

THE CREATION OF HISTORICAL CULTURAL HERITAGE IN GREECE DURING THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

Ottomans marked their passage by the Balkan cities with the offprint of their culture: although they brought many of their cultural features from Anatolia, they assimilated others found in the conquered lands and developed a multi-cultural character. This noticeable architectural “ottoman” expression included many building types, which were formed within this cultural mix.

OTTOMAN BUILDINGS in GREECE

Ottoman architectural works outside Turkey cover in time and space large geographical areas and extensive historical periods. On attempting to identify these buildings, terms such as ‘*Ottoman*’, ‘*Muslim*’, ‘*islamic*’, ‘*postByzantine*’... are used in the publications of the Balkan countries on architectural works.

Ottoman provinces, which are at present within the borders of Greece, had been merged with the Ottoman Empire on different dates and detached from it during various periods: in the area of Macedonia Thessaloniki falls under the Ottoman rule in 1387, Veroia in 1385, Edessa in 1390. At the region of Western-Eastern Thrace, the city of Didymoteichon is the first to be conquered in 1360, in the Epirus district the town of Arta in 1449, while Yiannina in 1430. Peloponnese’s cities like Patra become Ottoman in 1446, Mystra in 1460, Methoni-Koroni around 1502, while Nafplio in 1540). First, Sultan Murad II, then his son, Sultan Mehmet II annexed large parts of Northern Greece, Western Thrace, Morea, Aegean and Cyclade Islands to the Ottoman Empire in the 15th century. Rhodes and the remaining Islands accepted Ottoman sovereignty after the campaign of Sultan Süleyman the Magnificent in 1522. Crete was the last island to merge with

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the Empire in 1645 during the reign of Sultan Murad IV. An independent Greek kingdom was established in Morea and Northern Greece in 1830. Crete was placed under French, English, Russian and Italian control in 1898. Rhodes and the other islands were occupied by the Italians in 1912. Salonika (Thessaloniki) was annexed to the Greek Kingdom in 1913. Western Thrace was ceded to Greece under the Lausanne Treaty in 1923. The Dodecanese became part of Greece in 1947 under the Paris Peace Treaty.

During these centuries, a historical period often named as “Tourkokratia” in Greek, the Hellenic territory was part of the Ottoman Empire, although even during the period 1453-1669 many regions were under the Venetian and the Genovese reign.

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As Islam prescribes ablution before prayer; this was a great encouragement to the construction of fountains, public baths and water supplies. Similarly, its insistence on education and study from childhood to old age gave a great impulse to the building of medreses and since social and medical assistance are among the basic principles of religion, hospices and hospitals were required to be built. Finally the importance attached in Islam to commerce created a demand for hostelries and caravanserais. The urban net of the former Byzantine cities was therefore enriched with a number of religious and secular buildings, necessary for the society’s basic needs. Mosques, religious schools, convents, soup-kitchens for the poor, khans, hamams were constructed, a large number of which still exist, a strong testimony of a former past.

Ottoman Buildings which are found in Greece belong to three basic categories¹:

- **religious buildings**, such as cami, mescit, teke, türbe, imaret, medrese,
- **secular buildings**, 2.i *social- public* (including *commercial ones*, such as bedestens, *social buildings*, as hamams, markets, caravanserais, libraries, etc.) and 2.ii. *domestic ones* (houses- private dwellings (*saray*) /(*ev*) etc.),
- **works of military architecture**, such as fortresses (*hisar*), towers (*kule*), gates (*kapi*).

INVENTORIES OF OTTOMAN MONUMENTS IN GREECE

In Greece there has been no thorough registration of the existing Ottoman buildings. They are legally protected by the Ministry of Culture (declared as “*monuments*”), supervised by the 28 regional Eforeie of Byzantine and post-Byzantine Monuments Department, to which most of them belong. -These Institutions (Superintendencies-Eforeie) are responsible for the preservation of the architectural features which certain buildings of archaeological, historical, artistic value present. (The Greek Ministry of Culture is divided into Eforeie for the preservation of Cultural Heritage dating from a. the Classical Period (mostly antiquities and archaeological sites, *Klassikwn*), b. from the Byzantine and postbyzantine period (*Byzantinwn kai Metabyzantinwn*), and c. from the time after the creation of the Hellenic State (1834) up to now, *Newterwn*). There are though many cases, in which Ottoman buildings belong to private ownership.

