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**THE MAKING OF AN OTTOMAN
PORT-CITY: THE STATE, LOCAL
ELITES AND URBAN SPACE IN
SALONICA, 1870-1912**

Sotirios Dimitriadis

**Thesis submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in History,
September 2013**

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Declaration for SOAS PhD thesis

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to the memory of Maria Simou

Abstract

My dissertation aims at giving an account of the late Ottoman city of Salonica and its establishment as a major urban and commercial centre in the period between 1870 and 1912. As such, it follows the growing debate on late Ottoman history, and in particular the role of the empire's port-cities. My study focuses on the emergence of two distinct local elites: The Ottoman provincial officialdom, whose presence was being increasingly felt, as the *Tanzimat*, the nineteenth-century Ottoman reforms progressed; and a diverse local bourgeoisie that took advantage of the opportunities presented by the integration of the region within the commercial networks that crisscrossed the Mediterranean. Urban governance was grounded upon a consensus between these two groups. It was structured around a hegemonic discourse of modernisation, semi-representative structures of local administration, as well as the profits generated by a nascent real estate market - itself a product of urban expansion and renovation.

This balance was placed into doubt in the beginning of the twentieth century. As tensions in Macedonia escalated into ethnic conflict, the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 promised to redraft the contract between the Ottoman state and society on a more equitable and inclusive basis. In the process, however, the social forces in the city were unable to manage the radical expansion of public space. The old elite arrangements were swept aside by the introduction of mass politics, and the sites that symbolised the modernisation of Salonica became sites of contestation. The defeat of the Ottoman army in the First Balkan War and the annexation of Salonica and part of its hinterland by Greece marked the final demise of the Ottoman city.

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Notes on Languages, Place Names, Dates and Currencies

1. Languages

This study makes use of a number of languages, making translation and transliteration methodology necessary. All translations of primary and secondary sources are my own, unless stated otherwise. Greek words and phrases are transcribed in the Latin alphabet using the formulation of the Centre for Byzantine, Ottoman and Modern Greek Studies of the University of Birmingham. Ottoman Turkish words, terms and phrases are spelled as in modern Turkish, following the transliteration format of the Istanbul edition of the New Redhouse Turkish-English Dictionary.¹ It must be noted that, while modern Turkish uses the Latin alphabet, some of the letters and the pronunciation ascribed to them differ from English:

|ç| sounds like |j| in *jazz*

|ç| reads like |ch| in *cherries*

|ğ| is silent, prolonging the preceding vowel

|j| resembles the French |j|

|ş| is the |sh| in *shine*

|ö| and |ü| sound like the German |ö| and |ü|

2. Places

The naming of settlements located in the Ottoman Empire presents the historian with certain difficulties. Such place names tend to appear in great variety, their form differing between the diverse languages used by locals and visitors, and often changing along with the state borders. Salonica was founded as Thessaloniki, but in its long history it has also been called (or had its name written) as Thessalonica, Saloniki, Selânik, Solun, Salonika, Salonique, Salonicco. The same can be observed in other cities of the area. For the purpose of this dissertation, I have chosen to use the Ottoman name of settlements, following up where necessary with the name used within the current political borders. Some examples would be Yanya [Ioannina],

¹ U. Bahadır Alkım et al. (eds.), *Yeni Redhouse Türkçe-İngilizce sözlük – New Redhouse Turkish-English dictionary* (Istanbul: Redhouse Press, 1981).

Siroz [Serres], or Manastır [Bitola]. This reflects the language of formal Ottoman practice and will serve to better posit these places within the historical context of nineteenth century.

Exemption to this rule will be made for cities, which are familiar enough to the reader of English to be given in their modern English spelling. So, I will use Beirut for Beyrut, Alexandria for İskenderiye, and Istanbul for Dersaadet, Konstantiniye or any of the other alternative names employed by the Ottomans to refer to their capital. In this vein, Salonica can be considered a valid name for the Ottoman city that forms the subject of this study, while Thessaloniki will be the form used, when translating from Greek or when referring to the city after its incorporation into the Greek state in 1912-1913.

3. Dates

The linguistic and religious diversity of Salonica is reflected on to the simultaneous use of different calendars by the inhabitants of the city for their everyday transactions. The lunar Islamic calendar (*takvim-i hicrî*), whose year count start with the migration (*hicret*) of the Prophet Mohammad from Mecca to Medina, was the liturgical calendar of the Muslim population, while the Greek Orthodox inhabitants used the Julian calendar. The *Rumi*, or ‘Roman,’ calendar was introduced in 1840 as part of the attempted Ottoman fiscal reforms; it was basically an adapted Julian calendar, its year count matching the Islamic calendar, and the start of the year set at March 1. The Hebrew calendar was widely used by the local Jewry. The Ottoman administration dated its archives using the Islamic and the *Rumi* calendars, often in combination.

All dates in this dissertation will be given in the form in which they appear in the original source, then converted to the Gregorian calendar. Conversions will be based on the online tool developed by Ahmet Murat Aytaç and the University of Ankara.²

4. Currency

The main unit of currency in the late Ottoman Empire was the golden *lira*, which was subdivided into 100 silver *kuruş*, and each *kuruş* into 40 *paras*. Despite its best efforts, the Ottoman state never managed to make the *lira* the only currency used in the Empire, and a great variety of foreign currencies continued to be accepted in

² <<http://193.255.138.2/takvim.asp?takvim>>, accessed at September 12, 2013.

commercial transaction until the end of the period. When recording monetary sums, this dissertation will record them in the currency unit used in the original source, without converting them. Providing a full account of the exchange rate between the *lira* and the main foreign currencies lies beyond the scope of this study and is unnecessary for following it. While market prices tended to fluctuate, official exchange rates were more or less steady, at 1.1 *liras* per Pound sterling and 4-5 *kuruş* per French franc. At the end of the period, daily salaries of white-collar and skilled labourers averaged 25-35 *kuruş*, barely sufficient to meet the rising living costs in the city.³

³ FO 295/18, Lamb to Grey, November 4, 1907; Basil C. Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia, 1870-1912: Socio-economic change and the railway factor* (Boulder, Colorado, and New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 268.

Acknowledgements

While this thesis bears only my signature, its completion would have been impossible without the interest, support and love shown by the members of my family, my friends, and many others. Now that my period of apprenticeship is nearing its conclusion, I would like to extend them my well-deserved gratitude.

The School of Oriental and African Studies and its Department of History were kind enough to accept my proposal for a dissertation, provided me with the perfect academic home and handed me the opportunity to give back some of the knowledge I acquired there to the undergraduate students. I would like to especially thank my supervisor, Professor Benjamin Fortna for his insightful comments, his support at crucial points and his inexhaustible patience. I would also like to thank my teachers, Yorgos Dedes, who has instructed me and many others in Ottoman Turkish, and John C. Alexander, who first awoke in me the interest for the study of the history of the Sublime State.

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and beyond gave advice and provided me with model examples of scholarly work. For their friendship and generosity, I want to heartily thank them.

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As I started my dissertation, the prospect of archival research seemed daunting and foreboding. The patience, dedication and helping nature of the personnel at the archives and libraries I have visited during the course of these last few years was indispensable. I would like to thank the staff of the National Archives in London, of the Political Archive of the Foreign Ministry in Berlin, of the Başbakanlık Arşivi, and the Beyazıt and Atatürk libraries in Istanbul, of the Institute of Mediterranean Studies in Rethymno, and of the Historical Archive of Macedonia, in Thessaloniki, and especially of Katerina Gianoukakou and Areti Makri.

I was lucky to have a great number of friends to whom I could always depend on, be it for logistic support or the hospitality of their homes. Yva Alexandrova, Yorgos Andreou, Idan Barir, Alexandros Chasapis-Giannakopoulos, Matteo Colombo, Pinar Çakıroğlu, Elizabeth Evangelidou, Nikos Genimakis, Chris Gratien, Liza Hashemi, Alexandros Ilias and Maria Papadima, Dimitris Kalatzopoulos, Evanthia Karassava, Chrysanthi Moschovaki, Stavros Panagiotidis, Sneha Patel, Marina Spanou, Giannis Touras and many others enabled me to carry on.

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Introduction

Paul Lindau first visited the port of Salonica in May 1888. The Oriental Railway, which would connect the Ottoman city to the Central and Western European networks, had been finally completed, after fifteen years of delay. The German journalist and dramatist was one of a number of European businessmen and intellectuals invited to the first trip from Paris to Salonica. On arrival, the train was welcomed by a huge crowd, as tens of thousands of locals had gathered on both sides of the lines for up to a mile before the station, in order to witness this historical occasion. From the station, Lindau and his fellow travellers were escorted to their hotels, and later converged at the mansion of the Allatini family, located at the heart of the city's commercial district. The Allatinis had arranged a fête for the esteemed visitors, and Lindau described his hosts:

The Allatinis are the princes of Salonica. In terms of wealth and significance, only one other family can compare to this great Oriental Commercial House: the Modianos. One wandering around Salonica will encounter many palatial apartments, an impressive commercial building, large warehouses and shops; if they were to ask a passer-by on the identity of their owners, the answer will be invariably be: if it isn't Allatini's, it must be Modiano's. If it isn't Modiano's, it must be Allatini's.¹

The Allatinis and the Modianos were perhaps the most successful of Salonica's entrepreneurial families. Their good fortunes were indicative of the development of Salonica during the last third of the nineteenth century. During this period, the city emerged as one of the biggest ports in the Ottoman Empire, comparable to other port-cities throughout the Mediterranean, such as Alexandria, Izmir and Beirut (and sharing common elements with Trieste, Odessa or Istanbul). Such ports evolved as a result of wide-ranging processes that defined this period. They provided Western European traders with access to the insular agricultural economies of the Balkan or Middle Eastern hinterlands, thus satisfying the needs of their home markets for the provision of food and raw materials. In these ports, the European powers not only

¹ Paul Lindau, *Aus dem Orient. Flüchtige Auszeichnungen* (Breslau: S. Schottlaender, 1890), 71.

competed with each other for economic and diplomatic influence. They also fought against the attempts of the Ottoman Empire to resist foreign encroachment through military and administrative reform. Public and domestic life, including patterns of consumption and sociability, would be increasingly modelled after Western Europe, especially France. The port-cities' cityscape was transformed as a result of the policies of the Ottoman central state and its local representatives, initiatives taken by local communities and individuals, and the contingencies of economic and demographic growth. As the Ottoman society, with its diverse populations and hierarchical order, was confronted with new political ideologies such as liberalism, nationalism, socialism, the resulting tensions threatened to eventually undermine the empire's internal balance.

All these themes are evident in Salonica, especially in the years between 1870 and 1912, which constitutes the period examined in this dissertation. This period is bookended with the first phase of the demolition of the city walls, which initiated an unprecedented period of urban expansion and interventions in the cityscape, and on the other end the capture of the city by the Greek army that put an end to the Ottoman rule. The economic, cultural and spatial transformation of the city can be traced to the actions of two groups that dominated local society. On one hand, the ambitious reforms introduced by the Ottoman state from the 1830s onwards resulted in the emergence of a reorganised bureaucracy, whose numbers and jurisdiction were ever-expanding. At the same time, the increasing significance of Western European economic interests in the empire led to a rapid increase in foreign commerce and the emergence of an indigenous class of merchants who would soon dominate the import and export trade. I will argue that these state and non-state elites would reach an understanding about their respective position within local society - within the hierarchical political context of Sultan Abdulhamid II's autocracy - and about the steps the city needed to take, in order to secure its status as one of the major centres of the region. The dominant role of these groups within local society allowed them to take decisions in the name of the city as whole. At the same time, their contribution to the transformation of the city and the specific course this process followed allowed them to secure their elite positions.

Urban space became the privileged site where this understanding could unfold and be reproduced. By transforming the cityscape, determining a dominant discourse that would define this transformation, and setting up the administrative bodies and

structures that would take the initiative and oversee the respective projects, the two groups would find common ground, on both the symbolic and material level. The need to modernise the fabric of the city, redesign its streets and buildings and provide public amenities to the population was generally accepted, and an affinity to the contemporary world and its prescripts was a crucial element of elite identity in the city. Beyond their ideological aspect, interventions on urban space included an economic component, as they not only expedited commercial and other transactions but also constituted in themselves a substantial outlet for investment. The expansion of the city, fuelled by economic and demographic growth, fostered a booming real estate market throughout most of the period in question. The Allatinis, the Modianos, and other local entrepreneurs acquired a significant amount of real-estate in the city and its environs, while taxes on such properties remained an important part of Ottoman finances during that time. The understanding between the state and non-state elites, sustained by a reformist discourse and material gain, remained dominant until the Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the subsequent explosive expansion of public space. Not only did the cohesion of both the local bureaucracy and the commercial bourgeoisie suffer after that point, as both groups splintered along ethnic and political lines, but their dominance over the city was actively challenged by non-elite groups.

These are the general hypotheses that define the scope of my dissertation and form its main argument. I will focus on the economic and social transformation of the Ottoman city of Salonica at the end of the nineteenth century, using urban space as my main analytical concept. As such, this study aims to connect a rich literature on the Late Ottoman port-cities with the lively debates in the field of urban studies, which are increasingly influential in the historiography of urbanity and urbanisation in Western Europe and the colonial world. I will trace similarities and differences between my case study and similar developments taking place elsewhere during the same period based on a selection of primary and secondary sources that are designed to bring forth the perspectives of the diverse set of actors involved in Salonica's transformation. Before I proceed, I feel it necessary to make reference to the history of Salonica that preceded the period under discussion, as well as the rich historiography that it has produced, especially in the last few years.

Salonica: A Mediterranean Port-city

Salonica was founded in the early Hellenistic period on the shores of the Northern Aegean, inside a large natural harbour. The city is located on a narrow plain between the hills and the sea. To the west, the landscape opens up to the Macedonian plain; to the east lie the forests and mountains of the Chalkidiki peninsula. A chain of river valleys and mountain passes connects the city to the northern Macedonian plateau and the plains of Thrace. Soon after its founding, Salonica would become a major administrative and commercial hub for the kingdom of Macedon and subsequently for the Roman Empire. The city survived the upheavals of late antiquity that caused the decline or demise of most other Roman urban centres in South-eastern Europe, and retained its political, economic and cultural history up until the late Middle Ages. The slow collapse of Byzantine power after the sack of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade separated Salonica from its hinterland and caused the temporary decline of the city. The city surrendered to the Ottoman Turks in the 1390s, was given back to the Byzantines a few years later, sold to the Venetians, only to be finally taken by force by Ottoman Sultan Murad II in 1430.

The Ottoman conquerors found a much depopulated city. Despite early attempts to settle Muslim soldiers and Christian peasants from the surrounding countryside, the situation was exacerbated after the conquest of Istanbul in 1453 by Mehmed II, when the sultan moved a portion of the population to his new capital. The relative decline of the city was not fully reversed before the turn of the sixteenth century, when thousands of Sephardic Jews, who had just been expelled from the Iberian Peninsula, began arriving in the city. In the next two centuries, their numbers were frequently reinforced with new arrivals, as more Jews and Marranos fled persecution in the Catholic kingdoms of the Western Mediterranean or were simply attracted by the security and the better opportunities offered to them by the Ottoman Empire. Eventually the Jews became the largest religious group in the city and Jewish presence an important element of urban life. The newcomers brought with them their production skills and commercial contacts, and Salonica gradually emerged as a major outlet for Ottoman commerce, a centre of textile production and a strategic fort with a large Janissary garrison.

The growing instability that plagued the empire during the seventeenth century took its toll on the city. Traders and craftsmen suffered, cornered as they were between changing market conditions and growing demands from the state. The

feeling of crisis was especially pronounced among the Jews of the city and must have contributed to the success of the millenarian movement led by Sabetai Zevi. Zevi, a rabbi who had been born in İzmir, proclaimed himself the Messiah in 1648 and spent the next twenty years gathering followers among the Jewish communities in the Ottoman Empire and beyond. When the Ottoman authorities forced Zevi to convert to Islam in 1666, hundreds of Jews followed him. They became the 'believers,' the *mu'amin*, but they were generally (and pejoratively) referred to as the *dönme*, the converted. Their community observed the tenets of their new faith in public, while privately they observed separate rituals that combined Talmudic practices with the reverence of Zevi and his heirs.

The schism caused by Zevi and his followers was a heavy blow to the Jewish community of Salonica. As a result, it did not recover its economic strength and prestige, even after growing commercial traffic had restored Salonica's fortunes. The eighteenth century elites were comprised by Muslim land-owners and traders, who could divert part of their surpluses to the port and controlled the profitable routes to the Black Sea and Egypt, and by Orthodox Christians, who would travel the land routes to Central Europe and would eventually come to benefit from the rise of Greek shipping at the end of the century.

The historiography on Salonica has long attracted the interest of many scholars, but most works restrict themselves to antiquity or the Byzantine period. Echoing the assumptions of Greek national historiography, studies on the Ottoman period of the city are few and far between, and usually focus on highlighting the resilience of the Greek presence in the city. Even N. Svoronos and K. Moschof,² who adopted a Marxist perspective in their research, dismissed the role of the Ottoman state as an impediment to the introduction of capitalist relations of production; agency for the latter would be firmly located with the non-Muslim, mainly Greek, traders. Such studies restricted themselves within the boundaries of Greek or at best Balkan historiography, and were only marginally informed by contemporary trends in Ottoman historiography, or by the variety of sources and testimonies from Ottoman Salonica, which began to get published in Israel during the 1960s.

² Nicolas Svoronos, *Le commerce de Salonique au XVIII^e siècle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1956); Kostis Moschof, *Thessaloniki. I tomi tis metapratikis polis* [Thessaloniki. The cross-section of the commercial city] (Athens: Stochastis, 1978).

