

THE WAQF AND THE COMPLEX OF ŞİHABEDDİN PAŞA IN FILIBE

Nevertheless, the greatest architectural changes in Filibe that redesigned completely the urban space by shifting its commercial core outside the citadel and relocating it to the open plane below it, only took place during the reign of sultan Murad II. In the mid-1430s Murad II commissioned and built in the city a large multidomed imperial mosque, the so-called Muradiye (known locally as Cumaya mosque), which became the focal point of the emerging Muslim city.

Situated on the medieval highway through the Balkans, the Roman *Via Militaris*, the Byzantino-Bulgarian city of Philippopolis surrendered to the forces of Lala Şahin Paşa in the first half of the 1360s soon after the Ottomans took possession of Adrianople (Ott. Edirne) in 1361, or a few years later.¹ Building of a bridge over the biggest river crossing Upper Thrace, which allowed his retinues to raid the area and return without difficulties, must have been among the first steps undertaken by Lala Şahin in his attempt of reviving the old medieval urban center. The conqueror of Filibe is also likely to have been the patron of a currently vanished complex of buildings that constituted the earliest Muslim establishment outside the pre-Ottoman citadel.

Nevertheless, the greatest architectural changes in Filibe that redesigned completely the urban space by shifting its commercial core outside the citadel and relocating it to the open plane below it, only took place during the reign of sultan Murad II. In the mid-1430s Murad II commissioned and built in the city a large multidomed imperial mosque, the so-called Muradiye (known locally as *Cumaya* mosque), which became the focal point of the emerging Muslim city.

The process of rebuilding or better creating anew of the Ottoman Filibe concurred with the ap-

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1 Halil İnalçık. "The conquest of Edirne (1361)." *Archivum Ottomanicum* 3 (1971): 185-210. For other opinions, arguing for a later date of the fall of Adrianople into Ottoman hands, see Irène Beldiceanu-Steinherr. "La conquête d'Andrianople par les Turcs: La pénétration turque en Thrace et la valeur des chroniques ottomans." *Travaux et Mémoires* 1 (1965): 439-461; Elizabeth Zachariadou. "The conquest of Adrianople by the Turks" *Studi Veneziani* 22 (1970): 211-217. Aleksandır Burmov. "Türkler Edirne'yi ne Vakit Aldılar." *Bellekten* 13 (1949): 79-106.

pointment at the post of *beylerbeyi* of Rumili of Şihabeddin Paşa, whose extensive patronage of architecture in Filibe not only made him the greatest benefactor of the city in Ottoman times, but also significantly contributed for the thorough reshaping of the urban space. The eunuch *el-hac* Şihabeddin, son of Abdullah, often referred by the narrative sources as Kula (or Kavala) Şahin², after a term as *sancakbeyi* of Arvanid in the early 1430s replaced Sinan Paşa on the post of governor and commander of all Ottoman forces in Europe in A.H. 840 (1436-1437).³ He made a name as one of the most prominent commanders in the early fifteenth-century Balkans and turned into a highly influential figure during the second half of Murad II's reign. In 1441 Şihabeddin conquered the important Serbian silver-mining center of Novo Brdo, but on the next year he suffered a devastating defeat in Transylvania, which caused his dismissal. In 1443 facing the threat of the crusading army lead by Vladislav III (1434-1444) and Janos Hunyadi Murad II reinstated Şihabeddin as *beylerbeyi* of Rumeli and as a second vizier in the *divan*, a position that he kept under Mehmed II too.⁴ The latest documentary evidence of Şihabeddin's activity in Rumelia dates from 1455.⁵ Soon after that date he most probably retired and died in Filibe.

In regard of Şihabeddin's successful military and administrative career during which he acted as supporter of art and architecture in the Ottoman Balkan provinces it is hardly surprising that he also appears to have been an active patron of architecture in Filibe, the city in which he must have often resided in the course of his terms as *beylerbeyi* of Rumili. The public buildings in Filibe commissioned by Şihabeddin in the mid-fifteenth century were clearly in accordance with the general program for spatial modification and revival of the city that began with the construction of Murad II's large Friday mosque in the mid-1430s.

