulṭān.[11] Placing his dervish cap on Mehmed's head, the Şeyh foretold that, according to God's favour, the conquest of Constantinople would be Mehmed's doing. Aq Şeyh is protrayed in all of these traditions as more powerful than the Sulṭān. Evliyā claimed that during the siege three thousand men of religion, including şeyhs and *'ulamā'*, exhorted the soldiers to fight and that the well-known şeyhs participated actively in attacking the city's main gates.

According to some folk traditions,[12] even the great şeyhs of the Islamic world came and fought alongside the Muslim army on this great day for Islam. The Sulṭān had promised the şeyhs that, after the conquest, he would allocate half the booty to them, build for each of them a convent, and do other charitable works besides. Evliyā[13] also tells us that a group of Greek priests, spiritually overwhelmed, came out of the fortress to join the Muslim army. This is a general theme in the folk epics of this period: that God eventually guided Christian priests towards the 'ultimate truth'—Islam. The significance of all of these stories is that the Muslim populace in those days believed that the city had been conquered through the spiritual power of the Muslim saints. It remains uncertain whether the Sulṭān shared in these beliefs. But there is every reason to affirm his belief in the necessity of having and keeping the blessings of these charismatic holy men on his side.[14]

The Sulṭān's decisions for the reconstruction of the conquered city fell in with the overwhelming religious zeal among the Muslim masses. Indeed, in that Islamic reconstruction of the city, the religious orders assumed a key role.[15]

Şeyh Aq Şemseddīn was also charged, upon the Sulṭān's order, with locating the tomb of Ayyūb al-Anṣārī. Its discovery by the Şeyh was no less miraculous and significant than the conquest. It assured the

[10] *Cf.* H. Inalcik, 'An Analysis of the Otman Baba Vilāyetnāmesi', paper read at the Colloquium on Saints and Sainthood in Islam, held at the University of California, Berkeley, 1986, to be published in the forthcoming volume of the Colloquium papers.

[11] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyāhatnāme*, 94, 97, 105; also the Conqueror's *waqfiyya* 29/32, mentioned in n.16, where the conquest is attributed to the spiritual power of Aq Şeyh.

[12] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyāhatnāme*, 97.

[13] *ibid.*, 111.

[14] H. Inalcik, 'Analysis ...' (n. 10 above).

[15] *ibid.* Mehmed II apparently did not like the popular *kalenderī* dervishes, but recognized their immense popularity with the populace and army.

Muslims that providence was still on their side. Mehmed built a mausoleum at the site, a mosque and a dervish convent.[16]

Ayyūb's tomb, which rapidly grew into a town outside the walls of the city on the Golden Horn, became the most sacred place in Istanbul. Each day hundreds of believers would visit with offerings and seek the saint's help. The most famous of the dervish convents as well as a huge cemetery clustered around the tomb. It is also significant that each Sulṭān upon his accession to the throne visited the tomb following the same route as the legend described for Ayyūb.[17] At the site, the most venerated Şeyh of the day girded the Sulṭān with the sacred sword of *ghazā*'. Thus, the saint's presence not only made the whole area of Istanbul a consecrated place for Muslims, but also gave the Sulṭān's rule over the Muslims a religious sanction.

It should be noted that every Ottoman city had its own *wālī* or saint whose tomb, usually located on a hill-top outside the city, combined Islamic mystic tradition with a pre-Islamic mountain cult.[18] Cities were regarded as persons and a prayer formula recited each time the name of the city was mentioned.

CONSTANTINOPLE BECOMES 'ISLAMBOL'

After the conquest, Mehmed's first act was to convert Constantinople into an Islamic city. The preamble of his *waqf* deed for his mosque reads:[19] 'Sulṭān Mehmed conquered *Kostantiniyye* with the help of God. It was an abode of idols.... He converted its churches of beautiful decoration into Islamic colleges and mosques.' There were six churches converted into mosques and one into a college. Interestingly enough, the monastery of Aya-Marina was given to Baba Ḥaydarī dervishes.[20] In general the best sites were assigned either to members of the military or to the men of religion including the Ṣūfī orders.

On the day following the conquest the Sulṭān went straight to St

[16] Wittek, 'Ayvansaray ...' (n.5 above), 523–4. For the *wakfiyya* of the complex see *Fatih Mehmed II Vakfiyeleri* (Vakıflar Umum Müdürlüğü, Ankara, 1938), 285–327.

[17] On the ceremony of swordgirding see I. H. Uzunçarşılı, *Osmanlı Devletinin Saray Teşkilâtı* (Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 1945), 189–200.

[18] On the dervish convents built on a hill outside the Ottoman towns see Semavi Eyice, 'Zaviyeler ve Zaviyeli Camiler', *Istanbul Üniversitesi Iktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* xxiii (1962–3), 23, 29. F. Hasluck, *Christianity and Islam under the Sultans* (ed. Margaret M. Hasluck, Oxford, 1929), i, 324–5. G. E. von Grunebaum, 'The Sacred character of Islamic Cities', A. Badawi, ed., *Mélanges Taha Husain* (Cairo, 1962), 25–37.

[19] The Conqueror's *waqfiyya* in Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyāhatnāme*, (see n.11), 30–31.

[20] Mentioned in the Ottoman survey of Istanbul made in 1455. The survey, preserved at the *Başvekâlet Archives*, Istanbul, is being prepared for publication.

Sophia church and converted it into a mosque, saying there his first prayers, an act that symbolized the dedication of the city as an Islamic one. He also solemnly gave it the name 'Islam-bol' (Islam abounds)[21], which actually reflects the centuries-long aspiration of Muslims to convert the great city of Constantine ('Qosṭanṭiniyya al-Kubrā') into a city of Islam. The new name was hereafter strictly maintained by the ulema, though the people at large continued to use the pre-Ottoman Turkish name Istanbul. Folk memory of the congregational prayers on the first Friday after the conquest, as described by Evliyā Çelebi,[22] records: 'When the muezzins began to recite the verse *'inn 'Allāha wa mala'ikatahu'*[23] in a touching tone, Aq Şemseddīn, taking Sulṭān Mehmed by his arm, in great respect led him to the pulpit. There he called out in a strong deep voice, "Praise to God, Lord of all creatures," and the *ghāzīs* present in the mosque, deeply touched, broke into tears of joy.'