It was only in the late 1980s that a number of historians and scholars of other disciplines began to unearth the history of Ottoman, and especially late Ottoman, Salonica. Archival collections were catalogued and employed, an inclusive chronology established, individuals traced and sites mapped. The selection of the city as European Capital of Culture for 1997 brought not only necessary funds, but also a new awareness of the historical past that went beyond the established paradigms. The works of K. Tomanas,³ Y. Megas,⁴ E. Chekimoglou on the history of the local economy,⁵ B. Gounaris,⁶ and finally A. Yerolympos,⁷ V. Kolonas⁸ and V. Hastaoglou-Martinidis on local planning and architecture proved important additions to the historiography of the city. These works opened up the historiographical debate in a period where historians from Europe, Turkey and elsewhere began to show a renewed interest in the city.

Salonica had always been a topic of choice within the field of Jewish Studies, and it had also remained important for economic historians of the Ottoman Empire, especially in France, where the Braudelian paradigm of the historical unity of the Mediterranean world retained its credence. By the 1990s, the turn towards the study of Ottoman port-cities - reflecting a wider awareness among historians for urban and cultural topics - led to a number of edited volumes that included contributions on Salonica. Two authoritative monographs, Meropi Anastassiadou's *Salonique*⁹ and

³ Kostas Tomans, *To chroniko tis Thessalonikis, 1875-1920* [The chronicle of Thessaloniki, 1875-1920] (Thessaloniki: Nisides, 1995).

⁴ Yannis Megas, *Oi "varkarides" tis Thessalonikis: I anarchiki Boulgariki omada kai oi bombistikies energeies tou 1903* [The "boatmen" of Thessaloniki: The Bulgarian anarchist group and the bombing action of 1903] (Thessaloniki: Trochalia, 1994); idem, *I epanastasi ton Neotourkon sti Thessaloniki* [The Young Turk Revolution in Thessaloniki] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2003).

⁵ Evangelos Chekimoglou and Kirki Georgiadou-Tsimino, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikotitas sti Thessaloniki, t. B₁: I Othomaniki periodos* [The history of entrepreneurship in Thessaloniki, vol. B₁: The Ottoman period] (Thessaloniki: Politistiki Etairia Epiheirimation Boreiou Ellados, 2004); Chekimoglou and Thaleia Mantopoulou-Panagiotopoulou, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikotitas sti Thessaloniki, t. B₂: I Othomaniki Periodos* [History of Entrepreneurship in Thessaloniki, v B₂: The Ottoman Period], (Thessaloniki: Politistiki Etairia Epiheirimation Boreiou Ellados, 2004).

⁶ Gounaris, "Salonica," *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 16, 4 (Fall 1993), 499-518.

⁷ Alexandra Yerolympos. *Metaxy Anatonis kai Dysis: Boreioelladikes poleis stin periodo ton othomanikon metarrythmiseon* [Between East and West: Northern Greek cities in the period of Ottoman reforms] (Athens: Trochalia, 1997).

⁸ Vasilis S. Kolonas, "I ektos ton toihon epektasi tis Thessalonikis. Eikonografia tis synoikias Hamidie (1885-1912)" [The extra muros expansion of Thessaloniki. Topography of the Hamidiye quarter (1885-1912)] (PhD dissertation, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, 1991).

⁹ Anastassiadou, *Salonique, une ville Ottoman a l'âge des réformes* (Leiden, Brill, 1997).

Mark Mazower's *Salonica, City of Ghosts*,¹⁰ not only influenced subsequent studies of the city, but firmly placed it within the context of Ottoman history. In recent years, the growing interconnectedness of historiographical fields, the digitalisation and greater accessibility of the Ottoman archives, as well as a growing familiarity with the diverse languages used in the Ottoman Empire, proved conducive to the publication of a variety of studies on the subject. These references form the context and bibliographical background of this dissertation. The degree to which it differs from the existing literature will be made clear through a discussion on theory and methodology.

Port-cities: Sites of encounter, sites of conflict

The Mediterranean port-city was an urban type ultimately produced by the special economic and political conditions of the region during the nineteenth century, and especially its later half. The unique characteristics of these cities and their novelty did not escape the attention of local inhabitants and foreign visitors. What contemporaries instinctively grasped, historians then attempted to place within a chronological context and a typology. Much of the historiography on the late Ottoman empire has regarded the study of port-cities as crucial for the understanding of the processes that defined the history of the region. Such studies drew, to a greater or lesser extent, from a variety of academic disciplines – economics, political and social theory, urban and cultural studies. They have shared certain assumptions: The port-cities became the primary sites of European presence in the Mediterranean, and served as nodes between the industrial centres of Europe and the agricultural producers of the surrounding countryside. This process would lead to the overdevelopment of the commercial and service sectors of the economy and strengthen the indigenous commercial classes, who acted alternatively as agents and as competitors to the European traders. Peasants began to flock to the city in search of opportunities, while in the open system of what has been described as ‘first globalisation’, trans-regional and trans-national migration would thrive.¹¹ This process would greatly diversify urban populations, which had already been made

¹⁰ Mazower, *Salonica, city of ghosts: Christians, Muslims and Jews, 1430-1950* (London: HarperCollins, 2004).

¹¹ For the conceptualisation of the “First Globalisation,” see Suzanne Berger, *Notre première mondialisation: Leçons d'un échec oublié* (Paris: Seuil, 2003).

multi-ethnic after centuries of coexistence within an imperial frame. Eventually, port-cities would evolve into sites of contact, where the aesthetics and the practices of European modernity would encounter indigenous cultural forms, while ethnically and religiously diverse groups of locals and foreigners would find themselves sharing the same spaces. At the same time, port-cities would also become sites of conflict, where free trade would be linked to European imperial competition and indirect or direct control over territories and populations, and where different social groups, elite and non-elite, would vie for visibility and primacy within urban space.¹²

While most scholars involved in the debate accept the developments described above as a shared framework of reference, a given historian's preference for certain theoretical approaches necessarily determines which categories they prioritise at the expense of others. Some studies have highlighted the role of the port-cities as 'melting pots' of diverse population groups, as well as in the introduction of European modernity in the wider region. Even though part of these studies communicated a sense of 'imperial nostalgia', the influence of the Saidian paradigm would soon make scholars aware of the inequalities that were inherent in such encounters.¹³ For the most theory-minded of scholars, the discourses and cultural practices associated with the introduction of European modernity through the great urban centres of the Mediterranean were part and parcel of the colonisation of Northern Africa and the Levant.¹⁴ The influence of the historians of the *Subaltern Studies* group and the cultural/linguistic turn in the historiography led to the increasing use of discursive analysis and the employment of hybridity and cosmopolitanism as interpretative concepts.¹⁵

¹² This approach draws heavily from Sakis (Athanasios) Gekas, "Class and cosmopolitanism: the historiographical fortunes of merchants in Eastern Mediterranean ports," *Mediterranean Historical Review* 24, 2 (December 2009), 95-114.

¹³ Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Routledge and Paul Keagan, 1978); *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1993).

¹⁴ See for example Timothy Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988).

¹⁵ A critical review of the *Subaltern Studies* group and its evolution can be found in Sumit Sarkar, "The Decline of the Subaltern," in idem, *Writing Social History* (Delhi and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 82-108. An early elaboration of hybridity was Homi Bhabha's influential "Of mimicry and men: The ambivalence of colonial discourse," *October* 28 (Spring 1984), 125-133. For an overview of the cultural turn in historiography, see Hayden White, "The question of narrative in contemporary historical theory," *History and Theory* 23, 1 (February 1984), 1-33; William H. Sewell Jr., "The political unconscious of social and cultural history, or, confessions of a former quantitative historian", in *The politics of method in the Human Sciences: Positivism and its others*, ed. George Steinmetz (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2005), 173-206.

At the same time, the resurgence of ethnic and communal violence in the Balkans and the Middle East resulted in a growing interest among historians in the study of nationalism. A new generation of scholars stood critically against the traditional national historiographies and rejected their teleological assumptions regarding the transition from empire to nation-state. In response to the discourse of the inevitable triumph of nationalism, contemporary historians would highlight the resilience of pre- and non-national forms of identity: networks and forms of solidarity based on religion, place of origin, occupation and class. Within this historiography, nationalism was described as only one of many motives and conduits of political action. Port-cities were singled out as the quintessential site of hybridity and fluidity of identity, as a result of the pace of their transformation. There the same individuals would, depending on the specific context, perform a number of roles that drew from national allegiance, religious piety, or pride of local or imperial citizenship.¹⁶ These individuals described themselves by employing terms with a semantic ambiguity that reflected the diversity of their social and cultural milieu: Being Jewish, Greek, Muslim - Turkish or Albanian, could represent membership to a specific subgroup of a specific population, which included specific economic, legal and administrative privileges and obligations; it could convey affinity to all members of a given religion, encompassing people of a variety of ethnic and linguistic backgrounds, or it could be used to display allegiance to a specific political programme, be it Greek, Albanian or Turkic nationalism, Zionism, or Pan-Islamism.¹⁷

Most accounts following this post-nationalist approach are structured around the category of community, understood in two ways: as groups constituted by ethnicity and religion, and as corporate bodies that maintained their legal and

¹⁶ Faruk Birttek, "Greek Bull in the China Shop of Ottoman 'Grand Illusion': Greece in the Making of Modern Turkey," in *Citizenship and the Nation-State in Greece and Turkey*, eds. Birttek and Thalia Dragonas (London: Routledge, 2005), 37-48.

¹⁷ İpek Yosmaoğlu-Turner, "The priest's robe and the rebel's rifle: Communal violence and the construction of national identity in Ottoman Macedonia, 1878-1908," (unpublished PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2005), 10, argues for reserving national adjectives, like "Greek" and "Bulgarian," for subjects of the respective nation-states, and using "Greek/Bulgarian Orthodox" or the Ottoman terms "Rum/Bulgar" when referring to subjects of the empire. I feel that this choice fails to take into account the semantic ambiguity these terms had at the time, as they combined administrative, religious, linguistic, ethnic and political meanings. In this sense, I feel they can be used outside nationalist discourse. I am employing the term "Greeks" as synonymous with "Ottoman Greeks," "Greek Orthodox" or the "*Rum*" of the Ottoman sources, whereas I am giving a special indication for reference to subjects of the independent Greek kingdom.

administrative autonomy within the boundaries defined by the imperial state. During the nineteenth century, these groups became increasingly influenced by nationalism, but they discarded their older allegiances in favour of this new ideology. In that sense, focusing on how Ottoman urban society was sustained by a web of intra- and inter-communal relations, with all their contradictions and conflicts, paints a stark contrast to the often violent process that accompanied their incorporation into nation-states.¹⁸ While this picture of port-city cosmopolitanism is usually located within the commercial elites of the Mediterranean,¹⁹ Will Hanley's work on Alexandria suggested the existence of a 'vulgar cosmopolitanism', operating on the quotidian level and disrupting established boundaries of religion, language, class and ethnicity.²⁰ In the same vein, the recovery of the history of liminal and hybrid groups, whose importance far surpassed their number, further undermines the dominant nationalist discourse.²¹

An alternative perspective in the history of Mediterranean port-cities was offered by a group of historians inspired by dependency theory, and especially its later reformulation by Immanuel Wallerstein.²² Wallerstein suggested that the age of discoveries and the colonisation of the Americas had led to the emergence of a system of interconnected economies. At the centre of this world-economy lay the national monarchies of Western Europe - increasingly led by Britain and France - which maintained unequal terms of trade with the global periphery, which originally included the American colonies and was gradually expanded into all territories that fell under colonial rule or European economic domination. The Ottoman Empire had constituted an autonomous economic system under strict state regulation until the

¹⁸ That seems to be the main thread that runs through Mazower, *City of ghosts*.

¹⁹ Evridiki Sifneos, "'Cosmopolitanism' as a Feature of the Greek Commercial Diaspora," *History and Anthropology* 16, 1 (2005), 97–111.

²⁰ Will Hanley, "Foreignness and Localness in Alexandria, 1880–1914," (unpublished PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2007). See also Malte Fuhrmann, "Cosmopolitan imperialists and the Ottoman port cities. Conflicting logics in the urban social fabric," *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 67 (2003), Du cosmopolitisme en la Méditerranée, 149-163.

²¹ For an example, see Marc Baer's work on the *dönme* of Salonica. Baer, *The Dönme: Jewish converts, Muslim revolutionaries, and secular Turks* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2010).

²² Andre Gunder Frank, "The development of underdevelopment", in *Imperialism and underdevelopment: a reader*, eds. Robert I. Rhodes (New York and London: Monthly Review Press, 1970), 4-17; Immanuel Wallerstein, *The modern world-system, vol. I: Capitalist agriculture and the origins of European world-economy in the sixteenth century* (London and New York: Academic Press, 1974); idem, *The modern world-system, vol. II: Mercantilism and the consolidation of the European world-economy, 1600-1750* (London and New York: Academic Press, 1980).

eighteenth century, when the growing weakness of the central state allowed European merchants to deal directly with Ottoman producers and consumers. As industrial capitalism became the dominant economic model in Western Europe, the pressure exercised by Europe - in need of raw materials for its industries and markets for their products - only intensified. According to the world system approach, the contingencies of foreign commerce helped shape Ottoman agriculture and manufacture according to the needs of European industry, causing the empire to gradually slip into the periphery, its economy and public finances susceptible to fluctuations in the broader system.²³ The Ottoman ‘time of troubles’ that began with Napoleon’s invasion of Egypt in 1798 and would last for about the next forty years only accelerated the process of peripheralisation. By the mid-nineteenth century, the Ottoman state had been forced to open its borders to European imports and both public finances and private enterprise became dependent on European capital.

The process of integration into the world-system was mirrored by a transition from a subsistence economy to a market-oriented one. The state regulation over the economy was undermined by foreign commercial influence. Traditional trade routes and Ottoman manufactures declined as result of the competition, along with the established economic centres of the interior. Conversely, as producers in regions where the writ of the state was small switched to the cultivation of export crops destined for the European markets, the ports that served as entrepôts to foreign trade saw significant increases in trade. The port-cities evolved into nodes that linked their respective hinterlands to each other and the wider world-economy. This realignment concerned both commercial and migratory flows, and the populations of the Mediterranean coast, especially the urban population, exhibited a marked growth. Such observations made the port-cities a prime target of the attention of urban and economic historians sympathetic to world-system theory, who focused on the cities’ role as entry points for European influence and capital, and early sites of the transformation of the local economy. Led by Reşat Kasaba, Çağlar Keyder and others, and revolving around the Fernand Braudel Centre and its *Review* journal, this group of historians published a series of studies and articles on the subject.²⁴

²³ For the application of the world-system theory on the Ottoman case, see *The Ottoman Empire and the world-economy*, ed. Huri İslamoğlu-İnan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), and especially the contributions to that volume of İslamoğlu-İnan and Çağlar Keyder, “Agenda for Ottoman history”, 42-62, and Immanuel Wallerstein, “The incorporation of the Ottoman Empire into the world-economy”, 88-98.

²⁴ Çağlar Keyder, Y. Eyüp Özveren and Donald Quataert, “Port-cities in the Ottoman

Considerable attention was given to how Ottoman society, and especially its elite groups, reacted to these developments.²⁵ From the perspective of these scholars, the increase and change in the nature of the empire's foreign trade were directly linked to the emergence of new groups of local merchants, who positioned themselves between the European markets and the hinterland. Their intermediary role was essential to the integration of their respective regions to the world economy, since the commercialisation of agriculture was still limited. Through personal and family connections and their control of money-lending and tax-farming operations on the regional level, local traders effected a gradual shift in the local economy. In an attempt to secure their presence in the area, the European powers granted diplomatic protection and even citizenship to many influential Ottoman non-Muslim merchants who now found their social and economic position relatively secure from the Ottoman state. Conversely, the Muslim trading communities, who had been very active as late as the turn of the nineteenth century, could not count on European protection or the presence of diaspora communities in the ports of Western Europe, and were largely forced to restrict their activities to the empire's domestic trade.²⁶

The introduction of new directions in production and commerce had led to the emergence of an Ottoman bourgeoisie, even if it was yet limited to the port-cities. But how did the social and economic evolution of the empire compare to the Western European canon? Despite its integration into the world-economy, the Ottoman Empire differed from the Western European powers; the capitalist sector of its economy was largely restricted to commercial agriculture, banks, and several large-scale infrastructural projects. Modern industries were largely absent, and the democratisation of the empire's political and administrative structures remained

Empire: Some theoretical and historical perspectives", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 16, 4, Port-cities of the Eastern Mediterranean (Fall 1993), 519-558. For specific case-studies, see the other contributions to the issue.

²⁵ Though most studies make reference to the role and importance of non-elite groups, works specifically on the Ottoman non-elite are less frequent. For some examples, see Quataert, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1983); idem, *Workers, peasants and economic change in the Ottoman Empire, 1730-1914* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1993).