1 Kanetaki, 2004, METU Journal, 80.

A rising interest can lately be evidenced in Greece in regards to the Ottoman monuments in the Hellenic lands: many books have been published, regarding the history and the construction of Ottoman buildings, either as monographs referring to a certain architectural type (i.e. hamams², hans and caravanserais³) or as volumes dedicated to monuments of a special region (Yannina⁴, Serres⁵, Thessaloniki⁶, Verroia⁷, Rhodes, etc) and their conservation!

Apart from the attention showed by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture, that is expressed through restoration and reuse projects, as well as relevant books⁸, we must acknowledge the recent rising effort of Greek researchers in regards to cataloguing archival material, that is done i.e. by the National Hellenic Foundation for Scientific Research (Athens)⁹ and the Institute for Mediterranean Studies (IMS, Rethymno)¹⁰.



figure 1. Map of Greece (Ottoman Architecture in Greece, Brouskari E. (ed.), Ministry of Culture, Athens 2009.

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The term of the *Foundations*, as stated under the legal action of the *wakf* (or *vakıf*), introduces an important element in the organization of public life in the Balkans during the Ottoman times. The endowment of a property by its owner to the services of the community, under its own will, dedicating it for life to a charitable or social purpose, constitutes an essential chapter of Muslim Law.

2 Kanetaki E., 2004.

3 Androudis A., 2006.

4 Kanetakis I., 1994.

5 Balta E., 1995.

6 Demetriades V., 1983.

7 Margie A., Matskani A., 2005.

8 Ottoman Architecture in Greece, Brouskari E. (ed.), 2009.

9 Balta, 2003.

10 website: <http://www.ims.forth.gr>.

The *wakf institution* was responsible for many urban improvements during the Ottoman period regarding the infrastructure of the cities, since mosques, school libraries, public kitchens to serve the poor-*imarets*, medresses, caravanserais, hamams, fountains, roads, bridges, castles, aqueducts, etc. were built under its financial support. The cost of their operation, as well as of their maintenance, was also covered by the *wakf*. Its concept included not only the immovable property (landed estates), but referred also to merchandise (i.e. crops gathered). Under this procedure, buildings were endowed with estates, pieces of either urban or agricultural land, whose income would be credited to the maintenance of these works of charitable character.

The present paper will try to focus on an evaluation of the importance of Ottoman Foundations in Greece, in regards to the functional and aesthetic change of the historical centre, especially now that they have been incorporated into the modern image of the cities. Many important buildings of the Ottoman era still exist, constructed under the institution of the Foundations: mosques, medreses and baths are among them.

The institution of the *wakf* in Greece has roots in the Ottoman times and Islamic law, which was applied at the time. A *wakf* can be defined as a privately-owned property, which, once dedicated under a certain procedure, became the property of God. This meant, that any use to which it was put, could be channelled to charitable purposes for all perpetuity¹¹. The institution was in fact borrowed and adapted to the specificities of Islam from earlier institutions found in Byzantium as well as Mesopotamian civilizations. Gradually, however, the pious foundations came to shape Ottoman social organization. The *wakf* system, based on **private capital and initiative**, allowed for the provision of a series of essential services, such as health, education, and social welfare at no cost whatsoever to the government. This helped balance the undersupply of public goods, and resulted in better distribution of income and the strengthening of employment. In the Ottoman context, the *wakf* as a legal institution were grounded in *hadith* rules. Specific matters, such as the establishment of a *wakf*, its management and the appointment of its trustees, the transformation of its pious purpose (*hayri*), the allocation of its revenue and its beneficiaries, the position of the family of the founder, etc. were based on the perspectives of each of the main Islamic legal schools. Over time, the autonomy of the foundations was gradually lost and passed to the control of the state via modalities specific to each case. Centralization of supervision, control, and management of the *wakf* were observed also in the Ottoman Empire, mainly after the Tanzimat reforms, when the Ministry for the Vakfs became the central governmental authority throughout the Empire.