Islamic faith and the popular imagination combined to convert Constantinople into *Islambol*. For the Ottomans it was a Muslim city from the time it held the sacred remains of the Prophet's companions. In Islamic tradition, a place where Muslims had built a mosque and prayed was considered Islamic territory. The churches, Hagia Sophia in particular, were admired as works of God which the Muslims believed He would ultimately grant to the true religion. Legend tells us[24] that Abū Ayyūb Anṣārī performed his prayers there before his martyrdom. Also, while an area or a city of non-Muslims who had submitted to a Muslim state was accepted as, administratively, a part of Islamic territory, its ultimate islamization remained a constant hope. Tolerant enough to resettle the city with Greeks, Armenians, and Jews, Mehmed the Conqueror nevertheless took measures to ensure that 'Islambol' had a Muslim majority—a policy systematically applied to the major cities conquered for Islam.[25]

For the Ottomans, the most celebrated symbolic action, after conquest of a Christian city, was to convert the churches into mosques. The minaret for the call to prayer (*adhān*) became the visible symbol, and most striking feature, of the Islamic city. In their descriptions of conquests, the Ottomans always referred to this as the symbol of Islam's victory.

[21] See H. Inalcik, 'Istanbul', *EI*², iv, 224.

[22] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyāhatnāme*, 111.

[23] The Qur'ān, 2: 30–34.

[24] Evliyā Çelebi, *Seyāhatnāme*, i, 76.

[25] H. Inalcik, 'Istanbul', (n.21), 238. H. Inalcik, 'Ottoman Methods of Conquest', *Studia Islamica* ii (1954), 122–9. For the Balkans see *Structure sociale et développement culturel des villes sud-est européennes et adriatiques* (Bucharest, 1975); N. Todorov, *La ville balkanique aux XV–XIX siecles, développement socioéconomique et demographique* (Bucharest, 1980); and *Istanbul à la jonction des cultures balkaniques, mediterranéennes, slaves et orientales*: Actes du colloque organisé par AIESEE, Bucharest, 1977.

Every city or town with a Muslim population had to have a Friday Mosque or *masjid* (smaller mosque) and it was a religious duty to assemble there on Fridays. Suleyman the Magnificent, in order to extirpate the Kizilbash heresy, extended this obligation to villages.[26]

The great mosque in the centre of each *nāḥiye* (see *infra*) was the centre not only of religion but also of various other aspects of urban life. Aside from the *madrasa* built within the mosque complex, regular courses were held in the mosque for the general public (*dars-i 'ām*): the teaching of Islam was considered one of the greatest pious acts in the Islamic tradition. It was a religious duty for the Sulṭān (as well as the ordinary Muslim citizen) to go to prayers in the great mosque of the capital city, especially on Friday (*jum'a*). It was there that the Sulṭān had direct contact with ordinary people and received oral and written grievances (*riq'a*) on abuses of power they had suffered. The ceremony was symbolic of the Sulṭān's concern for his people's suffering, a concern regarded, in the Islamic state tradition, as the ruler's most important function. In miniature paintings of the Sulṭān receiving a *riq'a* from the hands of an old woman, symbolically the most helpless of the subjects, an image of the Sulṭān as the ideal ruler is created. The sermon (*khuṭba*) following Friday prayer, delivered by the most venerated Şeyh of the time, had more than a religious function. The congregation (*jamā'a*) would respond to the praises of the Sulṭān offered in the *khuṭba*—a ceremony interpreted in Islamic society as recognition of the Sulṭān's sovereignty by the public. Indeed, this Friday mention and the minting of coins were always regarded as the two necessary symbols for the independence of any ruler in Islamic lands.

Furthermore, the law courts were customarily located at the mosques. The busiest of them was in the courtyard of the Grand Vizir Mahmud Pasha Mosque, situated on the main street of the city in the vicinity of the Great Bazaar.

The organization of space in 'Islambol'

The world view of Islam determined the physical and social landscape of the city which was prepared as a space where the prescriptions of the Islamic religion could be observed properly and in their entirety.[27]

The basic objective in the expansion of Islam was to acquire political control over an area and establish the symbols of Islamic sovereignty.

[26] 'Osmanli Kanunnameleri' (*Kanunname-i Djedīd ve Mu'teber*), *Milli Tetebbu'lar Medjumu'ası*, i, 338.

[27] *Cf.* G. E. von Grunebaum, *Islam: Essays in the Nature and Growth of a Cultural Tradition* (Routledge and Kegan Paul, London, 1955), 142; Al-Mawardī, *Tashīl al-Nazar* ..., ed. Riḍwān al-Sayyid (Beirut, 1987), 209–13.

An area inhabited by non-Muslims which had submitted to the power of Islam was considered to be within the *Dār al-Islām*, that is, part of the Islamic territory, whether or not the people living there had converted to Islam. If the city had had to be taken by force, Islamic Law allowed that the inhabitants could be removed as captives, the buildings becoming the property of the Islamic state. This happened in Constantinople on 29 May, 1453—over thirty thousand were enslaved and removed from the city.[28] Under Ottoman rule, anyone who wanted to build a house had to pay rent to the state treasury for the plot used. The principle of state ownership of land had the most significant consequences for the reconstruction of the city under the Ottomans. The Sulṭān was free to carry out his own plans for the location of the palace, bazaars, military barracks, and storehouses: he had a free hand in organizing the space and creating a typical Islamic-Ottoman city.

It is often argued that the Islamic city came into being spontaneously without any sort of planning and that its population was only 'an amorphous crowd.'[29] The Ottoman practice, which we know basically followed Islamic tradition, challenges this view. The urban space of Istanbul, as with other cities before it that had been founded or reorganized by the Ottomans, followed a traditional pattern of organization laid down under the direction and supervision of the Sulṭān.[30]

[28] H. Inalcik, 'Istanbul', (n.21), 224–5.

[29] M. E. Bonine, 'The Morphogenesis of Iranian Cities', *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* lxlx/2 (1979), 208–24; Ira Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Later Middle Ages* (Harvard University Press, 1967), in particular ch.3, 'The Urban Society' and 185–91; M. E. Bonine, 'From Uruk to Casablanca, Perspectives in the Urban Experience of the Middle East', *Journal of Urban History*, iii/2, 141–80. Comparing always with the chartered cities and communes of medieval Europe, urban historians stress that in Islamic history there was no urban organization that can properly be called Islamic, that Muslim cities had no independent or autonomous guilds or workmen associations; see A. H. Hourani and S. M. Stern, eds., *The Islamic City* (Oxford, 1970); C. Brown, ed., *From Madina to Metropolis* (Darwin, Princeton, 1973); R. B. Serjeant, ed., *The Islamic City* (Paris, 1980), H. A. Miskimin and A. L. Udovitch, 'A Tale of Two Cities', in *The Medieval City* (eds. D. Herlihy and A. L. Udovitch, Yale University Press, New Haven, London, 1977), say (144): 'the Muslim conquerors... founded many more towns themselves, which provides at least a partial justification for using the epithet "Islamic" to designate the cities and towns of the medieval Near East.' Now see in particular, *Urbanism in Islam* (Tokyo, 1989, 5 vols.) Also see Excursus I and II at the end of this paper. On space organization see P. Wheatley, 'Levels of Space Awareness in the Traditional Islamic City', *Existics* xliv (1976), 354–66.