²⁶ Keyder, "Bureaucracy and bourgeoisie: Reform and revolution in the Age of Imperialism", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 11, 2 (Spring 1988), 151-165; Reşat Kasaba, "Was there a compradore bourgeoisie in mid-nineteenth century Anatolia?", *Review (Fernand Braudel Center)* 11, 2 (Spring 1988), 215-228; Engine Deniz Akarlı, "The tangled ends of an empire and its sultan", in *Modernity and culture: From the Mediterranean to the Indian Ocean*, eds. Leila Tarazi Fawaz and C.A. Bayly (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2002), 261-284.

severely limited. Beyond pointing out the inherent inequality of the relations between the empire and Europe, the proponents of the world-economy thesis attempted to justify this divergence by looking at the role of the Ottoman commercial elites. Their verdict was that these groups were unable or unwilling to play a role of a 'national bourgeoisie', and did not spearhead industrial development nor push for the expansion of political rights. Instead, they preferred to invest their profits in commerce, money-lending and other short-term, speculative ventures. Though their autonomy from their European partners, patrons and occasional competitors was recognised, it was nonetheless argued that their interests could not become hegemonic, in the sense that they were not seen as expressive and supplementary of the interests of the whole of the Ottoman society, in the way of the bourgeoisie in Western Europe.²⁷

This predicament was attributed to the way class formation in the Ottoman Empire was negotiated through communal affiliation and ethnicity. In her *Rise of the bourgeoisie, demise of empire*, Fatma Müge Göçek highlighted the bifurcation of the Ottoman elites between an essentially Muslim administration and the non-Muslim business classes. This divide isolated the latter from the Ottoman state and made any challenge from below to the political supremacy of the palace and the bureaucracy almost impossible. Tensions between state and non-state elites, and between the latter and the disaffected masses of Muslim urban poor and peasants, would eventually acquire an ethnic element and greatly contribute to the rise of nationalist ideologies in the empire. During the period of warfare between 1912 and 1922, the increasingly intransigent Ottoman administration felt sufficiently confident to move against the non-Muslim elites, in the hope of replacing them with a new Muslim bourgeoisie that would be loyal to and dependent on the state.²⁸

This model, which also reflects the opinions of a wide range of historians associated with the dependency and the world-economy paradigms, has been widely used to explain the history of the last years of the empire, especially the period following the Young Turk revolution of 1908, as well as the early republican (post-1923) period and the rise of Turkish nationalism.²⁹ The same approach, inverted, can

²⁷ Keyder, "Bureaucracy and bourgeoisie"; Kasaba, "Compradore bourgeoisie".

²⁸ Fatma Müge Göçek, *Rise of the bourgeoisie, demise of empire* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

²⁹ Feroz Ahmad, "Unionist relations with the Greek, Armenian and Jewish communities of the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1914", in *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire: The functioning of a plural society, vol. I: The central lands*, eds. Benjamin Braude and Bernard

also be seen in studies that attempt to attribute the economic and cultural life of the Ottoman port-cities to a single ethnic or communal group.³⁰ The reduction of the process of class formation, as well as other forms of identity, to ethnic and communal difference leaves it open to criticism and less compatible to the historical context of the mid- and late-nineteenth century.³¹

This rich body of literature forms the framework for my own study. For the purpose of this dissertation, I will attempt to combine the social and economic preoccupations of the world-system view with the micro-historical perspective of the other works on port-cities. I will not prioritise the ethnic bifurcation of administrative and commercial Ottoman elites, a development which Göçek largely locates in the early twentieth century. Instead, I suggest that in the environment of economic development and urban growth that characterised the late Ottoman port-cities, the Ottoman administration and the local commercial elites succeeded in fashioning a consensus among themselves. The former promised the implementation of a series of legal and administrative reforms aimed at streamlining the local economies, while giving limited opportunities for political representation to notable groups. The latter grudgingly accepted state oversight over commercial transactions and the taxation of parts of their income.

The understanding between the two main local elites would be tested and reaffirmed within urban space. The quays, the boulevards, the new annexes with their eclecticist mansions, the ubiquitous clock-towers and the government *konaks*, the municipal councils and the chambers of commerce, the trams and the steamers – all represented the triumph of the modernisation discourse and the market economy

Lewis (New York: Holms & Meier, 1982), 401-443; Ayşe Kadioğlu, “The paradox of Turkish nationalism and the construction of official identity”, *Middle Eastern Studies* 32, 2 (April 1996), 177-193; Kasaba, “Kemalist certainties and modern ambiguities”, in *Rethinking modernity and national identity in Turkey*, eds. Kasaba and Sibel Bozdoğan (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997), 15-36; Keyder, “A history and geography of Turkish nationalism”, in *Citizenship and the nation-state in Greece and Turkey*, eds. Keyder and Anna Frangoudaki (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 3-17. Such studies move between two semantic extremes, from the self-withdrawal of the Armenian and Greek elites from the Ottoman state, to the strategies employed in the Ottoman Empire by the state elites for the purpose of nation-building from above.

³⁰ An example is how Orly C. Meron employs the concept of the ‘ethnic economy’ in relation to late Ottoman Salonica in her *Jewish entrepreneurship in Salonica, 1912-1940* (Brighton: Sussex Academics, 2011), 9ff.

³¹ Hilmar Kaiser, *Imperialism, racism and development theories: The construction of a dominant paradigm on Ottoman Armenians* (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Gomidas Institute, 1997) offers some combative criticism on this intellectual tradition.

that both state and non-state elites accepted and advocated. They helped resolve tensions and conflicts that arose, fuelled by the contradictions that underlay the emergence of the port-cities as a distinct urban environment, typical of the social and economic conditions of the Ottoman nineteenth century. Further deliberation on these themes requires a critical examination of space as an analytical category.

The Production of Urban Space and the Modern City

Space is a concept that has been appropriated relatively recently by critical theory. Space has been long treated in many academic traditions, including history, as a component of the material plane, measurable, natural and unproblematic. Conversely, a number of philosophers embarked on critical elaborations of the concept, especially after the changing appreciation of space and time in the physical sciences from the turn of the nineteenth century onward.³² An important point within this context was Henri Lefebvre's concentrated attempt to fashion a new theory of space which would connect it firmly to the level of social and production relations.³³ Lefebvre distinguished between three aspects of space that existed and evolved in parallel. Perceived space was the site of spatial practices, connected to productive and reproductive activities. This is the physical and social space, space as lived and experienced. The representations of space, on the other hand, constituted the manner in which space was conceived and conceptualised by planners and architects. These representations formed discourses on the shaping and organising space. Finally, representative space corresponded to the spatial unconscious, the underground spaces that spoke to artists and represented the inarticulate values and memories of society.³⁴ In the cities of Renaissance and early modern Europe, which employed an "historical" conception of space, the urban environment corresponded to the conditions that produced it and could be read as such by the inhabitants. Conversely, capitalist modernity imposed the conceptualisation of space as abstract and homogenous, thus obscuring the realities of social relations and state power.³⁵ Lefebvre responded by highlighting the produced quality of space: not only the site

³² For a history of critical thought on space, see Edward W. Soja, *Seeking spatial justice* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010).

³³ Henri Lefebvre, *The production of space* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 38-40.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 77-82.

of production, but a product of this process; not only the environment in which discourses take shape, but the product of these discourses. The production of space necessarily contains the reproduction of the social relations it contains, namely the reproduction of the sum of urban life.³⁶

Lefebvre's work had an immediate and deep impact in the fields of geography and urban studies and contributed to the emergence of a generation of scholars that took up his conceptualisation of space and expanded it in a number of directions. Some scholars traced Lefebvre back to his Marxist influences and attempted to write about space, and primarily urban space, as the site of social struggle and class conflict. Thus they sought to ascribe meaning to the great transformations of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, as well as their post-Fordist present.³⁷ Others adopted an alternative approach, abandoning Marx for Foucault and post-structuralist theory, in their attempt at a critical interpretation of urban life and conflicts.³⁸ As the number of studies that addressed Lefebvre and his theory of space grew, there were some critical approaches on whether the *Production of Space* should indeed be regarded as canonical, or as a work deliberately left incomplete.³⁹ Doubts were expressed on the possibility that coherent and inclusive political demands can be structured around space and its conceptualisations.⁴⁰

While these debates would remain largely restricted to the theoretical level or the study of contemporary phenomena, they would often result in ambitious studies of the genealogies of modern urbanism. The importance given by Lefebvre to the transformations of the nineteenth century has been already mentioned. In this, he reflected the work of thinkers who approached the novelty of modernity from a temporal perspective. Studying that tradition and echoing Walter Benjamin and Henri Bergson, Timothy Mitchell reminds us that modernity introduces a new

³⁶ Ibid., 38-40.

³⁷ David Harvey, *The limits to capital* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1982) remains the most ambitious attempt to reconstruct a Marxist theory of space and, through it, of contemporary society. See also Derek Gregory and John Urry, *Social relations and spatial structures* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1985) and Mark Gottdiener, *The social production of urban space* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1985).

³⁸ Manuel Castells, *The city and the grassroots: a cross-cultural theory of urban social movements* (Berkeley: California University Press, 1983); Soja, *Postmodern geographies: the reassertion of space in critical theory* (London: Verso, 1989).

³⁹ Andy Merrifield, "Lefebvre, anti-Logos, and Nietzsche: An alternative reading of the *Production of Space*," *Antipodes* 27, 3 (1995): 294-303.

⁴⁰ Merrifield, "The right to the city and beyond," *City* 15, 3-4 (June-August 2011): 473-481; Mark Purcell, "Excavating Lefebvre: The right to the city and its politics of the inhabitant," *GeoJournal* 58 (2002): 99-108.

perception of time: it transforms heterogeneous and asynchronous time, into a homogenous medium, empty and measurable, by giving it a spatial expression. If the different social experiences of the period and the single temporal logic that connects them must be enshrined onto space, then that space becomes their representation. For Mitchell, “the emergence of a capitalist economy means that everything is produced, traded and consumed as representations of something else.”⁴¹ One can trace this argument backwards and decipher the meaning of the transformed spaces, in order to comment on the historical conditions that effected this transformation.

These insights had significant impact on the historiography of the emergence of modernity as a distinct historical phase. Critical conceptions of space soon crossed over and became utilised in relevant debates. An analysis that treated space as an ensemble of physical, discursive and social spaces, found some of its first applications in studies on the question of the public sphere and its emergence. Scholars critical of Jürgen Habermas’ authoritative model employed the concept of space for a more political and conflict-conscious alternative. Moreover, the grounding of Lefebvre’s ‘spaces of representation’ onto strategies of state power and the social and economic sphere appealed to a number of urban and art historians. This trend manifested in research dealing with architecture and urban design in the colonial world, in which the introduction of new models and forms would be directly traced to the strategies and preoccupations of colonial authorities.⁴² Urban transformation would also feature on studies on the port-cities of the Ottoman Empire and the Eastern Mediterranean, usually as the background of an analysis that revolved on other issues.⁴³ Other works would adopt a more concentrated outlook

⁴¹ Mitchell, “The stage of modernity,” in *Questions of modernity*, ed. by Mitchell (Minneapolis and London, University of Minnesota Press, 2000), 14-15.

⁴² Paul Rabinow, *French modern: Norms and forms of social environment* (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: MIT Press, 1989); Brenda S.A. Yeoh, *Contesting space: Power relations and the urban built environment in colonial Singapore* (Kuala Lumpur and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Zeynep Çelik, *Urban forms and colonial confrontations: Algiers under French rule* (Berkeley, California and London: University of California Press, 1997); Jyoti Hosagrahar, *Indigenous modernities: Negotiating architecture and urbanism* (London: Routledge, 2005); Peter Scriver and Vikramaditya Prakash (eds.), *Colonial modernities: Building, dwelling and architecture in British India and Ceylon* (London: Routledge, 2007); William J. Glover, *Making Lahore modern: Constructing and imagining a colonial city* (Minneapolis: Minnesota University Press, 2008).

⁴³ For example, Michael J. Reimer, “Colonial bridgehead: social and spatial change in Alexandria, 1850-1882”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 20, 4 (November 1988), 531-553, uses a description of urban change in mid-nineteenth Alexandria as part of his argument on the penetration of Alexandria and its hinterland by foreign interests before the formal imposition of the British protectorate in 1882.

and focus on city planning, the emergence of social and public spaces and issues of urban property.⁴⁴

The connection between urban space and modernity highlighted above is an important issue and has implications for the historiography of the nineteenth century cities. This is especially valid for urban environments where modernity was seen as imposed from the outside onto indigenous social and cultural orders. Colonial rule on the level of the city was exemplified by the construction of ‘white towns’: settlements comprised of monumental buildings, wide streets, spacious houses and parks and gardens that stood in stark contrast with the cramped native quarters.⁴⁵ Such juxtapositions were repeated throughout colonial society. The introduction of ‘widely held’ principles in colonial administration, in the planning of new city suburbs and in pre-existing urban environments, the enumeration and registration of houses and their inhabitants, the regulation of professional and social practices, were all designed as instances where the hierarchal relation between the coloniser and the colonised would be reproduced. Founded on a discourse of progress, civility and hygiene, the shaping of the cityscape according to modern tenets would not only inscribe these power relations onto physical space, but also offer a justification for colonialism.

This process of imposition need not be played out within a formally colonial context. The appropriation of modernity by indigenous elites was crucial not only in the fight for self-determination and the formation of the post-colonial nation-states, but also for the maintenance of elite rule over a subaltern population. The nationalist intelligentsia renounced the political rule by the colonial administration, but it would critically adopt the intellectual and cultural aspects of the order the latter represented.⁴⁶ Closer to my own case-study, in the example of nineteenth-century Egypt, Timothy Mitchell traced the strategies of the British colonial regime back to

⁴⁴ Çelik, *The remaking of Istanbul: portrait of an Ottoman city in the nineteenth century* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1986); Jens Hanssen, *Fin de siècle Beirut: the making of an Ottoman provincial capital* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005); Sibel Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir: The rise of a cosmopolitan port, 1840-1880* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2012).

⁴⁵ Swati Chattopadhyay, “Blurring boundaries: The limits of ‘White Town’ in colonial Calcutta”, *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 59, 2 (June 2000), 154-179. See also Janet L. Abu-Lughod, *Rabat: Urban apartheid in Morocco* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1980).

⁴⁶ Partha Chatterjee, *Nationalist thought and the colonial world: A derivative discourse* (London: Zed Books, 1986); idem, *The nation and its fragments: Colonial and postcolonial histories* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1993).

the modernisation efforts made by Mehmed Ali and his successors.⁴⁷ Şerif Mardin, who pioneered the study of literary and political culture in the nineteenth century Ottoman Empire, had long maintained the existence of a rift between the modern-minded administrative elites of the empire and the majority of the Muslim population, who retreated to the safe havens of vernacular culture and popular religion.⁴⁸ Negotiating that rift was crucial for the late nineteenth politics of Sultan Abdülhamid II, who put an end to the cautious constitutionalist experiment of 1876-1878 and attempted instead to forge a direct contact between the throne and the empire's Muslim subjects through the public performance of (Sunni Islamic) religiosity and the political use of the caliphal office.⁴⁹

The appropriation of modernity by indigenous elites contained a contradiction: European claims of superiority needed to be rejected, but their material underpinnings were nonetheless adopted. 'Tradition' on the other hand was hailed as the essence of communal identity, while simultaneously (and perhaps implicitly) regarded as the cause of economic and social stagnation.⁵⁰ These contradictions were by no means restricted to the colonial world. Most elites confronted with the new forces unleashed by the nineteenth century attempted to reinforce their cohesion and shore up their own legitimacy by invoking 'tradition' – which they infused with meaning at the same time in which they embraced modern discourses and practices.⁵¹ The same process was certainly evident in the Ottoman Empire, among both the state and the non-state elites.⁵² The critical appropriation of European modernity by the

⁴⁷ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*.

⁴⁸ Şerif Mardin, *The Emergence of the Young Ottoman Thought: A study in the modernization of Turkish political ideas* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1962); idem, "Super Westernisation in Urban Life in the Ottoman Empire in the Last Quarter of the Nineteenth Century" in *Turkey: Geographic and Social Perspectives*, eds. Peter Benedict, Erol Tümertekin, and Fatma Mansur (Leiden: Brill, 1974) 403-446.

⁴⁹ Selim Deringil, "Legitimacy structures in the Ottoman state: The Reign of Abdülhamid II (1876-1909)", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 23 (1991), 345-359; idem, "'They live in a State of Nomadism and Savagery': The Late Ottoman Empire and Post-colonial Debate", *Comparative Studies in Society and Culture* 45, 2 (April 2003), 311-342; Eugene Rogan, *Frontiers of state in the late Ottoman Empire: Transjordan, 1850-1921* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 273-275.

⁵⁰ Chatterjee, *Nationalist thought*, 1-2, quoting John Plamenatz' theory of two nationalisms.

⁵¹ Erik Hobsbawm, "Mass-producing traditions: Europe, 1830-1914", in *The invention of tradition*, eds. Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983), 263-307.

⁵² Deringil, *The well-protected domains: Ideology and the legitimation of power in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1909* (London, I.B. Tauris, 1998); Haris Exertzoglou, "The cultural uses of consumption: Negotiating class, gender, and nation in the Ottoman urban centers during the 19th century", in *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 35, 1 (2003), 77-

indigenous, and in this case Ottoman, elites can be easily understood. Their economic and military advantage allowed Europeans to elevate their own social and cultural model to a “standard of civilisation” of universal application.⁵³ Equal treatment was reserved for those who could approach these standards. As such, exhibiting modernist credentials and an affinity to reform was essential for the prestige and territorial sovereignty of the Ottoman state. It also proved instrumental in preserving the predominant position of the empire’s commercial elites within the trans-regional networks that sustained their activities. Both groups soon became confident enough with European culture and discursive strategies so as to cultivate contacts to European diplomats, journalists and opinion makers, and often defend their own status by using the lens of modernity in reverse, to pass judgement on the actions of Europeans.⁵⁴

The dominant position of state and civil society elites within late Ottoman society was certainly underscored by their role in the process of production. Both groups were at the forefront of the capitalist transformation of the Ottoman economy, and had large stakes in commercial and banking activity, as well as urban and agricultural properties. Class boundaries, however, can be understood as going beyond economic difference and access to the means of production.⁵⁵ They are also closely connected to the politics of hegemony – the articulation of a set of political demands accepted as representative of the whole of society even by non-elite groups.⁵⁶ At the same time, access to cultural capital, increasingly equated with exposure to Western European cultural tropes, was essential for social upward mobility. Keith David Watenpough has described how a new group of local notables

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⁵³ Richard Horowitz, “International law and state transformation in Siam, China and the Ottoman Empire in the nineteenth century”, *Journal of World History* 15, 4 (December 2004), 452-453.

⁵⁴ Elli Skopetea, *I Dysi tis Anatonis: Eikones apo to telos tis Othomanikis Aftokratourias* [The West of the East: Images from the End of the Ottoman Empire] (Athens: Gnosi, 1992); Fuhrmann, "Vagrants, prostitutes and Bosnians: Making and unmaking European supremacy in Ottoman Southeastern Europe", in *Conflicting Loyalties in the Balkans. The Great Powers, the Ottoman Empire and Nation-Building*, eds. Hannes Grandits, Nathalie Clayer and Robert Pichler (London: I.B Tauris, 2011), 15-46.