The buildings which set the Ottoman town's tone were what we would today call "public" buildings, namely mosques, medreses, *imarets*, hamam, bedestens, hans and caravanserais, also the residences of the sultan or of the higher officials who represented him in local government. Since foundations such as those just mentioned benefited from a town's economic and social life, establishing and maintaining them was a factor in legitimizing the sultan's authority, allowing him to appear as the protector and benefactor of urban life, while the towns themselves took on "Ottoman" characteristics, which encouraged acceptance of the status quo¹².

Vakıf was the name given to the permanent transfer of some source of income for godly or philanthropic purposes. The revenue from the vakif landed endowment was accumulated for the

11 In Islamic law, a *wakf* is 'the act of founding a charitable trust, and hence the trust itself', R. Deguilhem, 2002: 59. quoted from Tsitselikis K., *From historical minorities to immigrant newcomers. OLD AND NEW ISLAM IN GREECE*, Brill 2012.

12 Anastasopoulos Ant., Kolovos El., Sariyannis M., "The Ottoman Empire and the Greek Lands", in *Ottoman Architecture in Greece*, 2009.

support of every form of religious, educational, and charitable institution in Islam. An individual would dedicate a piece of property, of which he enjoyed the immediate ownership, in order to establish a charitable foundation. In this case, ultimate ownership is deemed to belong to God, and no longer to the ruler. In the presence of the Kadı, the benefactor transferred the resources he was dedicating and stated the terms he wished to apply. In addition he appointed an official in charge (mütevelli), while in the case of large vakıfs, administrators were also appointed.

Often the vakıfs were mosques along with their usual dependencies such as schools, medreses, bath houses, guest houses, kitchens, hospitals, etc., but they might also be other philanthropic works such as fountains or bridges.

Under Ottoman *hanefi* law, the *vakf* real estate was divided into categories, a simplified taxonomy of which could be presented as follows (as quoted below by K. Tsitselikis)¹³:

1. The religious and pious establishments, such as mosque, hospital, and medrese. (muesesati hayriye) constituted the 'main vakf'. The 'annexed vakf' comprised real estate able to bring income (musteğal), such as plots of land, apartments or homes. In practice, the income of the 'annexed vakf' supported the 'main vakf'.
2. Vakıfs of 'pure ownership' (mulk) and vakıfs of 'non-pure ownership', namely public land (arazi-i emriye), which was offered by the Sultan for a certain pious scope. From a different viewpoint, they can be divided into those submitted to the Ministry of Evkaf (mazbuta), to mülhak (managed by the mouteveli) or müstesna, which were not submitted to public or community control.
3. Vakf of periodical rent or izdarye vahideli (monoteli) and of periodical rent with an initial down payment or izdareteynli (diteli). The tenant in the first case had the right to use and exploit the real estate. A 'main vakf' allocated the izdareteynli plots to the tenant so he/she could build a building. The tenant in that case acquired rights to use and exploit it for life and to bequeath it to his/her heirs
4. The mukatali vakıfs, which were conceded to a third person who, under the condition of annual rent (mukataa), had the right to exploit the use of any tree and building that the tenant put on the vakf plot for perpetuity.
5. Special cases, like the family vakıfs (evladiye), which retained the right of management in favour of the members of the family of the donor through inheritance rights and the school vakf (mearif), managed by the community or the school community authority.

Different kinds of vakıfs

In the Empire, even during the first period of the Ottoman conquest, many categories of vakıf estates were defined on the basis of different criteria: who the founder was (state, individuals), external form (urban, agricultural), type of administration, rates to be collected. Sultanic foundations comprised the largest part of this type of estates. In the cities, the biggest vakıfs belonging to sultans were the ones created with the purpose to support and maintain the most significant Muslim places of worship.