[30] See H. Inalcik 'Istanbul' (n.21), 226–48. A pioneer on Ottoman urbanism is Osman Nuri Ergin, *Medjelle-i Umür-i Belediyye* (Istanbul, 1922), vol. i; *idem, Türkiye'de Şehirciliğin Tarihi İnkişafi* (Istanbul, 1936). On Turkish urbanism in Asia Minor see Faruk Sümer, *Eski Türklerde Şehircilik* (Istanbul, 1984); Uğur Tanyeli, *Anadolu Türk Kentinde Fiziksel Yapının Evrim Süreci (11–15 yy)* (Istanbul, 1987); Tuncer Baykara, *Konya* (Ankara, 1985); *Tarih İçinde Ankara* (Seminar Papers, Ankara, 1984); Emel Esin, 'The Genesis of the Turkish Mosque and Madrasa Complex', *Proceedings of the Twenty-Seventh International Congress of Orientalists (Napoli, 1967)*: (Annali dell'Istituto

The view that an Islamic city lacked any planning really does need to be modified. The founders of pious endowments followed a traditional plan in establishing the main complexes of the religious and commercial centres of the city. The complexes themselves had a distinct arrangement of buildings within their boundaries. Of whatever origin—Hellenistic, Sassanian or Central Asiatic—a certain type of planning was followed in creating such centres. On the other hand, the lack of planning in the residential sections of the city is a fact and can be explained by certain Islamic concepts to be discussed later.

As early as 1453 the Sulṭān had issued orders for the construction of certain buildings without which the Ottomans would not consider a city as complete.[31] Important among these were a citadel within the walls surrounding the Golden Gate of the Roman city, a royal palace on the hill, Forum Tauri, in the centre of the city, and a huge bazaar with a central *bedestān* (compact hall) for valuable commodity imports.[32]

The citadel, symbol of the Sulṭān's power, and housing the state treasury, was the main stronghold in the city, its garrison the ultimate force for city-defence in the event of invasion or popular uprising.

The royal palace (later abandoned for another on the Topkapi site)

orientale di Napoli, 1972), n.s. xxii, 115–23. For Ottoman urbanism, publications of the qāḍī records are essential: for titles see *Türkologischer Anzeiger*; Cengiz Orhonlu, *Osmanlı Imparatorlunğunda Şehircilik ve Ulaşım, Türk Tarihinde ve Kültüründe Tokat*, Symposium, 2–6 July 1986 (Ankara, 1987). An important sixteenth century source for the Ottoman idea of city with plans showing the basic buildings and complexes is Nasühu's-Silāḥī (Matraḳçi), *Beyān-i Menāzil-i Sefer-i Irakeyn-i Sulṭān Süleymān Ḫān*, ed. H. G. Yurdaydın. (Türk Tarih Kurumu, Ankara, 1976); İlhan Tekeli, 'On institutionalized External Relations of Cities in the Ottoman Empire: A Settlement Models Approach', *Etudes Balkaniques* (Sofia, 1972), ii, 49–72; Z. Vesela-Prenosilová, 'Quelques remarques sur l'évolution de l'organisation urbaine en Empire ottoman', *Archiv Orientalni* (Prague, 1974), 200–224; Ö. L. Barkan, 'Türkiye Şehirlerinin Teşekkül ve Inkişaf Tarihi Bakımından Imaret Siterlerinin Kuruluş ve Işleyiş Tarzına ait Araştırmalar', *İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* (Istanbul, 1963), xxiii, 239–398. For examples of the cities 'created' by the Ottomans' *waqfs* see Ö. L. Barkan, 'Vakıflar ve Temlikler: I. Istilā Devirlerinin Kolonizatör Türk Dervişleri, *Vakıflar Dergisi* (Ankara, ii, 355); *cf.* E. Pauty, 'Villes spontanées et villes crées en Islam', *Annales de l'Institut d'Etudes Orientales* ix (1951); K. Liebe-Harkort, *Beiträge zur sozialen und wirtschaftlichen Lage Bursas am Anfang des 16. Jahrhunderts* (Hamburg, 1970); S. Faroqhi, *Towns and Townsmen of Ottoman Anatolia: trade, crafts and food production in an urban setting, 1520–1650* (Cambridge U. P., Cambridge, 1984); *idem, Men of Modest Substance, House Owners and House Property in Seventeenth-century Ankara and Kayseri* (Cambridge U. P., Cambridge, 1987).

[31] See H. Inalcik, 'Istanbul' (n.21), 226–9.

[32] See H. Inalcik, 'The Hub of the City: The Bedestan of Istanbul', *International Journal of Turkish Studies* (Madison, 1980), 311–58; and Excursus II at the end of this paper.

was also surrounded by walls making it a fortified city within the city. The Sulṭān's palace was revered as a quasi-sacred place where God's disposition for his creatures manifested itself in the *Imām*, the Sulṭān. As the Prophet's saying reads: 'The Imām is the trusted agent of Allah amongst his people and the proof of His care over His creatures and His representative over the country.'

On the day of conquest, Mehmed announced that Istanbul was his capital city in the words: 'From now on Istanbul is my *taht* (throne)'.[33] The capital is called *tahtgah* or *dār al-Salṭana*, literally 'the abode of the throne' or of the *salṭana* (political sovereignty, distinct from *khilāfa*, the supreme spiritual–political authority of the successor of the Prophet.) The capital was thus conceived as the place of residence of the holder of the *salṭana*.

Beyond the main gate of the palace or *Bāb al-Sa'āda* is where the subjects live, the palace gate therefore manifests the ruler's authority.[34] It is an elaborate structure topped with a golden dome, symbolic of the heavens or the universe, under which the ruler sat enthroned to receive people in a most elaborate court ceremony. The spot where the throne was placed was the quasi-sacred centre of the realm, around which the whole Empire revolved.