⁵⁵ For the debates surrounding class within contemporary historiography, as well as for a proposal of a new approach to the concept, see Geoff Eley and Keith Neild, *The future of class in history: What's left of the social?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007).

⁵⁶ My understanding of class is informed largely by the non-essentialistic model suggested by E. Laclau and Ch. Mouffe in their *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics*, London: Verso, 1985.

emerged in Ottoman Aleppo at the turn of the nineteenth century, structured around ‘modern’ cultural and political practices.⁵⁷ Watenpough refers to the Syrian city’s “middle classes,” to address the relatively humble origins of many of these individuals. I prefer the term elites, to convey the predominance of Salonica’s upper class in the economic, political and cultural spheres, as well as refer to their emergence from within the networks that had sustained the city’s administration and merchant class before the period under consideration.

It is important not to overstate the tensions between a modernising Ottoman elite and conservative non-elite groups. Such an approach would threaten to essentialise this distinction exactly in a period where group boundaries were blurred. Opportunities for industrial workers and clerks gave a growing number of people access to the ‘modern’ sector of the economy, as well as to practices and models of behaviour associated with upward social mobility.⁵⁸ At the other end of the spectrum, the milieu of itinerant workers, sailors, soldiers and prostitutes acted as agents of a vernacular modernity that emerged throughout the ports of the region.⁵⁹ Non-elite dissatisfaction was articulated not only through the time-honoured practice of appealing for justice to a paternalist state, but also through modern idioms of dissent: nationalism and socialism, and appropriate means of communication.⁶⁰

These insights inform the underlying assumptions of this dissertation, as well as its structure and argument. To summarise: In a process that began roughly at the turn of nineteenth century, the Eastern Mediterranean came into the economic orbit of Western Europe. Increasingly, the economic predominance of the European was followed by the imposition of new social and cultural forms and military encroachment, despite the efforts of local states to resist by imitating European models of organisation in reforming their militaries and administrations. The port-cities of the regions, which acted as the primary nodes in the foreign trade and presence, emerged as the main sites, where these contrarian influences played out.

⁵⁷ Keith David Watenpough, *Being modern in the Middle East: Revolution, nationalism, colonialism, and the Arab middle-class* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2006), 20-21.

⁵⁸ For similar criticisms, see Sakrar.

⁵⁹ Edhem Eldem, “The undesirables of Smyrna, 1926,” *Mediterranean Historical Review* 24, 2 (2009), 223-227.

⁶⁰ Paul Dumont, “A Jewish, Socialist, and Ottoman organization: the Workers’ Federation of Salonica”, in *Socialism and Nationalism in the Ottoman Empire, 1876-1921*, eds. Mete Tunçay and Erich J. Zürcher (New York: British Academic Press, 1994), 49-75; Basil C. Gounaris, “Social Cleavages and National ‘Awakening’ in Ottoman Macedonia”, *East European Quarterly*, 29 (1995), 409-426.

Their cityscapes were transformed by the novel social and economic relations. Urban space became the crucible where state and society, and the different classes that comprised the latter, constituted themselves as distinct (though often overlapping) groups, performed their mutating roles and renegotiated their boundaries. I maintain that the history of the production and evolution of these spaces, and their interplay with local society, can offer important insights to the history not only of the port-cities themselves, but also of their hinterlands and of the states and societies of the region. My understanding of space draws heavily from the conceptualisation of Henri Lefebvre and those that followed up on his works. Though a direct engagement and a thorough critique of this intellectual tradition lie beyond the scope of this study, it nonetheless provides me with a complete conceptual framework, through which to view the primary material I have consulted.

The State, Local Elites and Urban Space in Late Ottoman Salonica: Sources Employed, and the Outline of the Dissertation

Besides the rich literature on late Ottoman Salonica, part of which has been already addressed in this introduction, this dissertation is based on a number of primary sources, which will hopefully offer balanced insight on its subject. In order to contribute to the rich literature on the city, which so far has largely focused on European and Greek sources, much importance is given to the study of archival material produced by the Ottoman central bureaucracy. The Prime Ministry Archives (*Başbakanlık Arşivleri*) in Istanbul hold a wealth of information, mainly comprised of the administrative correspondence between the competent departments and ministries, as well as between the imperial centre and its local representatives in Salonica. These materials reveal the view from Istanbul, but go beyond that. They also document reports from provincial and municipal officials and individual petitions, and frequently contain annexed contracts of projects or maps of Salonica. Besides the collections of the Grand Vizierate (*Bâb-ı Âlî Evrak Odası*) and the Yıldız Palace, most of the material was drawn from the Council of State (*Şura-ı Devlet*), the ministries of the Interior (*Dahiliye*), of Commerce and Public Works (*Ticaret ve Nafia*), and the Privy Purse (*Hazine-i Hassa*), as well as the General Inspectorate of Macedonia (*Teftişat-ı Rumeli Evrakı*). A number of Ottoman maps, blueprints and

sketches, most of which are unpublished, will offer evidence on the process of Salonica's transformation.

More information was gained from recourse to the archives produced by the local administration in Salonica. The provincial yearbooks (*salnames*) offer important statistical information and contain clues on local bureaucracy and notable individuals of the city. The Historical Archive of Macedonia (*Istoriko Archeio Makedonias*) in Salonica contains a full series of Ottoman land registers (*yoklama, emlâk-ı daimî, defter-i hakkani*) for the city and the surrounding area, as well as the tax registers (*esas defterleri*) of 1906-1907. This invaluable material offers insight in patterns of property ownership, strategies of property acquisition, the value of residential and commercial properties, and the evolution of these measures over a forty year period. Unfortunately, the archives of the municipality itself appear lost and the material from the provincial administration that can be found in the Salonica archives only covers a very short period of time. Parts and fragments from these sources are thankfully duplicated in the central Ottoman archives.

Recourse to the local press has helped with the reconstruction of the perspective of Salonica's inhabitants, as well as of the city's day-to-day function. For reasons of economy, I have restricted my research to two Greek newspapers, *Faros*, which covers the 1880s and early 1890s, *Alitheia*, which started its circulation in 1905 and continued until the end of the period, and *Makedonia*, first published in 1911. The *Journal de Salonique*, a French paper that carried great influence among the local Jewish community, has been extensively cited in other studies, to which reference will be made.

The use of European sources and diplomatic correspondence will supplement these sources. The archives of the British Foreign Office include the diplomatic correspondence between the consulate of Salonica, the Istanbul embassy and London. This correspondence contains information on the principal political and economic developments in the city from the mid-nineteenth century onward, though more mundane matters like commercial representation, the correspondence to the Ottoman authorities, and information on particular individuals are largely absent. This absence is partially balanced through recourse to the Political Archive of the German Foreign Service (*Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes*), which despite its name records much from the non-official correspondence of the consulate.

In all, sources that have been consulted cover most of the variety of local and European languages that were being spoken or read in late Ottoman Salonica. The unfortunate exception is Judeospanish, that Spanish dialect of the Sephardic diaspora, with its traces of Medieval Castilian and its loans from Turkish and Greek, written in the Rashi script and widely used by the city's Jewish inhabitants, and also by their neighbours. The literature on the Jewry of Salonica is extensive, and in the late Ottoman period there is an increasing amount of information on the Jews of the city, as well as testimonies produced by them, in other languages, primarily French. The wealth of late Ottoman popular literature, however, with its plays and its boulevard songs, unfortunately remains outside the scope of this study.

This study is divided into five chapters, which expand on the issues that have been raised so far. Chapter 1 examines the question of agency. The emergence of the two main elite groups that would play an instrumental role in developments in Salonica, namely the local Ottoman administration and the commercial elites of the city, constitutes the focal point of the chapter. Their emergence is placed within the two complimentary processes that produced them: the Ottoman military and administrative reforms known as the *Tanzimat* and the rapid increase in the commerce of Salonica following the integration of the city and its region to global economic networks. Attention is given to the spaces of encounter between the two groups, and the way these evolved: spaces of representation, like the provincial council and the municipal council of the city; and the spaces connected to the market, like the Customs Office and the Chamber of Commerce.

Between the contingencies of state policies, elite aspirations and the activities of the intermediary bodies described above, the cityscape of late Ottoman Salonica witnessed a period of radical transformation. This process is detailed in Chapter 2. Starting with the demolition of the coastal walls in 1870 and the subsequent construction of the quay, the city experienced rapid expansion, the repositioning of streets, buildings and services provided within the pre-existing urban quarters, and the construction of new spaces for residence, commerce and leisure. This process would accelerate during the 1890s, with the expansion of the city beyond its historical boundaries and the reconstruction of large parts of the city centre after the devastating fire of September 1890. The logic of spatial expansion and transformation was dictated by successive planning ordinances that were drafted in Istanbul, but it was the priorities of the local elites that dictated the manner of their

application in Salonica. Space was rapidly becoming commodified and the market in urban and suburban real estate would absorb significant amounts of the profits from commerce, banking and industry.

During the period in question, Salonica was graced with the construction of a number of large-scale public projects, which had a deep impact both on the economic potential of the city and on the functioning of urban space, and form the subject of Chapter 3. The completion of the railway connection to Serbia and Central Europe in the late 1880s and the further construction of railroads to Manastir (Bitola) and Istanbul in by the mid-1890s, made Salonica a transportation and communication hub in the Ottoman Balkans. The construction of new harbour facilities, which began in 1897, cemented the position of the city as the major port and the undisputed economic centre of the region. At about the same period, a number of lesser projects (tram, water provision, gas lighting and electrification) introduced a wholly different way to perceive space and organise time for the inhabitants of the city. The railroad and the port were major technical undertakings, and their planning, construction and eventual operation were a matter of negotiation between the Ottoman government, the European financiers that were awarded the concessions and bought stock in the resulting companies, and the diplomatic missions that represented them. Local commercial elites heartily supported these projects, seeing in them as a means to dominate regional trade. They were, however, soon disenchanted with the dues imposed on trade by the rail and port companies, and their constant attempts to secure better terms played an important role in their group cohesion. The smaller scale of the other projects, on the other hand, allowed for the implication of local actors. Their concessions were initially awarded locally and, although they were invariably sold to European investors, local businessmen had a strong presence in the resulting joint-stock companies.

The production of new spaces in the city was accompanied by the emergence of new practices and standards of behaviour, which form the topic of Chapter 4. Improved transportation had placed Salonica firmly within the wider world, and 'modern' norms and models were readily available for its elite citizens. They proceeded to shape public spaces in the urban environment that would reflect their civic spirit and cultural refinement. The lower classes of the city were largely barred from these developments. They had access, however, to a vernacular culture that was emerging throughout the region as a result of the contact between European and

indigenous elements. The two classes, and the two cultural milieus, coexisted in the open spaces that were emerging in the city during this period: the quay, the public parks, the cafés and theatres. Physical proximity violated social and cultural boundaries and made the public spaces of the city increasingly dangerous in the eyes of the elites.

The new urban spaces in late Ottoman Salonica, public and domestic, commercial and social, were instrumental in the emergence of an elite alliance between the local administration and the commercial bourgeoisie of the city which determined the development of the city during the late Ottoman period. The contradictions, however, inherent in the economic and social underpinnings of these groups would soon become uncontainable and, as recounted in Chapter 5, the Ottoman city would enter a period of increased strife. The unequal development of the region, which favoured Salonica at the expense of the towns of the interior, together with the strains released on agricultural economy by its commercialisation, would become cause for growing instability in the countryside. In the early twentieth century, tensions would erupt into open ethnic conflict, where local peasants, Greek and Bulgarian bands and Ottoman regular and irregular troops would wage a bloody war against each other. Violence not only threatened the commercial networks that sustained the port-city, but occasionally spilled over into Salonica itself. In growing frustration with the regime's inability to restore order, a group of officers stationed in Salonica and other Macedonian towns rose in revolt in July 1908 and, as events spiraled beyond control, the sultan was forced to concede a return to constitutional rule. The success of the 1908 Young Revolution signaled the peak of Salonica as an Ottoman city, with all classes and ethnic groups placing their hopes in the restored constitution. The demise of Hamidian autocracy, however, led to an explosive expansion of public space, which in turn brought the old consensus under question. Urban space became a site of conflict, as the victorious revolutionaries adopted an increasingly nationalist position, non-elite groups began asserting their own position in the city, and the cohesion of the embattled elites collapsed.

The City of Salonica and its Elites: Ottoman Officialdom and the Local Bourgeoisie

Chapter One

In February 1893 Namzizâde Hamdi Bey, previously a municipal councillor in Salonica, was selected as the head (*reis*) of the council. He replaced *müfti* İbrahim Namık Bey, who had resigned from his post.¹ Hamdi Bey came from an influential family of Yakubi *dönme* and had made a fortune in the tobacco trade with Europe; he later expanded his operations into banking and acquired significant landed property in the city and the surrounding countryside.² His commercial network spread to several European cities, and he maintained especially strong contacts with Belgium, where he often visited. At the same time, Hamdi Bey had been active in local politics, serving in a variety of posts, including the Landed Property Registration Commission in Salonica (*Tahrir-i Emlâk Komisyonu*) that was set up by the provincial authorities, in order to estimate the value of the urban property in the city.³ Throughout his career, Hamdi Bey had received multiple decorations from the sultan and was recognised in Istanbul as one of the leading notables of the city.⁴ In the late 1880s he was awarded a number of concessions, including the construction and operation of a tram line in Salonica and the provision of the city with running water.⁵ By the time of his appointment, Hamdi Bey had already transferred the contracts to Belgian companies, and the projects had just been completed. As head of the municipal council (a post he apparently held up until his death in 1902), Hamdi Bey utilised all his diverse contacts towards the renovation of the city;

¹ *Faros* 1664, March 1, 1893.

² Baer, *The Dönme*, 88-89.

³ Yerolympos. *Metaxy Anatonlis kai Dysis*, 104-105, 175, 235.

⁴ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XIV [XIII], 1313 [1895], 158-159.

⁵ BOA, İ.MMS 106/4553, 6 Ağustos [1]305 [August 18, 1889].

despite his long absences from his post,⁶ he was remembered by his contemporaries as one of the prime renovators of the city.⁷

The esteemed career of Hamdi Bey transcended the boundaries between the two most prominent groups in the city, as it combined the functions of an Ottoman official with that of an established businessman. Both groups had emerged from the social and economic developments of the mid-nineteenth century. From the 1830s onwards, the Ottoman Empire experimented with a variety of new administrative structures, selectively modelled after practices in use in Western Europe, in an attempt to increase bureaucratic efficiency and central control over its territories. The resulting reforms expanded the scope and number of Ottoman civil servants to an unprecedented scale. At about the same time, the Ottoman economy was being dragged into the orbit of a world economic system that revolved around Western Europe. Buoyed by new productive and commercial practices and a sense of cultural and military superiority, European traders opened the Ottoman markets to exploitation. The steady increase in the empire's import and export trade offered in turn ample opportunities to the diverse Ottoman commercial classes and brought prosperity to ports like Salonica. The indigenous traders would soon master the sophisticated commercial and financial tools developed in Europe and set up and control networks of their own, connecting Ottoman consumers (and raw materials) to European manufacturers.

Because of certain characteristics of Ottoman society, the relationship between these two groups can be simultaneously regarded as both symbiotic and bifurcated. Both Ottoman officials and traders, emerged at about the same time and, in a sense made each other possible. The relative stability provided by an expansive Ottoman state was essential for maintaining the commercial routes and money flows that tied the Ottoman countryside to the port cities. On the other hand, the empire's fiscal situation remained dire throughout the period in question, and the sums collected by taxing the growing commercial traffic – and the concurrent activities of traders and dependents – were absolutely essential for the continuation of the Ottoman reform

⁶ The provincial yearbooks (*salname*) of 1895 and 1897 respectively mention Kerim Efendi and Hasan Hüsnü Efendi as deputy heads of the council (*vekil*). Hamdi Bey reappears in the records of the following yearbook (1900). See *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XIV [XIII – the enumeration of the yearbooks skips issue III, which was never published], [1895], 78; XV [XIV], [1897], 177.

⁷ Baer, "Globalization, cosmopolitanism and the Dönme in Ottoman Salonica and Turkish Istanbul," *Journal of World History* 18, 2 (2007), 152-153.

project. A number of initiatives taken were in fact aimed at supporting exactly the spread of trade and market relations, under state supervision, in recognition of the need to make the reforms self-financed and thus sustainable. At the same time, by the late 19th century the two groups would have developed significantly different ethnic compositions. Ottoman Greeks, Armenians and Jews enjoyed closer relations to European traders who were operating in the empire. They could also count on the networks established between the Western and Eastern Mediterranean ports, thanks to the presence of large diasporic communities. They were therefore overrepresented in the international trade of the empire. Conversely, their Muslim competitors were edged out and were only present in domestic commerce.⁸ On the other hand, despite the declarations of equality for all Ottoman subjects that were integral to the reforms, Ottoman Muslims retained their near monopoly of the state apparatus – either because of long-standing administrative bias, or perhaps because the state recognised the need to offer employment to groups that would otherwise have difficulty competing in the commercial professions.

This contrast would lead to tensions between the two groups throughout the period under study. It must be noted, however, that in the period before 1908 the consensual aspect of the relationship between the bureaucracy and the local bourgeoisie was much more pronounced than any underlying tensions. Waging a “war of positions” in Gramscian parlance, the merchant elites of Salonica would consciously accept a politically subservient role, in exchange for autonomy in the economic sphere – an autonomy guaranteed by the unequal treaties the empire had signed with the foreign powers and that defined the terms of foreign trade. The two groups shared the same set of values, that of an ever-progressing Ottoman modernisation, which would eventually secure economic prosperity and equal rights to all subjects of the sultan. They employed the respective discourse in the urban spaces they shared: that of the marketplace, where commercial transactions were initiated and then regulated; and that of the mixed institutions that were set up by the Ottoman state, in order to provide an outlet for the representation for the local public (or at least its most notable members).