In regards to the city of Ioannina, relevant information regarding the property of the mosques have been recorded¹⁴.

13 Tsitselikis K., 2012.

14 Koulidas K., 1998.

-Aslan Pasa cami (1618). Its vakif property includes 5 urban stores, 8 urban plot of land and 13 urban houses,

2 plots of land in the plains of Ioannina and in Rapsista.

-Fethiye cami 1618. Its vakif property includes 1 fish farming, 1 urban plot of land in Rapsista and 1 urban house.

-Kanli Çeşme cami (Kalou cesme), Kaloutsiani suburb. Its vakif property includes 3 urban stores, 1 urban plot of land and 1 urban house.



figure 2, figure 3 Aslan Pasa cami, Ioannina, Folk's Art Museum (Kanetaki El.).

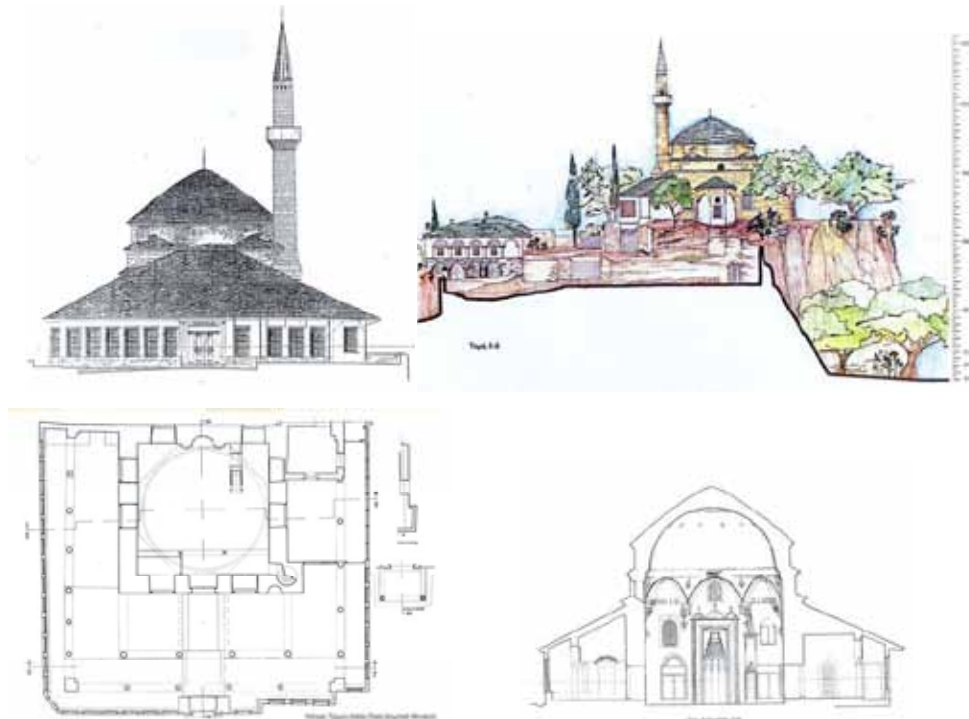


figure 4, figure 5, figure 6, figure 7. The façade, the ground floor plan, a cross section of Aslan Paşa cami and a section at İç Kale, Ioannina (Kanetakis I., 1994).



figure 8, Fetihye cami (Kanetaki El.), figure 9, Fetihye cami (Kanetakis I., 1994), figure 10. Kanli Cesme cami (Kanetaki El.).

The İmaret of Komotini, (1360-8).



figure 11, figure 12, The imaret of Komotini.

