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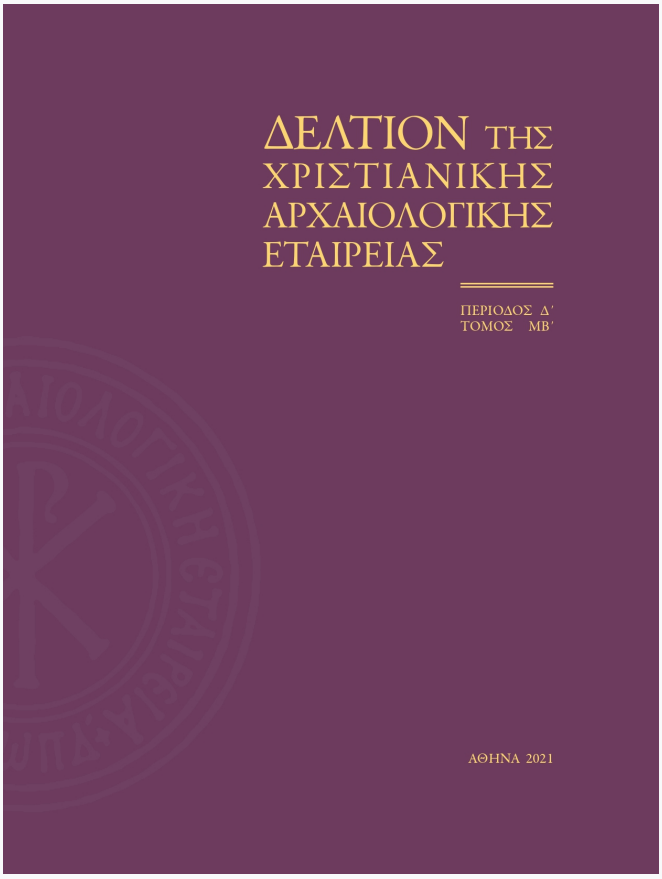

Suna Çağaptay, The First Capital of the Ottoman Empire. The Reli¬gious, Architectural and Social History of Bursa

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Κωνσταντινούπολη ο Ανανίας Μισαηλίδης και οι γιοι του, Ευθύμιος και Κωνσταντίνος (Εικ. ΚΜ38). Το «εικονογραφείον» αναφέρεται ως «αρχαιότατον» και στην ετικέτα σημειώνεται ότι «μεθ' όλης της χαρακτηριζούσης αυτό βυζαντινής τέχνης» αναλαμβάνει και εκτελεί κατόπιν παραγγελιών εικόνες, τέμπλα, θρόνους, άμβωνες, προσκυνητάρια, φανάρια, σημαίες, αναστάσεις, επιταφίους και Ωραίες Πύλες».

Οι συγκεντρωμένες στο βιβλίο μαρτυρίες για τους αφιερωτές, τους ζωγράφους, τα επαγγέλματα και τους τόπους αποτελούν θησαυρό ιστορίας και μνήμης. Αποδεικνύουν, επίσης, πόσο βαθιά και αδιάρρηκτη ήταν η θρησκευτική λατρεία με την ζωή και την καθημερινότητα, πόσο ψυχικά ανακουφιστική και κοινωνικά επαινετέα ήταν η χορηγία έργων τέχνης προς δόξαν Θεού.

Η ανά χείρας επιστημονική έκδοση των ιερών αντικειμένων της Ίμβρου δικαιώνει τον πολυετή αγώνα της Ευγενίας Χαλκιά και των συνεργατών της για την ολοκλήρωση αυτής της προσπάθειας με τις πολλαπλές δυσκολίες, όχι μόνο επιστημονικές ή οικονομικές. Ο τόμος αυτός αναδεικνύει, επίσης, πολλαπλές πτυχές της ιστορίας και της ζωής του νησιού, και διασώζει την μνήμη των ανθρώπων του καθημερινού μόχθου, που με θεάρεστο ζήλο κατέβαλαν κόπο και χρήμα για να χτίσουν και να καλλωπίσουν τις εκκλησίες του τόπου τους.