The Emergence of a New State Elite: The Ottoman Provincial Officialdom

⁸ Note that the *dönme* community of Salonica retained their prominent role in local commerce throughout the period.

From roughly the second third of the nineteenth century onward, the Ottoman Empire embarked on a number of reforms that would fundamentally alter its military organisation, its legal system, its administrative structure and fiscal institutions. These reforms are widely known as the *Tanzimat*, the reorderings, and are conventionally dated between the imperial edict of 1839 (the *Hatt-ı şerif* of Gülhane) and the abortive period of constitutional rule in 1876-1877.⁹ This periodisation has been often extended, to include both the earlier reforms of Sultan Mahmud II (1808-1839) and the later policies of Sultan Abdülhamid II (1876-1909). The Ottoman reforms trace their origins to the turbulent late 1700s. The abysmal performance of the Ottoman forces in all major confrontations in that period, as well as the marked inability of the state to guarantee law and order on the domestic front, led a growing number of Ottoman functionaries to the conclusion that certain changes were necessary, if the empire was to compete politically and militarily with the European powers. The reforms were originally oriented towards the military, but their scope soon expanded as a result of external pressures, but also of a contingent logic. Military reorganisation was costly and required large expenses from an already cash stripped imperial treasury, making the optimisation of tax collection imperative. At the same time, it also depended on the adoption of European practices and innovations on a large scale: from drilling and uniforms to the teaching of the scientific principles that governed field medicine and military engineering.¹⁰ A professional diplomatic corps would be based in Europe to guard the peace, while the military was reorganising, securing alliances and bringing in information on all matters deemed relevant.

Ultimately, the reforms were aimed at preserving the Ottoman Empire as a Muslim Great Power and thus perpetuate the dominance of its state elites. The Ottoman reformist statesmen attempted to create spaces necessary for manoeuvring between external pressure and internal demands. The “fine-tuning” of the Ottoman segments, a negotiation of sorts between the state and the people, would allow the

⁹ Roderic H. Davison, "Tanzīmāt.", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 201-209. See also Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire, 1856-1876* (New York: Gordion Press, 1973).

¹⁰ On the eighteenth century crisis of the Ottoman military and its subsequent reorganisation, see Virginia Aksan, *The Ottoman wars, 1700-1870: an empire besieged* (Harlow: Pearson/Longman, 2007).

former to implement its policies on an unprecedented scale.¹¹ This also included the mobilisation of the empire's non-Muslim populations, their resources and their commercial and political ties to the West. The gradual lifting of symbolic and legal restrictions on their activities was seen as a way to neutralise European influence and the allure of nationalist movements among the Ottoman Christian and Jewish subjects.¹² The edict of 1839 formally declared the legal equality of all Ottoman subjects, and related provisions were also included in the reform edict (*Islahat fermanı*) of 1856.¹³

The need for ever-greater centralisation, taking as models their traditional Austrian and Russian enemies, but also Napoleonic France, would loom large in the deliberations of Ottoman statesmen in this period. Even if the reformed Ottoman army was far from being considered a competent force,¹⁴ it was still very successful at imposing the will of Istanbul on all those groups in Istanbul and the provinces that had up to that point been virtually autonomous. A series of military campaigns in the 1810s and 1820s directed against nomadic tribes and provincial notables largely restored the control of the imperial centre over the European and Anatolian provinces. The Janissary corps, whose opposition to the reforms had led to the overthrow and eventual execution of Sultan Selim III as late as in 1807, was violently disbanded in 1826 along with their allies in the *Bektaşî* order, and the urban guilds that were connected to them saw their prerogatives drastically curtailed.¹⁵ In their place emerged an expanding bureaucratic apparatus, entrusted to carry out all functions that had before been the privilege of non-state actors. The old scribal schools that were affiliated to different elite households and produced the small number of clerks that were necessary to run the empire were replaced by a system of

¹¹ Deringil, *The Well-Protected Domains*, 3-4, 10.

¹² The clothing restrictions that had been imposed on Ottoman non-Muslims were finally lifted in 1829 and the fez was introduced as a marker of common Ottoman identity. Quataert, "Clothing Laws, State and Society in the Ottoman Empire 1720-1829," *International Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* 29, 3 (1997), 412-414.

¹³ Masami Arai, "An Imagined Nation: the Idea of the Ottoman Nation as a Key to Modern Ottoman History", *Orient: Report of the Society for Near Eastern Studies in Japan*, 27 (1991), 1-11.

¹⁴ As demonstrated by its defeat in the Russian war of 1828-29, and the two campaigns against Egypt in the following decade.

¹⁵ M. Şükrü Hanioglu, *A brief history of the late Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, New Jersey and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2008), 60-61.

ministries with defined areas of oversight. Existing structures of training, jurisdiction and promotion were standardised and formalised.¹⁶

Given the diverse social and economic conditions across different regions of the empire, as well as the high cost of the introduction of wide-ranging reforms, the spread of reforms from Istanbul to the provinces was a slow and gradual process. The formula usually followed was to draft a specific ordinance, try it first in Istanbul and in one of the core provinces of the empire, where the writ of the central government was large, and only when the returns were deemed satisfactory, extend its application to the provinces. Even then, the faithful interpretation of policies coming in from Istanbul depended on the level of activity shown by the local governance and any resistance by local vested interests in their defence of the status-quo. Knowing well that any unrest could open the way for foreign intervention into Ottoman domestic matters, the government would adopt a combination of soft and hard policies to expand its control on the provincial level. Its preferred method was to incorporate the local elites into the new administrative order, while at the same time using force to subdue rebellious elements.

These tasks required a significant increase in the numbers serving in and resources given to provincial administration, as well as its total restructure. In the 1840s and 1850s, the Ottoman government was preoccupied with reforming the central administration. The publication of the Edict of 1856, however, exacerbated the underlying tensions between Muslims and non-Muslim, anti- and pro-reform groups. A number of violent incidents linked to the implementation of the new reformist ordinances (revolt in Niş in 1859; armed conflict in Lebanon in 1859-1860; the massacre of Christians in Damascus in 1860) convinced the Porte to expedite the reorganisation of provincial administration. A new generation of statesmen trained in the liberal environment of early *Tanzimat* Istanbul were despatched to certain key provinces with a wide mandate for reform.¹⁷ In 1861 the Balkan provinces (*eyalets*)

¹⁶ For the eighteenth century bureaucratic elites, the *kalemiye*, see Norman Itzkowitz, "Eighteenth century Ottoman realities," *Studia Islamica* 16 (1962), 73-94. The most detailed works on Ottoman administrative reform from the perspective of the centre are Carter Findley's *Bureaucratic reform in the Ottoman Empire: The Sublime Porte, 1789-1922* (Princeton and Guildford: Princeton University Press, 1980) and *Ottoman civil officialdom: a social history* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989).

¹⁷ Examples include Ali Rıza Paşa of Tripoli in Libya and, somewhat later, Ahmed Vefik Paşa in Bursa. See Nora Lafi, *Une ville du Maghreb entre ancien régime et réformes Ottomans* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002), 8ff;



[Map 1] The province of Salonica and the principal urban centres of the region.
Source: BOA, HRT.H 325/1.

of Niş, Vidin and Silistre were united into the model province (*vilayet*) of the Danube (Tuna), and Midhat Paşa was given the post of provincial governor-general (*vali*). In 1864, the province received an organic law, which defined the jurisdiction of the different bureaucratic functionaries, and which stipulated its administrative division into districts (*sancaks*), counties (*kazas*) and communes (*nahiyes*).¹⁸ By the end of his tenure, Midhat Paşa had managed not only to quell unrest in the restive region by placating the Serbian and Bulgarian Christians, but also to take the necessary actions to uplift the province's economy and expand its infrastructure. The impression of his success was so great in Istanbul that the organic law of the Tuna province was made into the standard for all imperial provinces and was codified into law in 1867.¹⁹ The new province of Salonica [See Map 1] included the central,

¹⁸ İlber Ortaylı, *Tanzimat'tan sonra mahallî idareler (1840-1878)* [Local administrations after the Tanzimat, 1840-1878] (Ankara: Sevinç Matbaası, 1974), 39-42. 48-49.

¹⁹ Midhat Paşa continued his illustrious career in 'difficult' postings throughout the empire. A

southern and eastern parts of Macedonia. It was bordered by the provinces of Manastır to the west, Kosova to the north, and Edirne to the east, and it was divided into three districts: Salonica, Siroz, and Drama.

The provincial law of 1864/7, as amended in 1871, defined the role and the jurisdiction of the provincial bureaucracy. The focus lay in setting up a structure that could be uniformly applied throughout the empire, and that would allow for the carrying out of all necessary administrative functions on the local level. A clear hierarchy was defined, with the top of the local officialdom constituted by the governor-general, the treasurer of the province (*defterdâr*), the head of official correspondence (*mektupçu* or *mektubi-yi kalemî*), the head judge (*naib*) and chair of the appeals court of the province, representing the judicial corps, and the deputy (*mu'avin*) governor, who would often be the head official (*mütessarif*) of the province's central *sancak*. Each of these posts had a separate scribal section, which was responsible for carrying out and reporting on the day-to-day function of their office. A number of inspectors (*müfettiş*) were to assess and report on how efficient the different functions of the administration worked.

The law reflected the ambiguity of the imperial government towards provincial administration. On one hand, provincial government needed to be given enough powers to function effectively and impose its will on any special interests on the local level. On the other hand, allowing provincial officials too much leeway posed the risk that they might form their own local bases of power. This would in turn defeat the whole purpose of the exercise, which was to reimpose the will of the centre on the imperial periphery. The imperfect solution that was found was to give wide jurisdiction to the different governors-general, but curtail their powers by making sure all important posting decisions were made in Istanbul,²⁰ and by keeping the tenures of appointments very short, less than a year and a half on average.²¹ It

leader for the liberal faction within the bureaucracy, he was instrumental in the deposition of Sultan Abdülaziz in 1876 and the drafting of the Ottoman constitution. Upon the abrogation of the constitution in 1878, Abdülhamid exiled Midhat Paşa to Yemen, where he soon died in mysterious circumstances. He had been posted in Salonica in late 1873, but was transferred after a few months. Nonetheless, his brief tenure remained a matter of pride to the locals, who in later narratives tended to exaggerate his contributions to the city. Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dýsis*, 155.

²⁰ George Young, *Corps de Droit Ottoman: Recueil des codes, lois, règlements, ordonnances et actes les plus importants du droit intérieur, et d'études sur lois coutumier de l'Empire Ottomane, vol. I* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1905), 51ff.

²¹ Between 1836 and 1905, there were 51 recorded changes of governor in the province of Salonica, with four paşas being posted twice and one returning for a third tenure. *Salname-i*

must also be noted that the career ‘pilgrimage’ of these functionaries took them to better or worse posts throughout the empire, as they gained or lost favour with their superiors.²²

As the scope of provincial administration expanded, a number of different posts and commissions were formed to take over the new, specialised tasks. One of the first such bodies in Salonica was entrusted with the setting up and the maintenance of the quarantine in the local harbour.²³ The adoption of new Commercial, Penal and Land Codes in the 1850s, and the codification of *hanefi* Islamic civil law (the *mecelle*) coincided with the introduction of a system of secular courts (*nizamiye*), which would operate in parallel to the Islamic (*şeriat*) courts.²⁴ The Director of Foreign Affairs (*umur-i ecnebiye müdürü*) was to represent the Ottoman administration to the foreign consulates, and resolve any issues arising between the state and citizens with foreign citizenship in provinces like Salonica that had an important foreign presence.²⁵ The Commission of Mines and Forests and the Directorate of Imperial Properties (*emlak-ı şahane idaresi*) were set up for the optimal exploitation of the resources that belonged to the state and the sultan’s Privy Purse.²⁶ Different commissions would oversee the operation and expansion of schools in the province, the construction of public projects, the operation of the telegraph and the post office.²⁷ The Bank of Agriculture was designed to give access

vilayet-i Selânik VVIII [XVII], 1322 [1905], 280-281. The other important posts also show a high turnover: There were 16 *naibs* between 1868 and 1898, 23 *defterdars* between 1868 and 1901, and 15 *mektubcus* between 1868 and 1900. Ibid., 281-283.

²² This is true for the governors as well as their subordinates. In September 1881, Mustafa Bey and Derviş Bey, chief judges in the penal courts of Salonica and Manastır [Bitola], exchanged posts. The following year, Ismail Bey, who had served as the Ottoman ambassador in Tehran, and Nimallah Efendi, the former public prosecutor in İşkodra (Shkoder) were appointed director and chief inspector of public education for the province of Salonica. *Faros* 600, September 12 [24], 1881 and 681, June 26 [July 8], 1882.

²³ Gülay Tulasoğlu, “‘Humble efforts in search for reform’: consuls, pashas, and quarantine in early-Tanzimat Salonica”, in *Well-connected domains: Towards an entangled Ottoman history*, eds. Tulasoğlu et al. (forthcoming).

²⁴ Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 57-58; Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 255-256.

²⁵ Note that the director of the bureau was directly appointed by the Foreign Ministry. Findley, *Bureaucratic reform*, 189.

²⁶ The latter office, directed for most of the period by Krikor Paşalyan Efendi, was supported by the Commission for Imperial Properties (*emlak-ı hümayun komisyonu*). See *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* X [IX], 1307 [1890], 114.

²⁷ As an example, the Public Works Commission (*Umur-ı Nafia Komisyonu*) for the year 1313 [1895] was chosen by the governor-general himself, its members comprised of Osman Ali Efendi. Also sitting in the provincial council, Horasan Efendi, the long serving chief engineer of the province, the inspector of agriculture, Ahmed Üzümcüzâde, a member of the Chamber of Commerce, Homroz Efendi, the commissioner for the Salonica branch of the Oriental Railways, Eyüb Sabri Efendi, who was a clerk at the Agricultural Bank branch in

to credit to the agricultural sector and thus increase its productivity.²⁸ A technical committee (*hendise heyeti*) was formed to oversee the construction of public buildings, as well as the implementation of the legislation that was now regulating construction and town planning.²⁹

The new provincial administration would pay serious attention to making its achievements known to the local population. Government printing presses were set up in many provincial centres and, following the example of the central ministries, the different *vilayets* started printing their own yearbooks.³⁰ Apart from containing a detailed calendar of the year, information on general history and the Ottoman dynasty, the names of Ottoman officials and their decorations, these publications (*salnames*) would feature detailed lists of local officials, general descriptions of the provincial capital and the geographical features of the regions, as well as lists upon lists of the province's notable citizens: religious leaders, merchants, professionals. More day-to-day information would be provided by an official gazette: From 1869 onwards, the province of Salonica published a weekly newspaper called *Selânik* in four different editions – in Ottoman Turkish, Greek, Bulgarian and Judeo-Spanish. The publication of other newspapers was also allowed, but the Press Office of the province exercised a tight control on submitted applications and an even tighter censorship on the content of circulating papers and the material that was printed in the private presses that operated in the area.³¹

Official publications were not the only way that provincial officials attempted to reach out to local groups. Already from the onset of the reform period, the introduction of local councils with an advisory role at the provincial level signalled

the city, and Stefanos Tattis, in his capacity as member of the municipal council. *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XIV [XIII], 1313 [1895], 54-56.

²⁸ By 1910, the *Ziraat Bankası* operated 480 agencies across the Ottoman Empire, extending up to 5.5 million *liras* in loans to 1.2 million cultivators. Christos Hadjiiosif, "Issues of management control and sovereignty in transnational banking in the Eastern Mediterranean before the First World War," in *Modern banking in the Balkans and Western-European capital in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries*, ed. Kostas P. Kostis (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999), 175.

²⁹ The first major task of the Salonica Public Works committee would be the demolition of the coastal walls and the construction of the quay.

³⁰ Their publication was supposed to be annual, but this rule was rarely followed. Between 1870 and 1907, the province of Salonica published 19 such yearbooks.

³¹ Manolis Kandylakis, *Efimeridografia tis Thessalonikis. Symvoli stin istoria tou typoy, t. I: Tourkokratia* [Gazeteering in Thessaloniki. A contribution to the history of the press, vol. I: Turkish rule] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1998), 37. It is not clear whether each edition was edited separately or they were all translated from the Ottoman original.

the limited recognition of the principle of representation in local administration.³² The councils (*meclis-i muhassıl* or tax-collecting council) were specifically tied to the taxation reforms of the central government, namely the replacement of tax-farming (the *iltizâm/malikâne* system) with direct collection of the sums owed by state functionaries.³³ By distributing the tax burden equally throughout the province, the councils were supposed to secure the co-option of the local elites into the new system. In reality, the reforms were soon withdrawn in the face of the inefficiency of the new tax-collecting mechanisms and strong resistance from the former tax-farmers, who often dominated the councils.³⁴

Despite the initial setbacks, the reformed provincial legislation of the 1860s made sure that there would be an element of local participation in the newly shaped structures. The new laws called for the creation of semi-elected councils (*meclis-i idare*) at the level of the province, the district and the county.³⁵ The councils were chaired by the governor-general (or the respective district governors) and included a number of *ex officio* members (*aza-i tabbiiye*). Initially, in the case of the province of Salonica,³⁶ these were the head inspector, the treasurer, the *mektupçu* and the director of foreign affairs.³⁷ After the amendments of 1871 on the Provincial Law, their number increased to include the religious heads of the Muslim, the Greek Orthodox and the Jewish communities. By 1890, the composition of these members had been settled into the treasurer, the *mektupçu*, the deputy governor, the head judge of Salonica and the three religious leaders.³⁸ They were accompanied by four elected members (*aza-i müntahabe*), two Muslims and two non-Muslims.³⁹ The jurisdiction of the councils included advising the administration in matters of policy, approving

³² Davison, *Reform in the Ottoman Empire*, 47-49.