The Muradiye in Filibe indeed defined the new center of the emerging Muslim city in the opened flat plane below the citadel, but in order that in truly turn into a new commercial core in accordance to the established Ottoman tradition, it needed to be supplemented by several other public buildings. Firstly and foremost, the large communal mosque that had to serve the growing congregation of the busy commercial quarter and city's visitors necessitated an adequate public bath. The building which served as a main public bath of the *çarşı* throughout Ottoman, known as *Tahtakale hamamı*, was located about fifty meters northeast of Muradiye mosque. The bath was destroyed in the beginning of the twentieth century thus depriving modern researchers from the possibility of closer observation, but the extant nineteenth-century photographs and Ottoman documentary evidence strongly suggest a construction date in the mid-fifteenth century.⁶ Evidence from the accounting registers of the pious foundation of Şihabeddin (*evkaf muhasebes*), however, demonstrate convincingly that Şihabeddin was the person who commissioned and built this bath.⁷ The documents reveal that the *vakf* was clearly in possession of the *Tahtakale hamamı*, the rent of which in the first half of the seventeenth century, yielded average

2 Şihabeddin was most likely a *lakab* of Şahin while his patronymic Abdullah indicates his non-Muslim origin.

3 Halil İnalçık. *Fatih Devri Üzerinde Tetkikler ve Vesikalar* (Ankara: TTK, 1954), 84-85, passim.; M. Tayib Gök-bilgin. *XV-XVI. Asırlarda Edirne ve Paşa Livası* (İstanbul: Üçler Basımevi, 1952), 256.

4 İnalçık. *Fatih Devri*, 84-85.

5 Elizabeth Zachariadou. "Another Document of Shehab al-Din Pasha concerning Mount Athos (1455)." in Barbara Kellner-Heinkele and Peter Zieme (eds.), *Studia Ottomanica: Festgabe für György Hazai zum 65. Geburtstag* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1997), 217-222.

6 The bath was heavily damaged by a night fire that devastated the old commercial quarter in 14 June 1906 and was demolished shortly afterward. Nikola Alvađiev. *Plovdivska hronika* (Plovdiv: Hristo G. Danov, 1971), 159. The available photographs dating from the early 1900s show tall vegetation on the roof of the bath, a sign that the bath was no longer operational.

7 There are multiple accounting registers (*muhasebe defters*) of this pious foundation – BOA, MAD 6513, contains two registers bound together dating A.H. 1042-1044 (1633-1634); BOA MAD 749, contains five registers dating A.H. 1042-1048 (1633-1638) that were bound and mixed up together other *vakıfs*; Bulgarian National Library, PD 17/12, dating A.H. 1049-1050 (1639-1640); BOA, MAD 15134, dating A.H. 1050-1051 (1640-1641); BOA, TSMA 5301, dating A.H. 3.4.1163 (12 March 1750).

annual revenue of about six to seven thousand *akçes*.⁸ Moreover, a number of shops surrounding the bath were accruing rent to the foundation, which on the other hand regularly expended large sums for its maintenance and repair.⁹

While being unanimous on the fact that the patron of the bath was Şihabeddin the documentary sources contain no clue for the exact date of construction of this building. Nonetheless, its proximity to Muradiye and the fact that this was the main public bath of the commercial area of Filibe strongly suggest that *Tahtakale hamamı* was built soon after the completion of the large Friday mosque. It is unlikely that Şihabeddin commissioned the bath prior to his appointment to the post *beylerbeyi* of Rumili in 1436. On the contrary it must have been after this date that he came to the city. By the time of his arrival in Filibe Muradiye mosque was already completed (in all probability a year earlier) and the necessity of a public bath was most likely apparent. In any case the *Tahtakale* bath was the much needed addition which Şihabeddin must have provided not long after the imperial mosque in Filibe was accomplished.

While the Muradiye mosque and the surrounding buildings shaped the new center of Filibe Şihabeddin much larger contribution to the urban landscape of Filibe was placed about half a kilometer northward of Muradiye on the banks of the river Maritsa thus marking the edge of the Muslim town. The complex in question consisted of a T-shaped *imaret/zaviye*, today known locally as “Imaret džamiya”, a public bath, a medrese, an inn and a mausoleum of the patron. They were built near the river, occupying both sides of the road, which crossed the bridge of Lala Şahin and ran south towards Muradiye and the central part of the town. Undoubtedly, the choice of location was not fortuitous, but was rather meant to mark the end of the Ottoman city on the one hand and to serve as a foretaste of it for those coming in on the other. A traveler on the *Via Militaris* coming from the west would have inevitably been confronted by the main T-shaped building, which faced the bridge, thus displaying the Ottoman presence at a distance. The date of completion of Şihabeddin’s T-shaped *imaret/zaviye* in Filibe and the rest of the buildings in the complex can be established with a great degree of certainty thanks to the dedicatory inscription (*kitabe*) that was once placed above its entrance. In the course of the restoration of the building during the 1970s the inscription was removed and disappeared ever since.¹⁰ Recently the original inscription was rediscovered broken into pieces and it is currently placed on display near the entrance of the building.¹¹