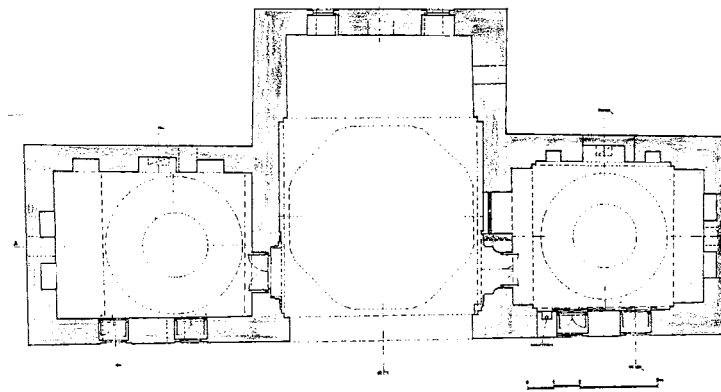


figure 13. The groundfloor of Komotini imaret
(Kosrniki Arhitektoriki sta Balkaria,
 CURCIC S. & HATZITRYFONOS E. (ed.), 1997., 295)

Bedesten, Serres (1494). It was destined to help financially the maintenance of its estate in Istanbul, according to its vakfiye by Ibrahim Paşa.

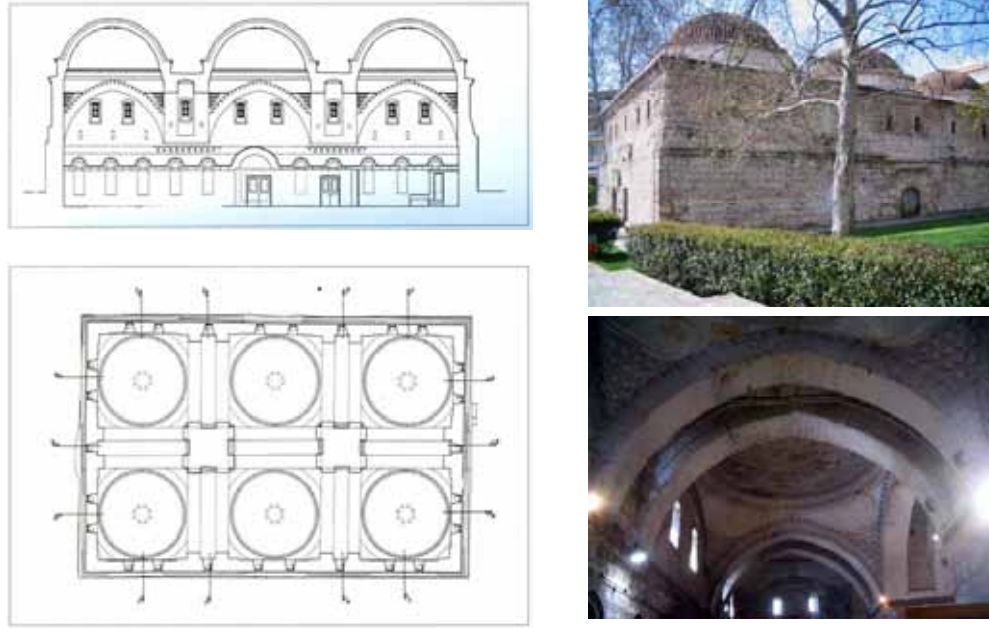


figure 14, figure 15. Longitudinal section and groundfloor plan of the Serres Bedesten (Kosmiki Arhitektoniki sta Balkania, CURCIC S. & HATZITRYFONOS E. (ed.), 1997, 292), now used as an Archaeological Museum, **figure 16, the external facade of the Bedesten (Kanetaki El.), figure 17, the double arches in the domes (Kanetaki El.).**

The concept that lies behind *wakfs* is the consideration of all land to be the property of Allah and the utilization of money raised from this land. The *wakf* is one of the best-developed institutions in Islamic law. The religion of Islam encourages the establishment of such *wakfs*. The revenue from the real estate of the *wakf* is spent for the poor and the needy, as well as in various activities that are considered to be beneficial to the community, and in service of humanity; thus the *wakf* funds are used in charitable acts in keeping with the wishes of and conditions set by the person(s) who established the *wakf*.