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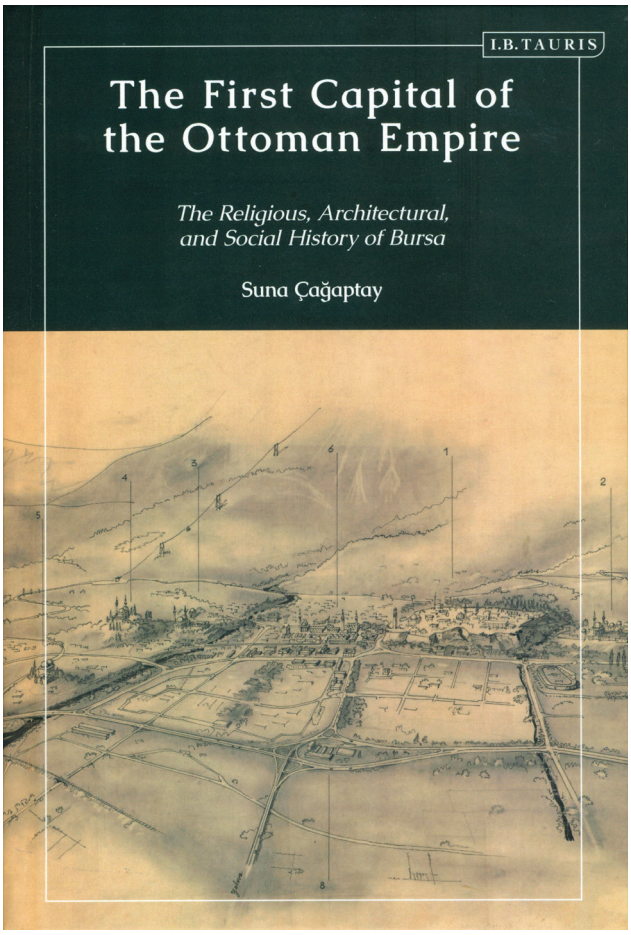
THIS BOOK IS AUTHORED BY SUNA ÇAĞAPTAY, an associate professor of architectural history and archaeology at Bahçeşehir University, who has been on research leave from her position in Istanbul since 2017 to work as a postdoctoral research fellow for the European Research Council-sponsored project "Impact of the Ancient City" in the Faculty of Classics at the University of Cambridge. Chapters 2, 3 and 5 are based on her PhD dissertation work at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign with Professor Robert Ousterhout.

Çağaptay deals with the rather short transition period from 1326, when Bursa was captured by the Ottomans after an almost ten-year siege, until the 1420s, when the capital was moved to Adrianople / Edirne to be closer to the main target of the Ottoman Empire: the capture of Constantinople. During this period, Bursa served as the first capital of the Ottoman state, one of the many principalities struggling for domination on the former grounds of the waning Byzantine Empire in Asia Minor. The capture of Prousa (Bursa), a large and flourishing city with an impressive topography, situated at the base of Mount Olympus, Bithynia, by Orhan, the son of Osman, the founder of the dynasty, was a successful strategic move that became a turning point in establishing the Ottoman Empire. This transition from a Byzantine city to an Ottoman city and the policies of the first five rulers that followed Osman (Orhan: 1324-1362, Murad I: 1362-1389, Bayezid I: 1389-1402, Mehmed I: 1413-1421, and Murad II: 1421-1444 and 1446-1451), in particular those regarding the built environment and ensuring a smooth transition of power, are the main foci of this book.

The book is divided into six chapters. In the introduction, the author describes her objective, which is a comprehensive study of the city as the transitional capital of a rising empire and how its identity was shaped by the synthesis of Byzantine and Ottoman cultures. In the first chapter, titled "Becoming Bursa", the general conditions before the Ottoman capture of the city are examined. This includes the city's history from the day it was established in 202 BC by the Bithynian King Prousias, including its Roman and Byzantine past. Juxtaposing the term "Islamic city", used by former scholars in order to emphasize the deep changes that the capture brought to the city, with the term "Ottoman City", the author opts for a middle ground where the classical and Byzantine past was acknowledged and reused. The architectural wealth of early Ottoman buildings, although greatly altered by earthquakes, fires and human intervention in the nineteenth century, makes Bursa unique for studying the formative years of Ottoman culture. Unfortunately, due to sparse archaeological research, one has



to rely heavily on written evidence and travellers' accounts, which Çağaptay does masterfully.