All Ottoman terminology connected with the Sulṭān's authority was based on this concept. The government was the *Sublime Porte*, the city itself *Der-i Sa'ādet*, the 'Gate of the Good Fortune'. Proximity to the Sulṭān's person determined the degree of authority and fortune enjoyed—for example, the pages of the privy chamber were candidates for the highest positions in the Empire.[35] The state officials in the capital represented the highest ranks in each class—the qāḍī of Istanbul, for example, was the supreme qāḍī in the Empire. In sum, the world-view, with its basic notion of a divinely sanctioned and supported centre of power, gave rise to the hierarchical and centralized structure of the Ottoman Empire. It was no mere mystical theory. In the mid-seventeenth century, Evliyā Çelebi observed that security and wealth diminished in the provinces in proportion to the distance from the 'Gate of Good Fortune'.

Apart from these 'political' formative elements of the Ottoman–Islamic city, the main urban zones, including the *bedestān–çarşı* or central market place, were brought into existence under the *waqf–'imāret* system.

[33] Tursun Beg, *The History of Mehmed the Conqueror*, eds. H. Inalcik and R. Murphey (Bibliotheca Islamica, Minneapolis and Chicago, 1978), Text: 52b.

[34] H. Inalcik, *The Ottoman Empire: the Classical Age 1300–1600*, trans. N. Itzkowitz and C. Imber (A. D. Caratzas: New Rochelle, repr. 1989), 76 and 89–100.

[35] *ibid.*, 76–88.

The waqf–'imāret system

In large metropolises such as Bursa and Istanbul the city developed not around a single nucleus but around several, variously located, each constructed as a well-planned complex of religious buildings (mosque, *madrasa*, hospice, etc.), and supported by a *waqf*. In Istanbul, around such nuclei built by the Sulṭān or vizirs, developed new divisions (*nāḥiye*), each under the jurisdiction of a surrogate judge appointed by the cadi of Istanbul. Each complex, as it answered the basic spiritual and material needs of a Muslim community in religion and education, as well as in water supply and even (through the hospice *'imāret* or hospice kitchen) in food, became the centre of a settlement which grew over time into a full-fledged *nāḥiye*. Through such a system Muslim Istanbul developed in the second half of the 15th century into Europe's largest city.

Through the *waqfs*, with sources of revenue such as shops rented to the merchants, traders, and artisans in the city, or villages and farms in rural areas, an immense amount of wealth constantly flowed into the city for the maintenance of such complexes. For example, the Fatih complex built by Mehmed the Conqueror had an annual revenue of 1.5 million akça or thirty thousand gold ducats which was spent as follows:[36]

Stipends for personnel and others	869,280 akça
Food for the Hospice	461,417
Expenses of the Hospital	72,000
Repairs	18,522

The total number of the personnel in various units was 383. At least 1,117 persons received two meals each day.

In the location and construction of the mosque, hierarchical considerations were given priority. It was forbidden to build a mosque larger or more stately than the Sulṭān's, a rule respected by all. The second largest mosque was built by the Grand Vizir or other vizirs. In the provinces, the governor-general or frontier *beg* was entitled to build a large mosque in the provincial centre. The founder was required to seek the written permission of the Sulṭān, while for the small district mosque (*mesjid*) the local qāḍī was able to grant permission for construction and to approve location.

For the location of a mosque a prominent site in the city's landscape or a crowded centre such as the bazaar area were preferred—that is, the criterion was either aesthetic or functional. The actual construction had to be in durable materials, mostly stone and such metals as iron and

[36] H. Inalcik, 'Istanbul' (n.21), 229.

bronze. A larger mosque was the central building among a complex of buildings including the *madrasa* (college), the library, hospital, hospice, convent for dervishes, school for children, and fountain for ablution. A *türbe* (mausoleum) was also usually added for the founder. It was only the Sulṭāns and the vizirs who built such *'imārets* or large complexes. They served as a kind of infrastructure for the creation of new districts in the reconstruction process in Istanbul. In 1459, Mehmed the Conqueror gave orders to his vizirs to build such complexes on various sites within the walls.[37] These complexes became the nuclei for subsequent districts.

It can safely be said that the reconstruction process of Ottoman Istanbul depended essentially on the Islamic institutions of *waqf* and *'imāret*. The construction of such complexes would sometimes follow the rapidly expanding settlement of a particular district. A number of districts came into existence spontaneously as a result of economic conditions. Smaller district mosques or *masjids* were built by leading figures of the local community, mostly merchants and craftsmen. A district was named after the founder of the local mosque.

The list below shows a breakdown of the districts of Istanbul according to the founders of mosques by the mid-seventeenth century:[38] it will be seen that 65 per cent of the founders of mosques belonged to the 'ruling class':

Ulema	46
Merchants and bankers	32
Trades people	28
Aghas of the Palace	18
Begs	16
Pashas	14
Officers of the Kapı-Kulu	12
'Bureaucrats'	8
Architects	6
Others	39
Total	219

Large-scale urban utilities, such as the water system, store-houses for provisions, slaughterhouses, etc., were all built by the Sulṭān as part of the pious foundation of the mosque. The construction of the city's water system–aqueducts, water conduits in the city, and public fountains—was likewise a part of the *waqfs* of the mosques. In the sixteenth century, when the population in *intra muros* Istanbul alone surpassed 250,000, the Ottomans renovated the entire water system with new aqueducts and a distribution system in the city. A permanent

[37] *ibid.*

[38] *ibid.*, 231.

organization called *su-yolcuları* had already been created to supervise and carry out the repair work. Suleyman the Magnificent, who considered improvements in the water supply for the urban population to be one of the most meritorious religious acts, was responsible for extending the system to all the big cities in the Empire, including Mecca, Medina, and Jerusalem. These cities relied, until very recently, on the water system introduced by the Ottomans.

The mosque, or rather the complex of religious and charitable buildings affiliated with it, was the meeting place of the urban community. It was not only the forum for their major religious, political and judicial affairs, but also for trading, socializing and entertainment. For example, the large square outside Bayezid II's mosque was surrounded by shops and 'thousands of people', Evliyā notes,[39] who 'enjoy the shady places under the trees and do shopping for their needs, buying all sorts of goods.'

The *bedestān* and the Great Çarşı were built as part of the *waqfs* for the Aya-Sofya (Hagia Sophia) mosque.[40] The rents were to be spent for the upkeep of the mosque and other charitable foundations. Thus, through the *waqf* system, all the works designed to enhance the city were interpreted as works of charity for the good of the Muslim community.