The text of the plate, studied by Elezović and Tatarlı indicates that the T-shaped building, referred to in the inscription as an elevated *imaret (el-‘imareti’l-‘aliye)*, was built by the then acting *beylerbeyi* of Rumili *el-hac* Şihabeddin Paşa during the reign of sultan Murad II.¹² The date in which the building was completed is encrypted in a chronogram at the bottom line that gives the Hidjri year 848 (29 April 1444 – 17 April 1445).¹³ The claims made by Elezović and Tatarlı that this building was commissioned by Şihabeddin in order to commemorate the Ottoman victory

8 MAD 15134, f. 3^a; PD 17/12, f. 2^a.

9 For instance in 1632 the administrator of the foundation spent 12 000 *akçes* the repair of the bath. MAD 749, p. 222.

10 In 1977 Machiel Kiel found the inscription lying on a pile of old tombstones inside the building. I am very indebted to Prof. Kiel who kindly offered me his unpublished notes and studies on the Ottoman monuments in Filibe.

11 The *katabe* was discovered by Elena Chardakliyska who spotted it under the pile of Ottoman tombstones behind the building. It is likely that the missing pieces of the plate are still buried under the heavy tombstones.

12 Gliša Elezović. *Turski spomenici*, vol. 1, part 1 (Belgrade: Zora, 1940), 1112-1138; İbrahim Tatarlı. “Turski kultovi sgradi i nadpisi v Bălgaria.” *Annuaire de l’Université de Sofia, Faculté de Lettres* 60 (1966): 593-600. The title *emirü’l-ümera* (the lord of the lords) clearly indicates the fact that he was the then acting *beylerbeyi*.

13 Elezović. *Turski spomenici*, 1113; Tatarlı, “Turski kultovi sgradi”, 596-597.

at the battle of Varna (10 November 1444) do not seem to hold ground. The information of the *kitabe* provides the year 848 that indeed makes this assumption possible, but it also clearly indicates Murad II as the reigning Ottoman sultan. Murad, however, abdicated in favor of his son Mehmed II in the late June or early August 1444 therefore Şihabeddin's complex was certainly built prior the battle of Varna.¹⁴ The construction of the buildings of Şihabeddin near the bridge of Lala Şahin in Filibe must have begun about a year earlier, probably when he was reappointed as *beylerbeyi* of Rumili in 1443 and completed in the period April – July 1444.

The T-shaped *imaret/zaviye* of Şihabeddin is among the largest and the most monumental buildings of this type in the Ottoman Balkans. A five-bay porch supported by square pillars precedes the main entrance of the building that was completely done in cloisonné masonry. The main hall of the *imaret/zaviye*, is covered by the resting on Turkish triangles large dome that has an oculus, crowned with a lantern. The domed oratory lying on the main axis of the building is elevated eight steps from the ground as six niches for shoes (*pabuçluk*) occupy both sides of the stairs. The niches clearly indicate that the elevated *eyvan* used for prayers was the only carpeted part of the building, while the rest of it was paved by hexagonal bricks. The two lateral rooms that accommodated important travelers and dervishes were equipped with fire places and niches for personal belongings that are still *in situ*. The eastern *tabhane* was also attainable from the outside through a door opened at the lateral facade. In the sixteenth century, when the building was converted to a communal mosque, the walls separating the side-rooms were removed thus opening wider space for the congregation. The minaret that is accessed through the western vestibule is likely to be an integral part of the original architectural design.¹⁵

Northeast of the T-shaped building there was a two-storied frame-built building that hosted the kitchens (*aşevi*) of the *imaret* and the refectory where food was distributed free of charge to those employed in the complex, travelers and poor.¹⁶ The upper floor had several rooms that accommodated visitors or those in service of the complex.¹⁷ The kitchens had very large and tall chimney the proportions of which greatly reminded of a tower. The imposing chimney of the *aşevi* stood until the late nineteenth century as it can be seen on the extant photographs from this period.