During the Ottoman Empire, **water wakfs** were established by the sultans, members of the palace, sheikhs, viziers, and emirs. In addition, *wakfs* were often established to help add newly-discovered spring to the existing water system, thus increasing the water flow at a lower expense.

Many of the processes of the waterways, starting with the allocation of the source and origins of the major water-supply structures, including the construction, maintenance and repairs and the lands they passed over were all supported by the *wakfs*; the processes that were applied over centuries in the construction, operation, maintenance, repair, protection against damage and contamination, water rights, water laws pertaining to structures such as the spring chamber, dam, additional spring chamber, water collection tunnels and drains, the galleries, aqueducts, water pressure reducing structures, water division structures or buildings, in other words structure for reducing water pressure and distribution, inverted siphons, and fountains today still function as a guide in water supply ¹⁵.

15 Borat M., 2012, 831-842.

Hamams in Greece.

Hamams were regarded as a major Islamic building type, since the fulfillment of hygiene laws were interwoven with Muslim religious regulation, according to which only running water had the ability for absolution. They form a unique building type, that varies from the other kind of mineral baths ("kaplica" =thermal baths).

When Ottomans started conquering the Balkan peninsula, they began constructing a number of buildings, necessary for public infrastructure. Their financial sponsorship was encouraged by endowments deeds (the Wakfi Institutional system). In some other cases already existing buildings were modified in order to render their spaces possible for a new use, i.e. Venetian churches in Crete were transformed into Ottoman mosques.

The Ottoman Baths which were constructed in Greece during the Turkish Occupation form a unique building category. They vary in size, quality of construction, as well as decorative elements, while their interior space still shows signs of excellent aesthetic expression. The existing hamams (approximately seventy eight buildings¹⁶, since many are half-demolished) are widespread in all the Greek territory, while it is very difficult to specify their exact date of construction, since no epigraphs (inscriptions) are to be found and in most cases the buildings are in a state of decay. Their origin stems from former building types and they continue the ritual of the Roman and Byzantine baths.

Hamams in Greece and their functional layout.

In Greece we find small, medium sized and big Ottoman baths. Some of them are single and some others double -*çifte*-, with separate accommodation for men and women. Small private baths are also found in houses (big mansions), while the public hamams (single or double), are of middle or larger size and present similar rhythmological and constructional features to other ottoman buildings. The two sections (male and female) show signs of symmetry, since one is placed with its big axis parallel to the other and are equipped with a common water reservoir and furnace.

The typical sequence of rooms (disrobing room, tepid and hot section), whose existence was dictated by the rigid order under which the ritual operations in the hamams were performed, has remained practically the same everywhere -apart from certain differences, in regards to the relation of the spaces that consist the bath's pattern.

Hamams left the architect little scope for variation, so that he was obliged to follow the accepted norms, arranging the various sections in accordance with a preconceived plan. In spite of this Turkish architects managed to create original forms by finding diverse solutions to the perennial problems. Their analysis offers conclusions as far as the construction methods, the materials in use and their morphology are concerned (masonry, domes, architectural elements such as functional and technical equipment, ornamentation).

16 Kanetaki E., 2011, *Acts of the 14th International Conference on Turkish Art*.

PROPOSED TYPOLOGICAL GROUPING OF THE STILL EXISTING OTTOMAN BATHS IN GREECE.

The comparative study of hamams in the Greek territory leads to a grouping into five typological categories, based on comparisons and confrontation between them, **with the criteria of their size and especially the disposition of the hot section, that is regarded as the basic functional part of each building.**¹⁷

In the **first group** the hot room is cross-shaped, forming four *eyvan* and has four private small cells (*halvet*) situated in each corner (*haçvarı dört (4) eyvanlı ve köşe hücreli tip*).

The next group includes baths, where the hot part forms an inverted T plan, with three *eyvan* and two private hot rooms (*halvet*), situated at the end of the bath against the wall of the water container. This plan has been used in other ottoman buildings, such as mosques, just like the Alaca imaret-cami, Thessaloniki and the Mehmet Bey cami, Serres.