³³ Şevket Pamuk, *The Ottoman Empire and European capitalism, 1820-1913: trade, investment and production* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 89; Stanford J. Shaw and Ezel Kural Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and modern Turkey, vol. II: Reform, revolution and republic: the rise of modern Turkey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 95-97.

³⁴ Ortaylı, 13-20.

³⁵ Young, *Droit Ottoman, vol. I*, 39 ff.

³⁶ The *salnames* only seldom offer information on the *sancak* and *kaza* administration of Salonica, so the composition of their respective councils will not be covered here.

³⁷ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik I*, 1287 [1870], 29 ; II, 1288 [1871], 30.

³⁸ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik X [IX]*, 1307 [1890], 100.

³⁹ Ortaylı, 59-60. In the case of Salonica, after 1871 this number would oscillate between four and six.

the decisions of the dependent municipalities and adjudicating on complaints against civil servants in their area of competence.⁴⁰

Not only were the elected councillors outnumbered by the appointed state functionaries, but their selection was also closely monitored by the state. Electoral rights were restricted to the literate, tax-paying male inhabitants of the province.⁴¹ While there were direct elections in the districts and counties, the provincial council was selected indirectly: a council of high state functionaries in the province would examine the list of voters and select six Muslim and six non-Muslims. The lists would then be forwarded to the different district councils, which would vote on their preferred candidates, then returned to the governor. He would select two out of the leading three names, and then forward his choices to Istanbul for verification.⁴² Sometimes, especially in the earlier years of the system's application, there was no recourse to the official rules in the selection process, and candidates would be selected or had their tenure renewed according to their customary position and seniority. In any case, political organising and any kind of propaganda on the part of the candidates remained strictly forbidden.⁴³ It is clear that the selection and operation of the local councils did not correspond to any concept of formal representation, but rather represented the recognition of the appointee's status within the locality and his community, and his strong connections to the Ottoman state.

The numerous restrictions imposed on their formation guaranteed that the local administrative councils would not develop into spaces of open political debate, let alone of challenging the central state. The Ottoman constitution of 1876 in article 108 formally recognised the principle of subsidiarity and invested local government with more authority. A new law on provincial administration passed in 1877, however, was vetoed by the sultan, and the prorogation of the constitution the following year put an end to all such discussion.⁴⁴ Nonetheless, the maintenance of a token element of public representation through the councils retained their importance

⁴⁰ Ortaylı, 56-57. Note that, though the 1867 law and the 1871 amendments called for the introduction of a specific ordinance that would define the jurisdiction of the councils, no such ordinance was produced.

⁴¹ Young, *Droit Ottoman*, vol. I, 44-47. Ortaylı states that the voters had to have 500 *liras* and the candidates 1000 *liras* worth of landed property. Ortaylı, 56-57. Compared to the legislation for the election of the other councils as cited by Young, this figure may be too high.

⁴² Ortaylı, 69-70.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 25-26.

⁴⁴ Findley, *Bureaucratic reform*, 251-252.

for all involved parties. The local elites received official recognition of their position within local society, and could claim they could represent if not their province, then at least their coreligionists. Even if mostly honorary, a position on the council could serve as a stepping stone for other appointments. Council members were frequently placed in one of the many economic committees operating in the province, from where they could advance their own interests. On the other hand, the Ottoman state secured a useful conduit for the airing of local grievances, and a space where those grievances could be negotiated and diffused. With Ottoman society experiencing rapid changes as a result of state reform and new economic trends, maintaining a good (and hierarchical) relation between the state and non-state elites was essential for both sides. Salonica during this period offers a representative case.

Developments in Salonica's Economy and the New Entrepreneurial Classes

The mid-nineteenth century marked a major transformation in the Ottoman economy. The early modern Ottoman state was based on a centrally regulated model, whose main aim was to maintain social stability and provide the palace, the army and the imperial capital with all necessary goods. State ownership of land and the prevalence of the guild system guaranteed state oversight over the production and circulation of goods. By the eighteenth century, the inability of the centre to project its authority over the Ottoman provinces allowed local groups to sidestep formal regulations and deal directly with foreign merchants.⁴⁵ In the 1830s, a series of commercial treaties signed between the Ottoman government and the Great Powers allowed the import of foreign merchandise at very low customs' dues. This formally signified the end of the state's interventionist policies and the adoption by the Ottoman government of the principles of free trade, and led to the decline of the Ottoman artisan and cottage producers. From the 1850s onward, the conjuncture of a number of factors led to the increase of the empire's foreign trade, as European traders attempted to tap the local production of foodstuffs, minerals and raw materials to cover the growing needs of their home countries. Ottoman agriculture gradually shifted from subsistence farming to the cultivation of commercial export

⁴⁵ Bruce McGowan, *Economic life in Ottoman Europe: taxation, trade and the struggle for land, 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 26-38.

crops – a process that reached coastal areas before it would extend to the hinterland; the economy would become increasingly monetised.

Ottoman merchants, who acted as intermediaries between European traders and the small-scale producers, profited greatly. They attempted to accentuate their wealth and status by adopting European trends and fashions, mirroring the processes, with which the Ottoman state was experimenting at the time. As the sector of the economy associated with foreign trade expanded in size and depth, there emerged new needs and new groups to cover them: commercial agents to represent European trading houses in the empire, insurance agencies to cover the risks inherent in commerce and shipping, banks and banking houses to provide businessmen with much needed credit, and a small army of clerks to staff the emerging commercial and financial businesses. The Ottoman authorities responded by expanding the state apparatus, in an attempt to organise and regulate the increasingly sophisticated economic trends in their domains – and increase state revenues by taxing the resulting profits.

Salonica stood at the forefront of the gradual incorporation of the Ottoman economy into the world economy. In the second half of the eighteenth century, its port became one of the most important of the empire, and the city supplied European traders with the products of its silk and wool manufactures, as well as the produce of the wider region. That period of economic growth stemmed the century-long decline of the local Jewish community, which could now depend on its monopoly on the trade of woollen cloth, as well as its connections to the Jewish commercial houses of Livorno and other Italian ports.⁴⁶ The city was also an important node in the domestic Ottoman commerce, as indicated by the local Muslim merchants and their profitable trade with Egypt.⁴⁷ The most successful group in the city, however, was perhaps the local Ottoman Greek merchants. They were favoured by a combination of their connections to the flourishing towns of the Macedonian interior and their small manufactures, the growing role of Greek shipping in the Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea, the growing number of diaspora communities in

⁴⁶ Minna Rozen, “Contest and rivalry in Mediterranean maritime commerce in the first half of the eighteenth century: the Jews of Salonika and the European presence,” *Revue des Etudes Juives* 147, 3 (1988), 309-352; Meron, *Jewish entrepreneurship in Salonica*, 22-23.

⁴⁷ Eyal Ginio, “A forgotten Balkan elite: The Muslim merchants and the Egyptian commerce”, in *The Great Ottoman-Turkish Civilization*, vol. II, eds. Kemal Çiçek (Ankara: Yeni Türkiye, 2000), 75-84.

the Western European and Russian ports, and the relative security in the land routes that linked the region to Austria and Hungary.⁴⁸

The times of relative prosperity ended with the economic slump that followed the end of the Napoleonic Wars in Europe. The beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in England and the establishment of industrial cotton mills may have accelerated the decline of the cottage industries of the Ottoman Balkans.⁴⁹ In 1821, the outbreak of another revolution, the Greek War of Independence, had dire consequences for Salonica. As Ottoman troops battled insurgents in the immediate vicinity of the city, access to the hinterland was severely affected. The Greek merchantmen were converted into warships, and commercial shipping all but stopped in the Aegean – piracy would remain a major problem up until the mid-1830s. Fearing an uprising within the city itself, the Ottoman acting governor, Yusuf Paşa, moved violently against the local Greek merchant elites and the Greek Orthodox population of the city in general. Many were executed, others were spared, but their fortunes were all plundered.⁵⁰ A few years later the Janissary corps, which had been the biggest client of local cloth producers, was forcibly disbanded. The position of the guilds deteriorated with the abolition of their formal privileges, as per the commercial treaties of the 1830s.

These successive developments had a devastating effect on Salonica's commercial activities and the local economy in general. Traditional manufacturing sectors, like wool weaving and leather processing all but disappeared.⁵¹ It would not be until the 1840s that the economic situation stabilised and the city returned to modest growth. Productive activities became increasingly oriented towards the cultivation of cash crops and the export trade. A demand emerged among European traders for the cereals of Macedonia, and local producers responded by funnelling their surpluses abroad. The cultivation of cotton was gradually introduced in the region, adding a second major export for the port of Salonica. Recovery was expedited by the resilience of the Greek shipping networks, which managed to

⁴⁸ For an authoritative negotiation of these themes, see Troian Stoianovich, "The conquering Balkan Orthodox merchant", *Journal of Economic History* 20, 2 (June 1960), 234-313.

⁴⁹ Quataert, *Ottoman manufacturing in the age of the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 33-37.

⁵⁰ Mazower, *City of ghosts*, 134-137.

⁵¹ Others, like silk reeling and carpet-weaving, retained their competitive edge. For an assessment of the crisis in the Ottoman Balkan manufacturing sector, see Michael Palairt, *The Balkan economies c. 1800-1914: evolution without development* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 50-57.

survive the turbulent period of the Greek Revolution and again constituted the main links between Ottoman, Russian and Western European ports. It must be noted, that these developments were hampered by the chronic lack of credit in the local markets, as well as the volatility of exchange rates caused by the Ottoman Empire's fiscal difficulties in the period. Commercial activity was highly susceptible to outside events, with trade contracting or expanding depending on the specific conjuncture.⁵²

The renewed commercial importance of Salonica led to the emergence of a new generation of local merchants. It also brought about an impressive reversal of fortunes for the city's Greek Orthodox elites, as traders migrated to the city from other parts of the Balkans, taking the place of the old Greek elite families, and revitalising those links that had given them a dominant position in local commerce. The Roggotis family originated in Yanya[Ioannina] and had established itself in Salonica in the early nineteenth century, when Nikolaos Roggotis opened up a branch of the family business. His son, Iakovos [James] Roggotis founded the commercial house "Jacque Roggotis, Salonique", which he operated with his son and nephew. The firm dealt in the import and export trade and maintained a workshop for silken goods, which were exported to France.⁵³ The Tattis family arrived from Vithkuq in Southern Albania at about the same time as the Roggotis. Stefanos Tattis, the head of the family in the final third of the nineteenth century, had established himself as a major trader in tobacco and a land-owner in the surrounding countryside. Tattis was very influential in the Greek Orthodox community, was elected deputy for Salonica in the Ottoman parliament of 1876, and held crucial posts in local administration.⁵⁴ Bartholomew Edward Abbott first arrived in Salonica in 1771 as the local representative of the Levant Company and served as the consul for a number of European countries. He must have married a local woman and his descendants gradually became integrated into the Greek Orthodox community of the city, while always keeping their British citizenship. The Abbotts made a fortune after they acquired a monopoly by the Ottoman state for gathering the leeches of nearby lakes and exporting them. By reinvesting their profits, they soon established their presence in all commercial and banking activities in the city.⁵⁵ Other notable Greek

⁵² Thus, the fiscal crises of 1844 and 1852 had a damaging effect on trade, while the outbreak of the American Civil War, which created a temporary yet very significant spike in the global demand for cotton, greatly increased commercial traffic.

⁵³ Chekimoglou and Georgiadou-Tsimino, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikitis, t. B₁*, 188-191.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 251-253.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 256-262.

Orthodox families of the time included the Katounis, the Harisis and the Hatzilazarou families. These leading families took a leading role in communal affairs, and held a visible place in the social life of the city through a variety of donations for their coreligionists and the local population in general.

The marked increase in commercial activity of the mid-nineteenth century had not necessitated the transformation of the existing relations of production. Cultivated land was largely divided between small, marginal freeholds and large estates (*çifliks*) run by mostly absentee landlords.⁵⁶ The gradual incorporation of market relations into the system was effected through a number of means. Pressure was exercised to dependent farmers to switch from subsistence to commercial cultivations. The re-imposition of tax-farming allowed the local merchants and landlords, who usually held the respective titles, to demand taxes in money rather than in kind, with the support of the Ottoman state, which was regarded the monetisation of agricultural economy as an important step in its economic reforms.⁵⁷ The produce of the countryside was bought and sold in the grand trade-fairs of the Macedonian interior, in Serres or Prelepe, before they were forwarded to the port.⁵⁸

A process of deeper economic transformation was initiated in the 1870s. The fiscal problems of the empire and the eventual imposition of international control over its debt in 1881 signalled the full penetration of the Ottoman economy by the European financial institutions.⁵⁹ Combined with the economic crisis of 1873, this development attracted increasing numbers of foreign investors, who felt secure enough to place their money in the Ottoman commercial and banking sectors, as well as major works of infrastructure.⁶⁰ Ottoman Macedonia and specifically Salonica

⁵⁶ McGowan, 58-79; Palairat, 34-41.

⁵⁷ Kasaba, "Compradore bourgeoisie", 223; idem, "A time and a place for the non-state: Social change in the Ottoman Empire during the 'Long Nineteenth-century'", in *State power and social forces: Domination and transformation in the Third World*, ed. Joel Migdal (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 207-230.

⁵⁸ The fairs (*panayır*) were tied to religious festivals of local importance and attracted thousands of traders and producers. They became less and less significant after the completion of the Macedonian railways, but were still deemed important enough, to be included in the *salnames*. For an example, see *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik XIV [XIII] [1895]*, 454.

⁵⁹ For the history of the Ottoman debt, see Christopher Clay, *Gold for the sultan: Western bankers and Ottoman finance, 1856-1881. A contribution to Ottoman and to international financial history* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2000); Murat Birdal, *The political economy of the Ottoman public debt: insolvency and international control in the late nineteenth century* (London and New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010).

⁶⁰ V. Necla Geyikdağı, *Foreign investment in the Ottoman Empire: international trade and relations in the late nineteenth century* (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 2010), 74ff.

benefitted greatly. The construction of the Oriental Railways not only offered a connection to Central Europe but also contributed greatly to the consolidation of the region as a single economic unit. The train extended the reach of commercial agriculture, with the production of tobacco now overshadowing both cereals and cotton as the main local cash crop. The improved access to money led to the emergence of groups of consumers with a taste for imported goods, making import and export trade equally viable for local traders. The combined impact of these factors led to an even greater increase in local trade.⁶¹ Salonica, as the largest city, the best port, and the only railhead in the area, established itself as its undisputable centre.⁶²

The leading Greek Orthodox houses of the city had difficulty in adjusting to the new circumstances. Their business model lacked the sophistication to adapt to the widening scale of local commerce, and the networks that had sustained them before were now disappearing. The railway eased access between the city and the producers of the countryside, thus contributing greatly to the decline of the trade-fairs.⁶³ At the same time, Greek shipping, still based on sailboats, was severely affected by the introduction of larger steamers and regular shipping routes in the Mediterranean; the Greek diasporic capital, which had been controlling the routes in the region, began to move its investments to transatlantic trade instead. Finally, links of solidarity among the Greek Orthodox populations of Macedonia were broken, when Bulgarian nationalists began advocating for larger rights within the community, which had been dominated by the Greek element. The split between the two groups became irrevocable in 1870, when the Bulgarian Exarchate received official recognition by the Ottoman government as an ecclesiastical authority independent from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate and representative of Ottoman Bulgarians. Unlike most of the Macedonian countryside, the Greek Orthodox community of Salonica maintained its cohesion and adherence to the Patriarchate. It did not, however, escape the violent inter-communal strife that started in 1873 over the administration of communal affairs and kept the local community divided almost until the end of the century.⁶⁴

⁶¹ FO 195/1802, Blunt to Ford, April 9, 1893.

⁶² Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 172-190.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 190-203.

⁶⁴ Chekimoglou, *Thessaloniki: Tourkokratia kai mesopolemos* [Thessaloniki: Ottoman rule and the Interwar years] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1996), 173ff.

In the end, the Greek Orthodox traders simply lacked the access to credit necessary to endeavour in the increasingly integrated commercial activities in Macedonia. While the leading families retained their status in the city mostly intact, they lost the leading role they held in the market to a new, largely Jewish, commercial elite.⁶⁵ The story of the Allatini family is a case in point. The family patriarch, Lazzaro Allatini, came to Salonica from Livorno, possibly in 1802, and became involved in local trade. After his death, his son Moiz, who had been trained as a doctor in Italy, took up the family business. The family fortunes improved spectacularly under his leadership, mainly thanks to his involvement with the cereal and tobacco trade. Moiz played an active role in urban reform, and his many charitable gestures made him remembered as the *père du Salonique*.⁶⁶ The Allatinis pioneered new organisational forms in local enterprise and ran their family business through the *Société Anonyme Ottomane Industrielle et Commerciale de Salonique*, one of the first joint-stock companies in the city. The company had a working capital of 7.8 million francs in 1905, and its 19,000 shares were divided between members of the family. The Allatinis were closely connected through partnership and marriage to other elite Italian Jewish families of the cities, like the Misrahi, who made their fortunes in the tobacco trade, and the Fernandez, who had one of the major insurance companies in the city.⁶⁷

The only other family that rivalled the Allatinis in the scope of their business endeavours were the Modianos. They had risen to prominence around the middle of the century, when Saul Modiano, who had been famously indentured as an

⁶⁵ From the 15 leading commercial companies recorded in a British report from 1850-1860, only those of Abbott, Harisis and Roggotis, along with Misrahi-Fernandez, were present in the local market 20 years later. Chekimoglou, *Trapezes kai Thessaloniki, 1900-1936: Opseis leitourgias kai to provlima tis chorothesis* [Banks in Thessaloniki, 1900-1936: Operational aspects and the issue of placement] (Thessaloniki: n.p., 1987), 38.