In the second chapter, titled "The City in Transition. Continuity, Conversion, and Reuse", the author's main arguments are presented. Çağaptay argues not for the "utilitarian opportunism" or "triumphalist appropriation" former scholars have written about but that a conscious ideological decision for continuity and integration formed the basis of Ottoman culture. When Ottomans took control of the city, which was then confined to the citadel on a promontory, they converted the most important monuments to their use. At first the walls fortifying the city, erected in Hellenistic times and repaired and enhanced ever since, were relieved of their defensive function. After the 1326 surrender, they saw no skirmishes, except for the 1402 sack by the Timurids, and became mere landmarks. Only the gates were altered to demarcate the new control of circulation towards the city. The Palace was certainly restored at this time, although we know very little of how it looked; it was of little use with a mostly peripatetic court.

The Bathhouses were also an important feature of the city, which was famous all over the Roman Empire for its warm waters. These were restored again and again and have reached the present day in some form. However, the most important buildings to be converted were the religious establishments in the citadel. Very little remains of the original marble opus sectile floor from the buildings housing Orhan's and Osman's mausolea, which were obliterated in the 1852 earthquake and subsequently completely remodelled. Partial evidence suggests the existence of an important monastic establishment, probably dedicated to Saint John Prodromos, with a church resembling Kosmosoteira in Ferres. Orhan was interred in its katholikon and Osman in the baptistery. The question of the original form of Orhan's Friday mosque, of which only a 1337 inscription remains, is also examined in this chapter.

In the third chapter, "Contextualising the Convent-Masjids and Friday Mosques. Local Knowledge and Hybridity", six buildings are examined: three convent-*masjids*, according to the author's terminology, each built by the first three Sultans; the now gone Orhan's Friday mosque; the *Şehadet* (Martyrdom) mosque built by Murad I; and the *Ulu Camii* (Grand Mosque) by Bayezid I. These formed the centres of the socioreligious complexes known as *külliyes* that the Sultans built to legitimize their power. They addressed the needs of the different members of the population (Muslims, Christians, Jews, etc.) or opened new areas for citizens to move in. These buildings were multi-functional and all followed the so-called inverted-T plan.

Orhan's convent-*masjid* was constructed in 1339. The walls of the existing structure are original (not the vaulting), and the façades are articulated by a host of Byzantine details (semi-circular arches, dogtooth friezes, cloisonné masonry, even a roundel in brick and stone) while also drawing from the Mamluk tradition. The convent-*masjid* of Murad I, the famous *Hüdavendigar camii,* is a magnificent building with a façade resembling the almost contemporary Panagia Paregoritissa in Arta and the Haghia Sophia in Ochrid. It displays Byzantine, Ottoman and Latin elements in fine juxtaposition, hinting of a learned and travelled architect who probably was behind this never-again repeated synthesis (The author, although hinting about a human agent to tie up the different traditions, stops short of naming him an architect, speaking in general terms about "masons" that would have undertaken this effort). Finally, Bayezid's convent-masjid consciously breaks away from the former tradition of alternating brick and stone for the walls, being constructed solely from ashlar masonry, signifying the emergence of an Ottoman building style.

The author then addresses the three mosques mentioned above. The function of a Friday mosque or Ulu camii was to celebrate the sultan's victory and claim ownership of the lands. This is why usually Christian cathedrals were converted to this purpose of Orhan's Friday mosque, only the 1337 inscription remains. Murad's was so much altered during the nineteenth-century restoration that even its plan is a matter of debate. Bayezid's *Ulu camii* (built in 1396-1400) would, as his convent-*masjid* had, represent a shift from brick and stone walls to ashlar masonry ones. Through the examination of the above buildings, the transitional character of the architectural culture in Bursa emerges, which sought to address the needs of a multi-ethnic, multicultural and multireligious population during the first century of Ottoman rule.

The fourth chapter examines "The Roots and Context of the Inverted-T Plan". This type of structure served many functions, from prayer to counselling to food distribution. Çağaptay, contradicting the existing notion of the introduction of this type by the Mongols, describes a plan that was common in the Mediterranean for several centuries and was used for residential and palatial structures by Byzantine and Islamic rulers alike.