The great bazaar with *bedestāns*, khans for merchants and *çarşıs* (*sūq*) for handicrafts, was built according to a Turco-Islamic plan on the former Byzantine site of crafts and guilds.[41] The high street called Divan-Yolu from Edirne-Kapî to Aya-Sofya (Hagia Sophia) was, as under the Byzantines, the main imperial road with all the important public buildings, including the great bazaar and the customs house for the caravans entering the city through Edirne-Kapı. This thoroughfare ran parallel to the port area on the Golden Horn, and the streets connected the business centre of the caravans with the port. In fact, the triangle between port area, Galata, and Üsküdar (the terminus for the caravans from Asia) became and still is the hub of the city's economic life. The streets extending from it to the Bazaar channelled goods arriving by sea to the great marketplace of the city. The entire system with its infrastructure of bazaars, market halls, storehouses, and groups of shops was established by the Sulṭān or high dignitaries as a source of revenue for the pious foundations, as though ultimately intended for the purpose of serving the religion. This world is, in Muslim beliefs, only a temporary station en route to the eternal life hereafter.

[39] *Seyāhatnāme*, 144.

[40] H. Inalcik, 'The Hub of the City: The Bedestān of Istanbul', *Studies in Ottoman Social and Economic History* (Variorum Reprints: London, 1985).

[41] See H. Inalcik, 'Istanbul', 227.

The main urban functions were viewed as being complementary to or extensions of the religious establishment or the imperial palace. The crafts were housed in the bazaars constructed by the founders of the pious endowments (*waqfs*). Each was put under the control of the respective craftsman appointed to the Sulṭān's palace. All of the jewellers were put under the *kuyumcubaşı* or chief imperial jeweller, all of the physicians under the *hekimbaşı* or chief imperial physician, all the tailors under the *terzibaşı* or chief imperial tailor, all of the architects under the chief imperial architect, and so on. Each examined and issued licences and promulgated regulations for people in their respective professions. Their services, however, were intended not only for the benefit of the palace but also for the Muslim community at large. Head of the officers responsible for the needs of the palace and the city was the *şehir-emini* or city 'prefect'. His primary duty was to oversee everything the Sulṭān's palaces needed, from provisions of the bazaar to repair work, etc.

The residential section of the city

It was noted above that the residential areas of the city lacked any kind of planned arrangement. This can be explained in relation to certain fundamental beliefs and concepts of the Islamic religion and culture.

The sacred principles of the Sharī'a, *ḥalāl* (lawful) and *ḥarām* (unlawful, prohibited) govern all human activities in society, the more so in an urban environment. Islamic law embraces not only matters related to ritual, social relationships and conduct, but also food, habitation and environment.

Due to the prohibition of intoxicating beverages and pork, the non-Muslim citizens were strictly forbidden to sell these items to Muslims and were required to keep their shops outside of the Muslim districts. Drinking houses were restricted to Galata on the other side of the Golden Horn, an area regarded by Muslims as a place of sin.

The right of privacy is a religious principle in Islam that helps explain many features of a Muslim city. While the decisive sources of Islam, i.e., the Qur'ān and Ḥadīth, gave rise to a detailed legal theory on the matter, the Ottoman court records provide abundant evidence of how that theory was actually implemented in the Islamic city.

The right of privacy encompassed family as well as religious life, which is the principal explanation of the division of the Ottoman—or, more widely, the Islamic—city into two main zones, residential and commercial. In the commercial zone, religious identity did not interfere with the daily routine, and Muslims and non-Muslims intermingled —only shops selling comestibles were segregated. In the residential zone

people operated under the rules, and performed the rituals, of their own religions, within their own communities, in separate or 'private' districts. As a rule, each religious community occupied a specific area in the residential quarters and had its own cemetery. The quarters (*maḥalle*) grew up around a *masjid*, church, or synagogue. Greeks, Armenians, Jews or Karaites had each their separate areas. Segregation of the Muslim districts from the non-Muslim ones was particularly stressed. The Sharī'a demanded that the non-Muslims not perform their ceremonies or rituals within sight or hearing of the Muslims. However, the Muslims went to great lengths to make their own ceremonies visible, which was thought to be the most efficient way to propagate Islam.

Islam makes a number of stipulations concerning private life and privacy. The family and the home are sacred, a transgression of which, though sometimes committed by the state authorities, is a major sin and may result in legal action against the transgressor. In particular, the part of the house where one's family lives is called *ḥarīm* and considered inviolable, and the Law prohibits entry to it by outsiders.[42] Without considering the Islamic rules on the sanctity of privacy, we cannot explain the particular forms which domestic architecture and the streets took in the Ottoman or Islamic city. The Ottoman buildings and street patterns adhered closely to the rules and regulations of Islamic Law.[43] They were controlled by such public authorities as the chief architect (*ser-mi'mār*) the prefect (*şehir-emini*) and the superintendent of the water conduits (*su-yolu nazırı*) in cooperation with the city's qāḍī. Disputes were settled by the qāḍī in accordance with the regulations and, in the final analysis, by the rules of the Sharī'a. Under the regulations, non-Muslims could not build near a Muslim place of worship and their houses were not to be more than nine *dhirā'* (6.82 metres) high or higher than a Muslim house. This regulation, however, was responsible for the construction of all sorts of 'extensions' on the tops of the buildings. The Istanbul court records contain frequent cases filed when a neighbour built a higher building to protect the interior of his house from being overlooked.

The residential section of *maḥalles* was the area in which the Muslim community and the other religious communities lived, in their separate districts, their private lives. Government officers rarely showed themselves in these areas. The *ketkḫudā* and *imām*, elected by the *maḥalle* and approved by the qāḍī, were responsible for the public affairs of the

[42] A *ḥadīth* says: 'every land has its appurtenance forbidden [to other than the proprietor].' See M. Hamidullah, *Muslim Conduct of State* (Kashmir Bazar, 4th edn., 1961), 92.

[43] On the Ottoman regulations on the construction of houses in the city of Istanbul, see Osman Nuri Ergin, *Medjelle-i Umūr-i Belediyye* (Istanbul 1922), 1059–72. A. Marcus, 'Privacy in Eighteenth-Century Aleppo', *IJMES*, 18 (1986), 165–83.

community. They mediated between government and community in such matters as tax collection and security. The city's population consisted of groups classed religiously and socially autonomous. The government did not think it appropriate to impose regulations on the residential areas except in matters affecting the entire city, such as a fire.

Non-intervention in social and economic life was vigorously defended by a group of Muslim jurists, among them Imām Abū Yūsuf (d. 798). In the sixth chapter of his *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, Abū Yūsuf, quoting several *aḥādīth*, ruled that the prices of the market are determined by God, not by human wisdom.[44] The Prophet himself declined to intervene when people complained about rising prices at the market. Abū Yūsuf argued that abundance or scarcity are not the only reasons for the rise or fall of prices. Here again we see the key attitude of Islam as far as social arrangements are concerned. It was believed that in such cases human intervention is an act against the divine purpose.