North of the *imaret's* kitchens Şihabeddin commissioned a large *medrese* that had twelve student cells in two parallel rows. The building was accessed through an imposing gate on its western side while a large lead-covered *eyvan* enclosed the structure from the east. This monumental Muslim college, built completely in cloisonné masonry is likely to have been the largest

14 İnalçık, Fatih Devri, 55-65; İnalçık, "Murad II", 168.

15 Ayverdi, Çelebi ve II. Sutan Murad Devri, 480-485.

16 The *imarets* in the Ottoman Empire had a clearly defined clientele that was served in the public soup kitchens. The groups who benefited from its services were specified in the stipulations of the endowment deed. In principle the staff of the complex, the students and their instructors, the *ulema*, wandering dervishes, the *gazis*, city's poor Muslims and non-Muslims were offered food free of charge in the *imarets* in Anatolia and the Balkans. Ömer Lütfi Balkan. "Osmanlı İmparatorluğunda İmâret Sitelerinin Kuruluş ve İşleyiş Tarzına âit Araştırmalar." *İstanbul Üniversitesi İktisat Fakültesi Mecmuası* 23 (1962-1963): 239-296; Amy Singer. *Constructing Ottoman Beneficence: an Imperial Soup Kitchen in Jerusalem* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002); idem. "Serving Up Charity: The Ottoman Public Kitchen." *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 35:3 (2005): 481–500; In a recent contribution H. Lowry discussed the functions and clients of the *imarets*, arguing that they differed according to the time period and region in the Ottoman Empire. Heath Lowry. The 'Soup Muslims' of the Balkans: Was There a 'Western' and 'Eastern' Ottoman Empire." in Donald Quataert and Baki Tezcan (eds.), *Beyond Dominant Paradigms in Ottoman and the Middle Eastern/North African Studies: A Tribute to Rifa'at Abou-El-Haj*. *Special issue of Osmanlı Araştırmaları/The Journal of Ottoman Studies* 36 (2010), 97-133.

17 Food was distributed until 1878 after the *imaret* gradually declined and the building fell in disrepair. Peev, Grad Plovdiv, 226.

medrese in today's Bulgaria.¹⁸ According to the Ottoman educational hierarchy the college of Şihabeddin was established as *otuzlu medresesi*, but turning into an important provincial center of education during the Süleymanic period it was promoted to *kırklı*, i.e. the daily salaries of the instructors (*müderris*) in the college were thirty and forty *akçes* respectively.¹⁹ The data from a seventeenth-century accounting register of the pious foundation of Şihabeddin show that in 1636-1637 the college had nine students who were entitled to a daily stipend of one *akçe*. The salary of the instructors in the seventeenth century had risen to sixty *akçes* as supposedly the prestige of the *medrese* too.²⁰

A large *hamam* that was placed opposite the T-shaped *imaret/zaviye* on the western side of the main road that cut through the complex dividing it into two seemingly equal parts. The bath for a reason was locally known as *Hünkâr hamamı* (Sultan's bath), but it undoubtedly was part of Şihabeddin's endowment of 1444. Accounting register of his foundation dating 1640-1641, for instance, shows that the bath by the bridge (*hamam-i cısır*) that is *Hünkâr hamamı* in question was property of the *vakıf* that rented it to a private individual, receiving an annual rent of ten thousand *akçes*.²¹ In the course of the same financial year the administrator of the foundation approved a repair work of the bath that amounted to 2 861 *akçes*.²² The *hamam* operated throughout the Ottoman period rendering services to the travelers who stopped at the nearby inn, the residents of the quarter and those employed and studying at the complex. After a restoration in 1879 the bath was used for the sessions of the local assembly of Eastern Rumelia. In 1923 it the magnificent building of the *Hünkâr hamamı*, that greatly remanded it both scale and appearance Şihabeddin's other bath (the *Tahtakale* bath in the *çarşı*) was demolished.²³

The complex of Şihabeddin also included a large *han* that was built on the western side of the road, north of the public bath. Located very close to the bridge over the river Maritsa that inn was frequented by merchants and travelers. In later period the inn of Şihabeddin was known as *panayır han* that possibly bespeaks of a regular seasonal market taking place near it. Nevertheless, very little is known about its architectural features, since being a relatively lower structure it remained hidden on all late nineteenth and early twentieth century photographs.