The fifth chapter is titled "Memory and Monuments. The Külliyes of the Sultans". This chapter covers the expansion of the city under the new rulers in order to accommodate the bulging population that was attracted to the capital of the new Ottoman state. This was not undertaken without purpose. First, Orhan ordered the building of a *külliye* northeast of the citadel inside the city walls (of which only the convent-*masjid* and *Emir Han* remains, very much altered). This symbolically framed the old city where he had established his authority by converting the most important buildings to Islamic use. Murad I, on the other hand, chose to form a new neighbourhood. He built his *külliye* further to the west, where the bathing complexes for which Prousa was famous for since the antiquity were located. The endowment deed specifically refers to it as *İmaret-i Kapluca*, the Bathhouse Imaret. It dramatically expanded the city limits, signalling ownership of valuable land and linking the city with its suburbs while exploiting the thermal springs of the area. It would later house his own tomb. Bayezid I then built his Noble Lodge and Pleasant Imaret several kilometres to the east of the walled city in order to expand the city and, for the first time, to house a Muslim-only population. These *külliyes* manipulated the landscape in order to orient the view of the visitor or inhabitant towards the prominent landmarks. They were not randomly placed because of a lack of the notion of the geometric order of Hellenistic and later Renaissance planning. They included kitchens, bathhouses, schools and other public buildings.

Two more *külliyes* were built in the aftermath of the Timurid sack. Mehmed I (1423-1421) established his, known as the Green Complex, on a hilltop between the old city and Bayezid I's complex. The convent-*masjid* as well as his tomb were done in ashlar masonry, but the subsidiary buildings in the "traditional" alternating brick and stone. Murad II completed his *külliye* in 1430 using brick and stone façades, intentionally recalling the buildings built by Orhan and Murad I, but he used contemporary decorative details on the inside. This is where the last sultan-commissioned inverted-T plan convent-*masjid,* as well as tombs of the royal family, are located. The existence of the mausolea of the founders of the Ottoman Empire and their families in the spaces they created leads Çağaptay to introduce the concept of the "ancestral" city: that is, the imperial dynastic city that Edirne, the next Ottoman capital, never became. Lastly, this chapter examines the boost to commerce, vital to the Ottoman state that was achieved by the building of Hans and caravanserais, which, unlike their Rum Seljuk counterparts, were constructed inside the cities.

In the sixth and final chapter, titled "Concluding remarks on 'Invisible Prousa / Bursa'", the author challenges the view of earlier scholarship that Bursa was built by the Ottomans from scratch, a triumphalist appropriation that neglects the fact that Bursa's Roman and Byzantine past and building practices were consciously integrated into the fabric of the fourteenth-century capital. She discusses her own notions of the conscious hybridity of the approach the first rulers took in forming the main traits of an Ottoman building culture. Bursa's past is not easily perceived today by visitors due to the history of catastrophic events, neglect and misplaced intervention –therefore the title "(In)visible Bursa". However, recent excavations have shown that the city's past is yet to be discovered.

Çağaptay, by gathering the meagre information still existing from the physical fabric of the city of Bursa and combining it with meticulous use of the extensive bibliography, has managed to paint a vivid picture of the transition period when fourteenth-century Prousa became Bursa. What emerges is the formative period of the Ottoman city, a time that utilized the Byzantine and Roman past not only by reusing existing buildings as empty vessels but also by leaning heavily on past building practices to consciously rearrange the new built environment. The buildings

examined in the book carry so many "Byzantine" features that earlier scholarship has suggested that they might have been adapted Byzantine ones. However, Çağaptay proves without doubt that the first leaders of the Ottoman Empire consciously sought to integrate the building culture of the former rulers into the new buildings they erected, remembering that they were speaking to a population that was not predominantly Muslim. By the end of the fourteenth century, the new leadership was confident enough to leave behind brick and stone buildings, although not completely, and turn to the ashlar that would follow Ottoman building culture to the end.

Çağaptay's book is easily read and adorned with fine English. It is a useful book for scholars seeking to understand the immensely exciting transition periods in the history, especially how Prousa became Bursa –as Nicomedia became Izmit– not through destruction and rebuilding, but by integration, commerce and intermarriage. However, probably because of budget constraints from the Editor, visual documentation falls short for a book of this importance that is focused mainly on architecture. Readers not readily familiar with the city or its monuments may at times have to turn to other, older publications or the internet to visualize the monuments so intimately described by Çağaptay. Despite this, the reader cannot but be taken by the author's forceful ideas and sometimes genuine melancholy for a period of glory for the Ottoman Empire, not for the battles it won but for the cultural achievements of its formative years.

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