⁶⁶ Henri Nahum, “Charisme et pouvoir d’un médecin Juif. Moïse Allatini (1809-1882), ‘le père de Salonique’”, in ed. Meropi Anastassiadou-Dumont, *Médecins et ingénieurs Ottomans à l’âge des nationalismes* (Paris: Maisonneuve & Larose, 2003), 49-62.

⁶⁷ Chekimoglou and Georgiadou-Tsimino, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikitis, t. B₁*, 290-295; Alexandros Dangas, *Symboli stin erevna gia tin oikonomiki kai koinoniki exeliksi tis Thessalonikis: Oikonomiki domi kai koinonikos katamerismos ergasias, 1912-1940* [A contribution to the study of the economic and social development of Thessaloniki: Economic structure and the social distribution of labour] (Thessaloniki: Meletes Epaggelmatikou kai Oikonomikou Epimelitiriu Thessalonikis, 1998), 61-62. Elia Fernandez was important enough, to be included in a list of insurance companies in the empire and the neighbouring states, drafted by the *Allgemeine Versicherungsgesellschaft für das Fluss- und Landtransport*, an insurance company based in Dresden who looked for partners in the region. PA-AA Gk Saloniki 37, Gillet to Abbott, August 24, 1872.

apprentice to Greek Orthodox merchant Vlastos, was left the administrator of his employer's assets in the city, after the latter left for Marseille. Modiano exploited the connections he had to Vlastos and the Greek commercial networks to the fullest, and had soon established himself as one of the main merchants and money-lenders in Salonica.⁶⁸ An Ottoman subject himself, Saul became active in tax-farming and, after the Crimean war, established the "Banque Saul".⁶⁹ His many children were involved in the family business and his eldest, Jacob (Jacko) Modiano, was his heir to the bank and grew to be an influential merchant, banker, investor, and property owner in his own right. Other prominent entrepreneurial families in the city included the Mallachs, who were very active in the real estate market, the Saiaz, the Sapportas and the Saltiels.⁷⁰

The predominance of the Italian Jews among this group is perhaps indicative of the advantages foreign citizenship gave to their holders. Foreign subjects were eligible for the benefits confirmed by the commercial treaties between the empire and the European powers. More specifically, they were exempt from the income tax and (in the case of non-Muslims) the military avoidance fee (*bedel-i askeri*) and were entitled to official consular representation in cases brought before the Ottoman judicial system. In theory, such privileges were restricted to foreigners and the staff of foreign diplomatic services. In practice, foreign missions would liberally issue certificates of protection (*berats*) to Ottoman subjects, and specifically to urban dwellers and traders. In this way, they not only established close relations between certain segments of the local urban elites, they also contributed to the emergence of a group that was beyond the full legal and administrative reach of the Ottoman authorities.⁷¹ Attempts by the latter to restrict the issue of *berats* to those it was originally intended for, led instead to the consulates directly naturalising those interested as citizens of the respective countries.⁷² This development was a major impetus to the drafting of the Ottoman Subjecthood Law of 1867, which defined

⁶⁸ Saul Modiano and his shot to prominence became one of the favourite stories in the city. He was rumoured to have started with a 10-*lira* 'capital' and to have ended up with 1,000,000. He was also said to be the second largest owner of urban and rural properties in the empire, after the Kamondo family of Istanbul. Chekimoglou, *Ypothesi Modiano: trapeziko krach sti Thessaloniki tou 1911* [The Modiano affair: Banking crash in 1911 Thessaloniki] (Thessaloniki: n.p., 1991), 34, fn. 36.

⁶⁹ Chekimoglou and Georgiadou-Tsimino, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikititas, t. B₁*, 275-276.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 270, 274.

⁷¹ Stephen Rosenthal, *The politics of dependency: urban reform in Istanbul* (Westport, Connecticut, and London: Greenwood Press, 1980), 10-11.

⁷² Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 62.

Ottoman citizenship in the negative: every inhabitant of the empire who could not prove foreign citizenship was an Ottoman subject. The normalisation of Ottoman subjecthood and the repeated attempts of the Ottoman state to bring foreign subjects under control arguably stemmed the acquisition of foreign protection and citizenship.⁷³

It is not clear how wide-spread the acquisition of foreign citizenship in the specific context of Salonica was. Still more difficult to ascertain is how big a part of the local elites carried foreign protection. There is sporadic evidence that, besides the Italian Jews, a number of important local businessmen had acquired and retained foreign citizenship and that it played an important role in the emergence of the late century commercial elites.⁷⁴ Iakovos [James] Roggotis was a naturalised British subject.⁷⁵ The Abbotts retained their ties to Britain and their British citizenship, even after their conversion to Greek Orthodoxy;⁷⁶ the ill-fated Henry Abbott had served as the consul of Italy in the city before assuming the role of the German consul in 1871.⁷⁷ Periklis Hatzilazarou had served as the American consul in the city throughout the late nineteenth century. Still, the numbers and the significance of naturalised foreign subjects among the local elites, while strong, were nowhere near the levels witnessed in Istanbul or Izmir.⁷⁸ Statistics published in the yearbook of 1303 [1886] recorded a population of 68,800 in Salonica, out of which there were 4,656 non-Ottoman citizens, 3,492 of which were termed as ‘locals’ [*yerli*] and 1,164 ‘foreigners’ [*yabancı*]. Importantly, almost all of the former (3253 individuals) and about one third of the latter (305) were classified as only ‘claiming foreign citizenship’ [*tebaiyet-i ecnebiye iddiasında bulunanlar*], indicating that the Ottoman state was willing to contest their status.⁷⁹ The census carried out by the British

⁷³ Haris Exertzoglou, “The development of a Greek Ottoman bourgeoisie”, in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: politics, economy and society in the nineteenth century*, eds. Charles Issawi and Dimitri Gondikas (Princeton: Darwin Press, 1999), 91.

⁷⁴ Dumont, “The Social Structure of the Jewish Community of Salonika at the End of the Nineteenth Century”, *South-Eastern Europe* 5, 2 (1979), 55-56.

⁷⁵ FO 295/3, Rasy to Francis, July 19, 1869.

⁷⁶ See, for example, FO 295/17, Graves [to Grey], March 25, 1907, on Alfred and Robert Abbott.

⁷⁷ PA-AA 37ii, 5, December 18, 1871.

⁷⁸ Almost half of the population of the Pera and Galata districts of Istanbul (111,000 out of 250,000) were foreign citizens or protégés. Rosenthal, 17.

⁷⁹ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik IX [VIII]*, 1303 [1886], 505ff. Kemal Karpat gives different figures: According to him, 800 ‘foreigners’ resided in Salonica, out of a population of 103,544. Kemal Karpat, *Ottoman population, 1830-1914: demographic and social characteristics* (Madison, Wisconsin, and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1985),

consulate in 1901 showed 144 naturalised British subjects living in the *kaza* of Salonica, and another 16 under British protection.⁸⁰ Many important local merchants, including all Muslims, the vast majority of Greek Orthodox and some Italian Jewish families like the Mallachs and the Saltiels, remained Ottoman subjects.⁸¹ For the intrepid Salonican businessmen, maintaining access to the Ottoman state may have been equally attractive to the diminishing benefits of foreign citizenship.

A case in point was the emergence of a local Muslim bourgeoisie from within the ranks of Salonica's *dönme* communities. The group may have always played a part in the commercial traffic in Salonica, and in 1839 the British consular report of the commerce of Salonica listed 10 commercial houses that belonged to *dönmes*.⁸² Though their fortunes during the mid-century are not well documented, these merchants reappeared by the 1870s and 1880s as some of leading local entrepreneurs. The Salonican *dönme* enthusiastically took advantage of the opportunities they were presented with in the new economic climate. They engaged themselves in banking and commerce, especially in the tobacco trade. They established an extended network of commercial agents throughout Central and Western Europe, by placing family members in important European centres as agents. They experimented with a number of innovations in business organisation, like the stock company structure, and they maintained a high visibility through their overrepresentation in the local state institutions and social clubs. Besides Hamdi Bey, the leading *dönme* entrepreneurs included Mehmed Kapancı and his brothers Ahmed and Yusuf, the tobacco merchant Hasan Akif Efendi, and Mehmed Karakaş and his family.⁸³

Entrepreneurial activity in Salonica promised a high rate of return but most investments carried a high degree of risk. Besides the inherent instability of commodity prices, local traders had to calculate the delay between purchasing the

134-135, 166-167.

⁸⁰ FO 195/2111, Freeman to O'Connor, April 9, 1901.

⁸¹ The landed property registries (*defter-i hakkani*) record the citizenship of the buyer in most cases, so they give an accurate picture, at least among property owners. For example, see Istoriko Archeio Makedonias, *Defter-i hakkani* 11, 1309 [1893-1894], 8, 11, 70-71 (for members of the Mallach family); 60 (for the Naoussa trader Giorgos Kyrtis); 70 (for 'Haim Şalom,' possibly Haim Saiaz).

⁸² Bülent Özdemir, "A Local Perception of Plural Ottoman Society: Muslim, Orthodox and Jewish Communities of Salonica During The 1840s", in ed. Çiçek, 422.

⁸³ Baer, "Globalization, cosmopolitanism and the Dönme", 150-151; *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XV [XIV], 1315 [1897], 298-301. Not incidentally, the business leader among the *dönme* coincided with the leading families within the three different subgroups of the sect.

agricultural produce of the countryside, and selling it to their European partners – or, conversely, buying imported products in cash and selling them in instalments. In a business environment defined by the limited availability of credit, uncontrollable factors (a bad crops or political instability) that appeared to threaten the continuation of economic growth could easily cause a liquidity squeeze.⁸⁴ Salonican businessmen attempted to minimise risk by diversifying their portfolios into various sectors of the local economy. The Allatini family were the first to experiment with industrial establishments in the city. Their flour mill, established in the late 1850s acquired steam power about twenty years later; in 1890 it was electrified and by the turn of the century it had become one of the biggest industrial units in the empire, shipping flour throughout the Balkans and playing a crucial role for the provision of the Ottoman troops in the region. The Allatini ceramics and brick factory that was established in 1880 had a similar importance for the construction spree that happened in Salonica at the same time.⁸⁵ The Allatinis also invested freely in other industrial endeavours in the city, like the *Misrahi, Fernandez et Cie* brewery, later renamed *Olympos*, the cotton mill run by the *Misrahi, Torres et Cie*.⁸⁶ Along with the Modianos, they also spread to banking, acquisition of agricultural land, and the trade in concessions for chrome, potassium and manganese mines in the hinterland.⁸⁷

The elite character of the bigger merchants of Salonica went beyond their domination of the local markets. It was also reinforced by the conscious adoption of a set of behaviours and practices, both in the private and the public spheres, which modelled itself after Europe. They projected themselves as the main proponents for the introduction of contemporary *mores* and fashions into the urban environment, and they played a vital role in resolving the interplay between ‘modernity’ and ‘tradition’ within the local context.⁸⁸ This is especially true for the Italian Jewish commercial families who actively cultivated their relations to the, by that point, largely imagined ‘homeland’, as a way to highlight their own modernity. They involved themselves heavily with the foundation of schools, charitable foundations, and clubs and societies, as well as with the reform of the pre-existing educational and communal institutions.⁸⁹ This not only guaranteed that the business and cultural

⁸⁴ Chekimoglou, *Ypothesi Modiano*, 17-23.

⁸⁵ Dangas, 60-61.

⁸⁶ Ibid.; Chekimoglou and Georgiadou Tsimino, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikitis, t. B1*, 268-269.

⁸⁷ Dangas, 60-61; Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 149-150.

⁸⁸ Exertzoglou, "The cultural uses of consumption,".

⁸⁹ Here, I am closely following the analysis of Paris Papamichos-Chronakis, "Oi ellines,

model that they represented would become dominant in the city, or at least among those segments of the population that aspired to upward mobility. It also helped fashion those spaces, where the local elites could display their prestige and status. The opening and the end of the school season were celebrated with fanfare at each school, with the pupils putting up a performance for the spectators. A simultaneous performance was given by the attending state and religious dignitaries, the notable members of the community, and representatives from the other ethno-religious groups among the local population, who exchanged pleasantries, and thus reaffirmed the cohesion (and the inherent hierarchies) of local society, as sanctioned by the state.⁹⁰ At the same time the elites needed a stage on which the different elements that constituted their identities, class and religion, ‘modernity’ and ‘tradition’, could be symbolically reconfirmed. The holding of a ball to celebrate the festival of Purim was a way for the Jewish societies to combine their Jewishness with a ‘modern’ sociability.⁹¹

In the case of the Jewish community of Salonica, the symbolic demonstration of the power of the commercial classes was linked to demands for larger political representation within the community. Ever since the late 17th century, the Jewish community of Salonica had been consolidated as a unified institution that represented all local Jewry. Decision power lay with a governing body of three rabbis, who were selected by the rabbinical corps of the city for life. The arch-rabbi was elected from their number, and their decisions were ratified by another body of four rabbis. A committee of lay members served in an advisory role, entrusted with distributing the communal tax among the city’s Jewry.⁹² Jews with foreign

evraioi, mououlmanoi kai donme emboroi tis Thessalonikis, 1882-1919: Taxikoi kai ethnotikoi metaschimatismoï se trochia exellinismou” [The greek, jewish, muslim and donme merchants of Thessaloniki, 1882-1919: class and ethnic transformations in a trajectory of hellenisation] (PhD dissertation, University of Crete, 2011), 132-134.

⁹⁰ The fête given at the Greek Orthodox school for girls in June 1883 on the occasion of the summer exams was attended by the governor-general, Galip Paşa, Mehmet Tevfik Paşa, the müftü, İbrahim Bey, the members of the public education commission, the public prosecutor, the general consuls of Greece, Britain and Russia, “and even mssrs. Allatini, Fernandez and Misrahim [sic]”. *Faros* 775, 8/6/1883 [June 20, 1883].

⁹¹ Papamichos-Chronakis, 116-119.

⁹² Rena Molho, “La renouveau de la communauté juive de Salonique entre 1856 et 1919”, in idem, *Salonica and Istanbul: Social, political and cultural aspects of Jewish life* (Istanbul, Isis Press, 2005), 92. The communal tax, or *pecha*, amounted to the poll tax that was imposed to all non-Muslim communities of the empire (*cizya*) – a tax which in the 1860s was replaced by the fee paid for avoiding military service (*bedel-i askeri*). The *pecha* was paid by only the richest families among local Jews, about 1,000 out of 10,000 households. See Molho, *Oi Ebraioi tis Thessalonikis, 1856-1919: Mia idiaiteri koinotita* [The Jews of

citizenship were excluded from participation in communal affairs, but they were also exempt from paying the communal tax. They were, however, still subject to the indirect taxes imposed on *kosher* meat, cheese etc. (*gabelle*), as well as to a 1% fee on all imported and exported goods.⁹³ From the late 1850s onward, the communal elites found their position challenged by a ‘progressive’ faction within the community. Merchants and rabbis, among them Moiz Allatini, Moiz Morpurgo, Salomon Fernandez, future arch-rabbi Avram Gatenio and editor Saadi Levy, pushed hard for the reorganisation of communal institutions and the reform of the community’s structure.⁹⁴ The economic problems of the community, which could neither raise enough revenue to respond to the growing costs of communal welfare and education nor cover its fiscal responsibilities towards the state, led to growing tensions between the opposed groupings. The confrontation ended with a victory for the commercial classes, when a new communal statute was introduced in 1887. Rabbinical authority was restricted to the communal courts. The affairs of the community were administered by a 70-member mixed committee, which was elected by all tax-paying members of the community and which in turn elected a 12-member communal board to preside over it. Foreign Jews, while still legally barred from these bodies, were represented in an advisory committee of five or six members.⁹⁵ The Ottoman authorities agreed to forgive the outstanding debt of the community; in exchange, they received the community’s tax registers and assumed responsibility for the direct collection of the *bedel-i askeri*.⁹⁶

Similar political developments were unique to the Jewish community of Salonica and were not observed among the city’s Muslims or Greek Orthodox at the time. Nonetheless, they were indicative of the growing influence that local merchants enjoyed within local society. Their gradual domination over communal politics constituted them as the undisputed representatives of the city’s interests to local authorities. The co-option of local elites had been one of the main targets of state policy since the inception of the reforms. The state would soon find itself in need of devising a number of new institutional structures, mixed, in the sense of being comprised by both state officials and selected representatives of the elites, and

Thessaloniki: A special community] (Athens, Themelio, 2001), 73-75.

⁹³ Ibid., 76-78.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 82-83.

⁹⁵ Molho, “La renouveau de la communauté juive“, 93.

⁹⁶ Joseph Nehama, *Istoria ton Israiliton tis Thessalonikis* [The history of the Israelites of Thessaloniki], book III (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2000), 1392.

responsible for optimising the economic and administrative functions of the Ottoman port-cities and their respective provinces.

Between State and non-State: Representative Bodies in Ottoman Local Administration

The emergence of commercial elites in the urban centres of the empire did not escape the notice of the Ottoman authorities. Though the principle of representation in local administration, as encompassed by the provincial councils, was originally introduced with the large landowners and tax-farmers in mind, by 1870 the nascent bourgeoisie was beginning to match the wealth, prestige and connections of the older, established elites. The gradual founding of structures for urban administration, where these new classes could be represented, was again tied to the political and fiscal objectives of the Ottoman state, in this case the debates on curbing the spread of foreign protégés and the imposition of an empire-wide property tax, which would apply to both Ottoman and foreign subjects. Already in 1854, a commission comprised by representatives of the state, the European consulates and the leading inhabitants of the city was formed in Salonica, with the task of recording all urban properties and estimating their value.⁹⁷ The committee was eventually replaced by an inspector attached to the Ottoman administration, to the consternation of local merchants.⁹⁸ The issue remained divisive, and as late as 1876 the Ottoman governor, Eşref Paşa, filed an official complaint to the foreign consulates on the grounds that many of their subjects were still refusing to pay.⁹⁹

From there, it was only a small step to formally extend the inclusion of local notables into the institutions of local administration. In their attempt to reshape the fabric of the empire's cities, the reformist statesmen of Istanbul regarded giving limited representation to urban elites as a means to benefit from their social and economic capital. An imperial ordinance of 1858 divided the capital into fourteen districts (*daire*), each to be administered by a separate municipal council. Pera and Galata, two commercial neighbourhoods that formed the Sixth *daire* and contained a large non-Muslim and European resident population, were endowed with a

⁹⁷ Yerolympos, *Metaxy anapolis kai Dysis*, 104-105.