The striking difference between the unplanned Muslim cemetery and the usually neatly planned Christian cemetery may also be explained in the same way. To the Muslim the tombs scattered on the cemetery grounds were a passage to the other world where the dead are visited and questioned by the angels (*malā'ika*) within forty days of burial. Even when the mausolea were erected for members of the ruling élite, the most pious among them asked in their wills that the dome of the tomb be left open to the sky. At the cemetery, things had to be left to the will of God.

THE QĀḌĪ AS AN INDEPENDENT RESPRESENTATIVE OF THE URBAN COMMUNITY

Every city and town was placed under the jurisdiction of a qāḍī who represented Islam and Sharī'a. Istanbul *intra muros* was under a qāḍī who held the highest rank among the qāḍīs, while the three towns which were separated from Istanbul by water or by city walls, namely Galata, Üsküdar and Haslar (also called Eyüp) had their own separate jurisdictions under independent qāḍīs. As a general rule, a qāḍī's jurisdiction (qāḍā') included *nāḥiyes* or districts as well as suburbs and villages around the urban centre. The central (*merkez*) *nāḥiye* included those nearby summer pastures (*yayla*), villages and other lands economically an integral part of the town and vital for the supply of provisions and raw materials (cotton, wool, and hides in particular).

[44] See M. N. Siddiqi, 'Muslim Economic Thinking: A Survey of Contemporary Literature', *Studies in Islamic Economics*, ed. Khurshid Ahmed (Glasgow, 1981), 249, 263. *Cf.* D. Gimaret, 'Les théologiens musulmans devant la hausse des prix', *JESHO* xxii/3 (1979), 330–7.

Here I shall focus on the role of the qāḍī and 'the council of the court' (*Majlis-i Shar'*) from the point of view of the Muslim city as an urban community. Although the qāḍī, as with any other executive officer, was appointed by the Sulṭān, this appointment was made in the Sulṭān's capacity as *imām* (religious head) of the Islamic community. The qāḍī therefore had all the delegated powers as head of the urban community under his particular jurisdiction. The qāḍī was autonomous with respect to the military and administrative authorities of the area and had direct access to the Sulṭān. He even had a kind of autonomy over the Sulṭān whenever the Sharī'a and the Islamic community were in question. His authority to administer the Sharī'a made him virtually autonomous, since no one could interfere in his decisions and actions in this field. Occasionally the opinion of the religious authorities was sought, but the qāḍī was not bound by it in his decisions. If his decision was challenged, the Porte could only ask him to hear the case again, or to transfer it to another qāḍī, or the case could be heard by the imperial council which then acted as a supreme court with higher judges (i.e. *qāḍī'asker*). The qāḍī's independent status as an administrator of the Sharī'a made it possible for the Islamic community to survive under foreign domination (of the Mongols in 13th century Iran, of Europeans in 19th century North Africa). In such circumstances the qāḍī assumed even greater authority and autonomy as the true and sole representative of the Sharī'a and thence of the Islamic community.

It should be remembered that in Muslim society, the Sharī'a was the final and absolute authority in governing Muslim life not only with regard to private matters but also in many areas of public life. That is why the Islamic communities energetically denounced the efforts of the colonial powers to secularize the law in administrative matters, which often led to prolonged resistance movements as seen in the nineteenth century North African Muslim countries. We cannot exaggerate the role of the qāḍī's leadership in the local urban community and in political life, even in the highly centralized Ottoman empire. The notables of the urban community led by the local ulema assembled in the qāḍī's court and conveyed their demands to the Sulṭān on such matters as lowering taxes or expelling an oppressive officer. The qāḍī usually presented and signed the document called the *maḥzar*.[45] Indeed, at such meetings the qāḍī's council swelled to include the leaders of the urban community. This was true even when the local notables were the real power behind him, as during the *a'yān* regime which prevailed in the eighteenth century Ottoman cities.

It was a part of a qāḍī's religious duties, included in the *ḥisba*

[45] See H. Inalcik, 'Şikâyet Hakkı: 'Arz-i Hâl ve 'Arz-i Maḥzarlar', *The Journal of Ottoman Studies* vii–viii (1988), 33–54.

jurisdiction,[46] to make sure that goods were manufactured according to set standards, and that any violations or profiteering were prevented in the market place.

An officer, the *muḥtesib*, in charge of *ḥisba* services, was on duty all the time at the market under the supervision of the city's qāḍī. The *muḥtesib's* function of insuring the welfare of the urban community was inferred by the ulema from the Qur'ānic verse[47] which commands believers 'to follow good known and recognized as such by everybody (*al-ma'rūf*)' and 'to abstain from evil known and recognized as such by everybody.' All ethical–social action with the purpose of establishing good and preventing evil in the society was based by the Muslim jurists on this Qur'ānic principle. Thus, the *muḥtesib's* duty transcended that of a simple market inspector such as the Greco-Roman agoranomos.[48] Whatever its institutional origin, it is in fact an Islamic religious office. Under the Ottomans the *muḥtesib* was nominatd by the qāḍī and appointed by the Sulṭān's diploma, which defined his authority and responsibilities.

In principle, he was responsible for seeing to it that Muslims in the city followed the precepts of the Sharī'a and lived a thoroughly Muslim life. In cooperation with the qāḍī, he was responsible for affairs bearing on public morality as the Sharī'a defines it. Because *ḥisba* was a religious office, its incumbent had to be a religious man with knowledge of Islamic jurisprudence. The Ottoman Sultans appointed a *muḥtesib* in each major city and promulgated *ḥisba* regulations. However, the *muḥtesib* under Ottoman rule, as in earlier times, under the 'Abbasids for example, was active only in the commercial zone and not in the residential zone. His main concerns were to prevent fraud in the marketplace, to apply the *ḥisba* (*iḥtisāb*) regulations, and to uphold the declared price lists. One of his most important duties was to check the accuracy of weights and measures at the market. This restriction of his jurisdiction to the marketplace can be explained by the fact that inviolability of an individual's privacy was the most important rule, and moral supervision was left to the *maḥalle* community and its leader, the *imām*.

Together with the qāḍī, who had the power to pronounce decisions on everything connected with the Sharī'a and the Sulṭanic law, the *muḥtesib* without doubt performed a major role in controlling urban life, its economic activities in particular.