The date of Şihabeddin's death is unknown but he most likely died in Filibe after 1455. His body was laid in the mausoleum built besides the western flank of the gallery of his T-shaped *imaret/zaviye*. It is a small domed octagonal building, built in very pleasant colorful masonry. The grave of Şihabeddin currently has two tombstones which have only decorative elements bearing no inscription. The same tombstones also flanked the grave of Şihabeddin, but regardless their fifteenth-century look it is difficult to tell whether these are indeed the original stones left without any inscription for certain reason or the original tombstones were removed and later replaced by the two decorated stones.

For the support of the complex in Filibe Şihabeddin endowed the revenue from a number of villages in the area of Filibe and Malkara together with the revenues from the rice fields and the

18 The other *medrese* in Bulgaria that had twelve cells was that of Haraççı Kara Mehmed in Köstendil. Orlin Sâbev. *Osmanskite uchilishta v bălgarskite zemi XV-XVIII v.* (Sofia: Lubomădrie-Hronika, 2001), 127.

19 For details and a list of some of the important instructors at this college see Căhid Baltacı. *XV-XVI. Asırlarda Osmanlı Medreseleri: Teşkilât, Tarih* (İstanbul: İrfan Matbaası, 1976), 141-143; Sâbev. *Osmanskite uchilishta*, 222.

20 BOA, MAD 749, f. 124.

21 BOA, MAD 15134, f. 3.

22 BOA, MAD 15134, f. 7.

23 Peev, Grad Plovdiv, 222.

rents of the two baths in Filibe and a number of other properties and shops in the city.²⁴ There is no extant copy of his endowment deed (*vakfiye*) therefore the exact date of its drawing up is unknown, but in all probability this must have happened shortly after the complex was completed, thus in second half of the 1440s. The accounting registers of the foundation show that after the death of Şihabeddin the *vakıf* was managed by the acting *kadı*s of Filibe, who proved to be skillful administrators because the wealth of the pious foundation gradually increased over time as the biggest villages in its domains reached in the mid-sixteenth century several hundred households of taxpayers.

The prolific architectural patronage of Şihabeddin during the late 1430s and the first half of the 1440s completely redesigned the urban space of Filibe and laid the foundations of the emerging Ottoman provincial center. On the one hand his contributions to the urban core gave a real boost to the development of the commercial area the revival of which seems to have been inspired by Murad II. On the other hand Şihabeddin became the benefactor of a large complex, centered on a T-shaped *imaret/zaviye* that was placed at the head of the bridge of Lala Şahin over the Maritsa. Acting in accordance with the established Ottoman tradition of urban planning Şihabeddin stretched the space of the city and defined its boundaries to the north. By extending the Ottoman architectural presence to previously unoccupied outlying areas the complex must have also had the task to serve as a dignified preview of the city and was by all means a vivid display of the Ottoman claim for lordship over the area.

Illustrations



Tahtakale *hamamı*, built by Şihabeddin Paşa in the 1430s

24 On the *vakıf* of Şihabeddin see Gökbilgin, *Edirne ve Paşa Livası*, 258-261; Vera Mutafchieva. "Novi osmanski dokumenti za vakāfite pod turska vlast." *Izvestiya na Dāržavnite Arhivi* 6 (1962): 271-273; idem. "Za rolyata na vakāfa v gradskata ikonomika na Balkanite pod turska vlast." *Izvestiya na Instituta po Istorija* 10 (1962): 121-143; Damiyan Borisov. *Vakāfskata institutsia v Rodopite prez XV-XVII vek* (unpublished PhD Dissertation, University of Plovdiv, 2008), 164-182; İbrahim Sezgin. "Filibe'deki Şehabeddin Paşa Vakıfları." in Meral Bayrak et al. (eds.), *Uluslararası Osmanlı ve Cumhuriyet Dönemi Türk-Bulgar İlişkileri Sempozyumu 11-13 Mayıs 2005. Bildiriler Kitabı* (Eskişehir: Osmangazi Üniversitesi, 2005), 347-355.



1.T-shaped imaret/zaviye; 2. Medrese; 3. Hünkâr bath; 4. Panayır han; 5. Mausoleum (türbe); 6. Kitchens (aşevi)