In the third group, the *sıcaklık* still gives the impression of a two *eyvan* room, but the third one between the two *halvet* has been omitted and the rooms have been placed directly against each other (*ortaşı kubbeli, enine sıcaklıklı ve çifte halvetli tip*).

The fourth type is very wide-spread throughout the Greek territory, and it is characterized by a squareshaped domed hot room, that is surrounded by small hot rooms (*kare bir sıcaklık etrafında sıralanan halvet hücreli tip*).

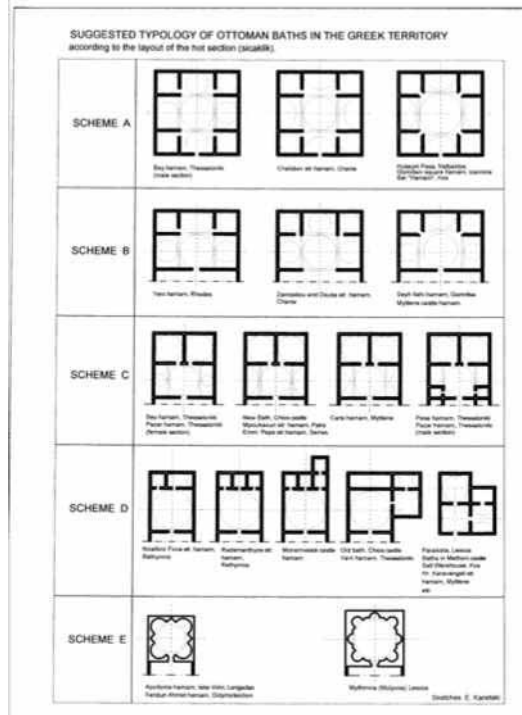


figure 18. The suggested typology of Ottoman Hamams in Greece (Kanetaki E.)

17 Kanetaki E., 2011, Bathing Culture of Anatolian Civilizations: Architecture, History and Imagination, 228.

The last group shows a polygonal hot part with niches (alcoves, *maksuras*), a feature that refers to the octagonal *sıcaklık* found in Bursa (*yıldızvarı sıcaklıklı tip*), such as the Eski Kaplıca (1389-1511) and the Yeni Kaplıca (1520-1566), Bursa. Buildings of this type show morphological similarities also with Mahmut Paşa hamam (1466), -the oldest Ottoman bath in Istanbul- and the Sokollu Mehmet Paşa hamam (1574), Lüleburgaz.

THE PRESENT STATE OF OTTOMAN MONUMENTS IN GREECE.

Ottoman monuments are found widespread in the greek territory. The Turkish traveler Evliya Çelebi's *Seyahatnâme*, written during his visits to many places in the XVIIth century, gives us a lot of information on

the -at that time- existence of Ottoman buildings. Other travelers have left narrations, which helps us now trace the site where important buildings were constructed.

Restoration projects in Greece can be divided into the following groups, according to the type of intervention selected, the extent of the preservation meters taken and in regards to the results that follow the execution of all the proposed works:

1. **Rehabilitation projects, converting the buildings to new functions**, such as exhibition halls, museums, cinemas, shops. Sometimes we unfortunately notice that buildings function as storerooms of archeological finds...This is due to the lack of financial support from which regional Eforeie suffer from the Ministry of Culture, in order to render the building useful for a cultural purpose.
2. **Projects whose aim is to maintain the traditional use** of the building, basically applied in the architectural types of bedestens and hamams, (although in some cases the permanent interior partitions don't offer many possibilities in order to render the buildings and their intervention project profitable). We should mention the Thessaloniki Bedesten, which stills maintains its initial use, as well as the baths of Patra and Rhodes.
3. **Consolidation works** are applied to the historic structure, in order to prevent their further deterioration and assure its structural strengthening, without its adaptation to a new use.
4. Some of the restored monuments are open to the public, **functioning solely as a museum of themselves.**

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