[46] On the application of *ḥisba* rules in the Ottoman empire, see Osman Nuri Ergin, *Medjelle-i Umūr-i Belediyye*, 302–470; 'Ḥisba' *EI*², iii, 485–90.

[47] The Qur'ān, 3:104, 110, 114.

[48] B. R. Foster, 'Agoranomos and Muhtesib', *JESHO* xiii/2 (1970), 128–14, in particular 141.

In Ottoman Istanbul as well as in other big cities, two other office holders, *şehir-ketkhudası* and *şeh-bender*, exercised some degree of supervision over city life as a whole. They are enumerated, though after the military and the ulema, among the *a'yān* and *ashrāf* (notables) of the city. Unlike other office holders they belonged to the *re'āyā'* class. The former represented the craft guilds and the latter the merchants, and both assumed responsibilities after nomination by their respective groups and registration by the qāḍī. They played an important part in matters directly concerning the city. They represented the city population in the qāḍī's council on various occasions, particularly as spokesmen of their respective groups whenever a dispute involving the whole group called for their mediation or arbitration. Whenever the interests of the government were not involved, neither the government authorities nor the qāḍī interfered in their election, and registration by the qāḍī was simply a formality. On such occasions the qāḍī served as a notary public to register the election. The same was true for the election of guilds in the city. This state of affairs, known only through recent research on court documents,[49] allows us to speak of a certain kind of urban autonomy in the Ottoman or Islamic city.

In looking at the various 'spaces' in the city, one can speak of a spiritual–Islamic dimension or 'space', which was dominant in the Ottoman city. We have discussed this aspect above. There was also an 'existential space' whose definition varies depending on whether we talk about the imperial institution with the palace and the standing army in the capital, or the pious endowments with *waqfs*, or the merchants and ordinary townsmen.

CONCLUSION

To sum up, the Ottoman city had a definite physical and social organization which was based on and reflected the ideal of the Islamic Sharī'a for Muslim life. The division of the city into two main sections, a commercial–industrial zone on the one hand with the *bedestān*, the central bazaar, crafts and caravanserais, and on the other hand, a residential section with *maḥalle* communities organized around the local mosque,[50] definitely originated from Islamic concepts.

It was the Sulṭān or members of the élite who were responsible for the planned construction of building complexes in the commercial section. They were conceived and built to serve religious foundations. As for the residential section, it was composed of *maḥalle* or quarters, each of

[49] See my publication of documents from the Bursa qāḍī court in *Belgeler* (Turkish Historical Society, Ankara, vol. x, 1981; vol. xi, 1987).

[50] See E. Wirth, 'Die orientalische Stadt', *Saeculum* 26 (1975), 75–94.

which was organized as an autonomous community under an *imām* or *ketkhudā* elected from among the members of the *maḥalle* community. Religion, not lineage, played the central role in the formation of the *maḥalle*. When necessary, the qāḍī called the *imāms* of the *maḥalle* or *ketkhudās* of the city to his court to reach a decision concerning the interests of the community.

Although the city seemed to be an assemblage of such autonomous units, the unity of the city itself was secured by its commercial–industrial centre shared by all citizens, and by its political and Islamic–judicial institutions. Representing the latter, the qāḍī played a crucial role, not only as mediator between the urban community and the government, but also as an authority supervising all urban matters.

In practice, the qāḍī acted in many instances as representative of the local Muslim community and assumed the responsibility of defending its common interests. Under a qāḍī, the Ottoman or Islamic urban population acquired a communal identity and unity.

Comprising religious, charitable institutions with the revenue-producing commercial installations, the *waqf* system was the key institution in creating a typical Ottoman–Islamic urban structure.

The *waqf–'imāret* system, which gave the city its basic physical–topographic features, was originally an act of Islamic piety, designed to organize urban space to enable one to live a complete Muslim life. Chosen and located on commercially or visibly prominent areas, such religious complexes determined and gave impetus to the development of the main districts (*nāḥiye*) of the city. The formation and growth of the districts, however, was left to chance.

EXCURSUS I: 'ISLAMIC CITY'

In this paper, on the basis of original sources, we have argued the significance of the Islamic faith and culture for the characteristics of the topography and social structure of the Ottoman city of Istanbul. Obviously this does not exclude other determining factors—geographic setting, Roman–Byzantine heritage and, most particularly, historical circumstances.

The marked physical divide in the layout of the Islamic City, between a business centre and a residential section, has deeper social–political origins. There was a latent conflict between the all-powerful ruler who organized the city and sought to control the whole

society in the name of a divine purpose and the *re'āyā'*, the subject population, confined to economic activities. The tension is seen in affairs to do with price structure and settlement, in fact all social and economic activities governed by factors other than explicitly politico-religious ones. Indeed, there was an unending struggle on the part of the ruler's bureaucracy to maintain the ruler's order against the encroachments resulting from inevitable demographic and economic changes in the city. The Ottoman state's overriding preoccupation with, and efforts to resolve the problems are vividly recorded in the Ottoman archival collections.

Equally, however, it should not be forgotton that Islamic law recognized the rules governing religious and private life of Muslims as distinct from those governing economic relations which were applicable to the non-Muslims, *dhimmīs*, as well as Muslims. The first category of rules demanded a religiously segregated residential area and the second a commercial–industrial section where peoples of various faiths mingled and worked together.

In recent publications, anthropologists and historians have continued to stress the unorganized features of the 'Islamic City'. Clifford Geertz argues that 'the (Islamic) urban landscape is not merely various, as are all such landscapes, it is disjunct'.[1] Ira Lapidus remarks that 'Muslim Cities are cities by virtue of social processes which are not peculiar to any given culture.[2] Recently, to be sure, some anthropologists and geographers have changed their two-dimensional view of urban landscape with the discovery of a third dimension, namely the evolutionary past, and realized the dangers of generalized verdicts on the basis of fieldwork focused on a town or city of their choosing: for an example, see D. F. Eickelman's generalizations on the basis of an anthropological study of one Moroccan town.[3]

It is still argued that in general the Islamic City was not a planned construction.[4] The fact is that the strict grid pattern of streets was not something unknown in the commercial part of the typical cities founded by Muslim rulers. Only the residential part grew haphazardly,

[1] *IJMES*, vol. 21, iii, 292.

[2] 'The Evolution of Muslim Urban Society', *Comparative Studies in Sociology and History* xv (1973), 48.

[3] 'Is there an Islamic City?' *IJMES* v (1974), 274–94. Following the rather discredited orientalist tradition André Raymond now brings up the third dimension explaining the creation and evolution of the Islamic cities in *Artisans et Commercants au Caire au XVIIIeme siecle*, (Institut Français de Damas, 1973–74, 2 vols); and *The Great Arab Cities in the 16th–18th Century: An Introduction* (New York U.P., 1984).

[4] Most recently, M. E. Bonine, 'The Sacred Direction and City Structure: A Preliminary Analysis of Islamic Cities of Morocco', a discussion paper presented to the Geography and Environment Workshop, the University of Chicago, 26 April 1988.

over time, through the private initiative of Muslim settlers. But then, in most European medieval cities we find the same pattern—a planned city core for commerce and administration and an unplanned agglomeration of residential quarters which grew up over time around that core.[5]

It is time to find a middle way between on over-idealized interpretation of Islamic social institutions—the most recent such approach may be found in *Studies in Islamic Economics* (1980)[6]—and totally ignoring the determining role of Islamic norms —for an example, see C. Geertz, *Islam Observed* (1968).[7] It would save much misunderstanding if we still held to the theory of the congregational-mosque and bazaar or the palace core theories instead of seeing in the historical cities of Islam nothing but chaos.

M. Bonine rightly complains that there are 'great gaps in our understanding of the structure of the city in Middle Eastern society. Lack of specific information is partly due to lack of available sources.'[8] He seems not to be aware of the existence of the vast collections of the qāḍī court records from Islamic cities. It should be emphasized that Islamic social history and institutions cannot be understood without constant reference to the stipulations of the Sharī'a and the crucial role which the qāḍī and *muftī* played in the Islamic city. Now with the discovery and the use of the qāḍī court records the urban historian has at his disposal a most detailed primary source on Islamic social history, and particularly urban institutions and life. Ottoman court records, from the middle fifteenth down to the twentieth century, form an immense collection amounting to thousands of volumes—for Istanbul alone there exist 9,870 registers[9]—scattered today in city archives from Tirana in Albania to Jerusalem. Without the 'simplistic, rigid' discipline of the orientalist (according to M. Bonine, 'From Uruk to Casablanca', p.169), deciphering and properly interpreting this source is not possible for the student of the Islamic city.

Anthropologists and geographers will discover 'meaning' only after the necessary 'fieldwork' in the court records of Islamic cities has been done. Excellent studies, mostly ignored by the anthropologists and geographers, have already been published. Here it suffices to mention the works of R. Jennings, A. Marcus, A. Cohen.[10]

[5] See for instance towns founded by the Genoese in the Levant, M. Balard, *La Romanie Génoise* (Genoa, 1978), i, 179–354; and H. Inalcik, 'Ottoman Galata', forthcoming.

[6] Khurshid Ahmad, ed., *Studies in Islamic Economics* (Jeddah, 1980).

[7] C. Geertz, *Islam Observed* (University of Chicago Press, 1968), 56–62.

[8] M. Bonine, Sacred Direction and City Structure (note 4 above).

[9] See H. Inalcik, 'The Rūznamče Registers...' *Turcica* xx (1988), 252.

[10] For the titles see *Türkologischer Anzeiger* i-xii (1974–86).

EXCURSUS II: THE CENTRAL ASIATIC *ORDUG*

Using the latest archaeological findings, Emel Esin[11] showed that the nucleus of the Central Asiatic imperial city was a four-cornered fort or palace built on a sacred mountain. It was thought of as the centre of the cosmic order, a sacred city, symbolizing the four cardinal points under the polar star around which the universe revolves. Connected with the divine nature of imperial sovereignty, this symbolism determined not only the topography of the imperial city but also the basic institutions of the Turco-Mongol empires which arose in Euroasia in ancient times. Esin points out the evident connection with the Chinese notion of sovereignty and the imperial centre. For the later periods she also refers to the East Iranian, Sogdian influence upon the Kök-Türk and Uyghur empires whose heritage was continued with the Turkish empires in the Islamic cultural area—the Karakhanids, the Seljukids and the Ottomans. In fact, when considered with all its cosmographical symbols, this particular notion of imperial power and its cosmic imperial centre apparently originated first in the ancient centralist empires of Mesopotamia, and spread from there to the east and the west. At any rate, the Ottoman sultans continued the Turco-Mongol belief that the imperial power rested on a sacred spot on the planet and later, after the conquest of Constantinople, they combined this with the Roman–Western tradition.[12] The claim of possessing by God's grace the capital city of the Roman empire guided Mehmed the Conqueror in the creation and legitimation of his empire and his imperial authority as well as his plan of conquests.[13] In their letters to the European powers Mehmed II and his successors took pride in inserting the title of *Kaysar* (Caesar) into their titulature. Suleyman I challenged the Emperor Charles V, claiming that he was the sole heir to the Roman empire, and denied to him the use of the title of caesar or emperor.[14] Mehmed II's palaces, the first in the centre of Istanbul near the Great Bazaar, then the second on the hill of Saray-Burnu near the Aya Sofya mosque, were surrounded by high walls. The later complex was called *Kal'at al-sulṭāniyye*. The Sulṭanic Fortress with its central palace, kiosks, and gardens constituted a quasi-sacred city, totally separate from the city of Istanbul and believed to be the locus where God's grace or Good Fortune (*sa'āda* or *kut*) manifested

[11] 'Ordug', Tarih Araştirmalari Dergisi (Ankara, 1972), vi/10–11.

[12] See H. Inalcik, 'Pādişāh' in *Islâm Ansikolopedisi*, ix, 491–95.

[13] See H. Inalcik, 'Mehmed II' in *Islâm Ansikolopedisi*, vii, 514–30.

[14] See H. Inalcik, 'The Origin of the Ottoman–Russian Rivalry and the Don–Volga Canal (1596)', *Annales de Université d'Ankara* i (1947), 47. For an interesting manifestation of this claim in regalia see Gülru Necipoğlu, 'Suleyman the Magnificent and the Representation of power in the Context of Ottoman–Hapsburg–Papal Rivalry', *The Art Bulletin* xxi/3 (New York, 1989), 421–6.

itself. This nucleus was formally called *Dār al-Salṭana*, 'The Abode of the Imperial Power'. Considering all the features peculiar to it, the Conqueror's 'fort' evidently replicated the Central Asiatic *ordug*. The *shahristān* or *shahr*, the larger metropolis, grew around the nucleus *ordug*, with the settlement of the commoners—merchants, artisans and so on.[15] As a result of the ruler's arrangement through his *waqfs*, the residential quarters had their own social and ethnic character. The quarters and houses of the élite surrounded the palace; the houses expressly constructed for the use of the *ulema* were next to the Fatih mosque complex.

[15] Esin, 'Ordug'.