⁹⁸ FO 295/3, Rasy to Baron, June 22, 1869.

⁹⁹ PA-AA Gk Saloniki 37, Eşref Paşa to Abbott, July 4, 1876; July 9, 1876.

functioning and autonomous council; the successful conclusion of the experiment there would have been followed by the extension of municipal structures to the rest of the city.¹⁰⁰ The six members of the council were selected from among Ottoman subjects, who owned property of 1,000 *liras* or more in the district for a six-month tenure, whereby membership in the council would be renewed through a lottery. Foreign citizens could also be elected, provided they owned 5,000 *liras* of property and had been residing in Istanbul for ten years or more.¹⁰¹ The council was given a broad mandate, as well as the right to collect a variety of fees. After a few years of energetic activity, the municipality began to falter because of a lack of funds. The foreign protégés and citizens of the districts refused to pay their assigned municipal fees, preferring their fiscal autonomy *vis-à-vis* the Ottoman state over limited access to political representation. This would only change after a period of negotiations between the Ottoman authorities and the European diplomats provided a first blueprint for the regulation of the tax status of resident foreigners.¹⁰²

In 1863 the bankrupt municipality was brought under the control of the government, which a new council, rewrote its statute and took responsibility for some of its debt.¹⁰³ The experiment may have been a failure, but its merits were recognised and the Ottomans felt confident enough to extend its application across the empire. Seven provincial cities, including Tripoli, Beirut, Izmir and Salonica, were selected for the formation of a municipal council.¹⁰⁴ Though it took some time before the councils were fully formed, their jurisdiction accepted by the provincial authorities and the public, and their selection process and operations normalised, the model was quickly introduced to smaller Ottoman towns. By 1875 almost all counties of the province of Salonica had acquired a municipal council in their seat, at least on paper; the sole exception, the county of Kesendire, followed in 1876.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁰ Rosenthal, 49-51; Ortaylı, 126-128.

¹⁰¹ Rosenthal, 52-54.

¹⁰² Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 58-62.

¹⁰³ Rosenthal, 147-150.

¹⁰⁴ The municipality of Izmir was founded in 1868, but was temporarily disbanded a year later by the governor, following their disagreement over the construction of the city's quay. Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 96. The municipality of Beirut was founded in 1868. Hanssen, *Fin de siècle Beirut*, 138ff. Lafi, 213.

¹⁰⁵ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* V [IV] [1875], 46ff; VI [V] [1876], 52. See Tetsua Sahara, "The Ottoman City Council and the beginning of the modernisation of the urban space in the Balkans," in *The city in the Ottoman Empire: Migration and the making of urban modernity*, eds. Ulrike Freitag et al. (London: Routledge, 2011), 32-33.

The municipalities were entrusted with regulating and reforming urban life. The very exact and extensive wording of the law on municipalities, as amended in 1877, was telling of how the task of the new institutions was perceived: Ordering (of streets, pavements, sewers), registering and recording (of births and deaths, of properties and their values), surveying (of restaurants, cafes, theatres, and everything ‘that concerns the police or public morality’), enlarging, embellishing, maintaining.¹⁰⁶ Though some of its jurisdictions were gradually transferred to competent branches of the local bureaucracy, the municipalities remained the prime tools for the regulation and renovation of urban space in the cities of the empire. The very specific recounting of all issues that called for the body’s intervention, from ensuring the cleanliness of linen offered at public baths, to prohibiting the preparation and selling of kebabs on the streets, placed the municipality between being a successor to the older institutions that regulated urban life and representing reformist notions of what a city should resemble and how it should be administered.¹⁰⁷ The municipal institution was being shaped under the influence of both European models of local government and pre-existing forms of ordering and regulating urban space.

The municipalities’ income would come from the introduction of municipal fees, as well as from special dues imposed on market transactions. Properties whose value would increase as a result of enlargement or realignment of nearby streets, would also contribute to the budget – they would either be sold, if public, or a fee would be imposed on their owners.¹⁰⁸ The money would go to provide for the many actions the councils were required to undertake, in order to maintain and improve their cities, and to pay for the salaries for the growing number of civil servants that were necessary for administering municipal functions. Besides the salaried president of the council,¹⁰⁹ attached to the body was a secretariat, a bursar, a chief medic and a veterinary officer, a bureau of engineers, which were responsible for planning and

¹⁰⁶ Young, *Droit Ottoman*, vol. I, 70-71.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 81-83.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 76-77. In reality, much of these revenues were siphoned off to the state budget. Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 95.

¹⁰⁹ The president of the Salonica municipal council received in 1886 a monthly salary of 25 *liras*. See *Faros* 1022, 26/2/1886 [March 10, 1886]. The other members served *ad honorem*. Young, *Droit Ottoman*, vol. I, 71-72.

carrying out all constructions, repairs and demolitions, and, at least initially, a cadastral and census office.¹¹⁰

The election process of the provincial and municipal councils constituted the widest application of the principle of representation in Ottoman administration. The right to vote in the municipal elections was restricted to male Ottoman subjects, who were of 25 years of age or older, had knowledge of Turkish, and paid at least 50 *kuruş* in property tax.¹¹¹ For prospective candidates, these requirements rose to 30 years and 100 *kuruş*, respectively. The council members were elected for four years and elections would take place every two years, for each half of the council. The process would last up to 10 days and the vote would not be secret.¹¹² The list with the elected members would, at least in the early years of municipal governance, be forwarded to Istanbul for verification.¹¹³

It is evident that the electoral law restricted the suffrage to a small percentage of the local population. The numbers for Salonica, especially for the earlier periods, are difficult to ascertain, can only be based on conjectural evidence, and must have varied between the different communities of the city; they probably never exceeded a few thousand people in a city whose population passed the 100,000 mark at the turn of the century.¹¹⁴ The indirect voting process and higher requirements probably made the number of eligible voters candidates for the provincial councils even smaller by comparison. Additionally, the prohibition of political organising and pre-election propaganda severely limited the potential of local representation evolving beyond the tight limits prescribed by the Ottoman state. The few mentions of the election process in the press of the city (as opposed to the ample references of the activities of the municipality) are usually constituted by the publication of the results.¹¹⁵

Despite the very real restrictions and limits imposed on the new bodies, the local elites took full advantage of the possibilities opened to them through the

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 77-79.

¹¹¹ The property tax was calculated as between a fourth and a tenth of the estimated total value of the property.

¹¹² The election officers would sign the ballot before placing it in an envelope. The information is listed in Young, *Droit Ottoman*, vol. I, 73-74.

¹¹³ Lafi, 230.

¹¹⁴ K. Chondrodimos, the most successful candidate in the municipal elections of February 1912, received 2512 positive and no negative votes. *Makedonia* 186-187, February 14-15 [27-28], 1912. For comparison, in the provincial elections a few months later, Rahmi Efendi came first with 70 votes. *Makedonia* 221, May 16 [29], 1912. It is, of course, very difficult to ascertain what percentage of voters this corresponds to, or measure voter participation.

¹¹⁵ For example, *Faros* 825, 14/3/1884 [March 26, 1884]; 1022, 26/2/1886 [March 10, 1886].

participation in the new bodies. The provincial yearbooks recorded the serving members of the provincial and municipal councils at the year of their publication.¹¹⁶ It is therefore possible partially to reconstruct the make-up of the councils after 1870, even if their members' names are not always easily identifiable. Unsurprisingly, the elected positions were monopolised by the commercial elites of the city, or more precisely, specific individuals and families, while civil and military officials were also represented. Though not formally stated in the law, the mayor and head of the council was always a Muslim, and Muslims consistently accounted for about half of the council members.¹¹⁷ After Hamdi Bey and İbrahim Namık Bey, Hulusi Bey was the third longest-serving mayor of the city. Originally a notable and land-owner from Siroz [Serres], he succeeded Hamdi Bey to the post in 1902 and remained mayor until the Young Turk Revolution, when Osman Adil Bey, Hamdi Bey's son replaced him.

Mehmed Tevfik Paşa, the *beylerbey* of Rumeli, dominated local administration for most of the early period: he served as member of the provincial council between 1870 and 1890, and doubled as head of the municipal council between 1874 and 1877.¹¹⁸ Abdülkerim Efendi, who owned extensive estates to the East of Salonica and whose family profited greatly from urban expansion in the 1880s and 1890s, held a seat in the provincial council in the mid-1870s.¹¹⁹ Hamdi Bey also appears as a member of the body in 1882, before continuing in the municipal council in the early 1890s.¹²⁰ İsmail Hakkı Efendi, a career civil servant with tenures at the Agricultural Bank¹²¹ and as head secretary of the *kaza* of Salonica,¹²² served in the provincial

¹¹⁶ Mentions of the district and county councils of the city of Salonica itself are rare. It is not clear whether this is due to poor record-keeping or the fact that these bodies were only infrequently formed, their jurisdiction substituted by the provincial and municipal councils.

¹¹⁷ The first couple of municipal councils seem to have been an exception, dominated as they were by foreign and Ottoman non-Muslims. See *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* I, 1287 [1870], 29; II, 1288 [1871], 30.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*; *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* IV [III], 1291 [1874], 33; V [IV], 1292 [1875], 33, 42; VI [V], 1293 [1876], 33, 42; VII [VI], 1294 [1877], 33, 42; VIII [VII], 1299 [1882], 59-60; IX [VIII], 1303 [1886], 79-80; X [IX], 1307 [1890], 100.

¹¹⁹ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* IV [III], 1291 [1874], 33; V [IV], 1292 [1875], 33; VI [V], 1293 [1876], 33.

¹²⁰ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* VIII [VII], 1299 [1882], 59-60; XI [X], 1307 [1890], 47.

¹²¹ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XVIII [XVII], 1322 [1905], 95.

¹²² *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XIX [XVIII], 1324 [1906], 210.

council between 1890 and 1902,¹²³ then moved on to the municipality.¹²⁴ Mehmed Kapancı was placed to the provincial council in the early twentieth century,¹²⁵ at about the same period when his brother, Ahmed, was serving in the municipal council.¹²⁶

Non-Muslim representation in the councils was also primarily restricted to the commercial elites. Kostakis Georgiadis, a Greek Orthodox businessman who would later be among the founders of the 'Naoussa' brewery, had been serving in the provincial council for more than 20 years.¹²⁷ Jewish representation in that body alternated between Bohor Saltiel,¹²⁸ his son Beniko,¹²⁹ and Nehama Mallach.¹³⁰ Merchants like Iakovos Roggotis, Salomon Fransez and Haim Saiaz were elected to the municipal council in the first years of its operation.¹³¹ Stefanos Tattis was elected in and out of the council from the early 1880s and for the next 20 years; at the end of the period, he was succeeded by his son Kostas.¹³² Jacob Kazes also held a long tenure in the municipality, serving as council member between 1890 and 1902.

¹²³ In 1900, he was also doubling as a municipal councillor despite the related prohibition. *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* X [IX], 1307 [1890], 100; XI [X], 1310 [1892], 28; XII [XI], 1311 [1893], 80-81; XIII [XII], 1312 [1894], 56-57; XIV [XIII], 1313 [1895], 54-55; XV [XIV], 1315 [1897], 150-151; XVI [XV], 1318 [1900], 89; XVII [XVI], 1320 [1902], 134.

¹²⁴ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XVIII [VVII], 1322 [1905], 103; XIX [XVIII], 1324 [1906], 151; XX [XIX], 1325 [1907], 150.

¹²⁵ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XVII [XVI], 1320 [1902], 134; XVIII [VVII], 1322 [1905], 76.

¹²⁶ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XVI [XV], 1318 [1900], 116-117; XVII [XVI], 1320 [1902], 165; XX [XIX], 1325 [1907], 150.

¹²⁷ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* IX [VIII], 1303 [1886], 79-80; X [IX], 1307 [1890], 100; XI [X], 1310 [1892], 28; XII [XI], 1311 [1893], 80-81; XIII [XII], 1312 [1894], 56-57; XIV [XIII], 1313 [1895], 54-55; XV [XIV], 1315 [1897], 150-151; XVI [XV], 1318 [1900], 89; XVII [XVI], 1320 [1902], 134; XVIII [VVII], 1322 [1905], 76; XIX [XVIII], 1324 [1906], 124-125; XX [XIX], 1325 [1907], 120-121.

¹²⁸ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* VIII [VII], 1299 [1882], 59-60; X [IX], 1320 [1890], 100. Bohor Saltiel also been serving in the municipal council in 1892-1893. *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XI [X], 1310 [1892], 47; XII [XI], 1311 [1893], 102.

¹²⁹ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XI [X], 1310 [1892], 28; XII [XI], 1311 [1893], 80-81; XIII [XII], 1312 [1894], 56-57; XIV [XIII], 1313 [1895], 54-55. Like Saltiel, Mallach also continued on to serve in the municipal council. See *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XVIII [VVII], 1322 [1905], 103; XIX [XVIII], 1324 [1906], 151.

¹³⁰ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XV [XIV], 1315 [1897], 150-151; XVI [XV], 1318 [1900], 89; XVII [XVI], 1320 [1902], 134; XVIII [VVII], 1322 [1905], 76; XIX [XVIII], 1324 [1906], 124-125; XX [XIX], 1325 [1907], 120-121.

¹³¹ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* I, 1287 [1870], 37; II, 1288 [1871], 40; IV [III], 1291 [1874], 47; VIII [VII], 1303 [1886], 96; IX [VIII], 1307 [1890], 107. The election of Roggotis, it appears that the suffrage was not limited to Ottoman subjects in the first municipal elections, but have become so later.

¹³² *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* VIII [VII], 1299 [1882], 69-70; X [IX], 1307 [1890], 107; XI [X], 1310 [1892], 47; XII [XI], 1311 [1893], 102; XVII [XVI], 1320 [1902], 165; XVIII [VVII], 1322 [1905], 103; XX [XIX], 1325 [1907], 150.

With very few references in the press and without recourse to the minutes of the councils, it is difficult to ascertain the nature of the election process and of the proceedings of these bodies. The restrictive legal framework and the long tenures of many of the members of the respective councils may suggest that they operated within a largely consensual context. It is quite probable that the selection of council members reflected a principle of seniority among the electorate, with certain members of the elite being recognised as steady and influential voices in local politics. Besides the acquisition of symbolic capital, however, tenure in one of the councils was also indispensable in cultivating a relationship with the local state elites.

By 1870, the aims that the institution of the councils sought to address – to bring the local population in line with state policy, in an attempt to apply the Ottoman reforms in the provinces - had been generally accepted by the elites of Salonica. Specific measures taken by the local administration, though, could still be cause for disputes, and the nascent local press did raise a number of related issues. The pace of urban renovation, the efficiency of municipal workers, the opaqueness of economic management and the constant danger of fire and cholera, exacerbated by administrative incompetence, were favourite topics in Salonica's newspapers. The governor-general and the provincial administration were regarded as representatives of the sultan in the region and, like the imperial dynasty and the central government, were off limits for criticism. The municipality, however, was not, and as such proved a much better target for Salonica's intrepid urban reformers. In the mid-1880s, the newspaper *Faros* initiated a series of articles haranguing the administration of mayor Arif Bey on a number of issues, from the administering of municipal funds to the water supply of the city, and from garbage collections to the distribution of permits to local brothels. The municipality responded with legal action that culminated in the temporary closure of the newspaper, which was only allowed to reopen after publishing an apology. Though the resolution of the incident proved that the municipality was indeed part of the state, therefore protected, it nonetheless highlighted the limits within which debate was indeed acceptable.¹³³

As described here, the Ottoman institutions of local administration in the late nineteenth century were indicative of the balance between the state and the local elites and specifically, in the case of port-cities like Salonica, the bourgeoisie. For

¹³³ Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatonis kai Dysis*, 176-191.

the Ottoman authorities, it seemed imperative for the success of the reforms on the local level to allow for the emergence of spaces, where local elites could exercise limited political power. The entrepreneurial classes of the Ottoman port-cities were content to play the role ascribed to them by Istanbul, having themselves picked up the mantle of urban reform, and conscious of the benefits of maintaining an intermediate space between themselves and the state. The activities of the councils and especially the municipality would help mediate disputes between the two groups in another intermediate space, that of the market. With the authorities attempting to maximise revenues from regulating and taxing commercial transactions, and different merchant groups competing in an unsteady business environment, the spaces of economic activity in the city became sites of contest between the state and the non-state.

Late Ottoman Salonica and its Market

Commercial traffic in Salonica boomed throughout the period in question. The imports and exports in the city for 1871 amounted respectively to 548,807 and 679,869 pounds sterling; in 1890, they had increased to 1,687,320 and 1,600,000 pounds, and in 1911 they had were at 4,663,105 and 1,362,102.¹³⁴ Business activities in Ottoman Salonica had been traditionally concentrated in the north-western part of the city, nearest to its port. The neighbourhoods of Malta, Cedid, Tophane, and the buildings referred to in the records as the ‘marketplace’ (*çarşı*) – collectively known as the Frankish Quarter, because of the predominance of European merchants - housed most of the commercial properties of the city, its workshops, its banking houses and its *hans*, as well as its main bazaars: the Flour Market (*un kapanı*), the Egypt Market (*Mısır çarşısı*), and the domed *bedesten*, behind the doors of which the silk merchants and jewellers secured their goods. On the other side of the walls, the quarter of *İştira*, adjacent to the port, contained the larger warehouses, the offices of the local Customs House, and the business establishments of shipping agents.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, a series of spatial interventions carried out by the local authorities led to some significant changes in

¹³⁴ Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 174-175. Note that exports stay more or less steady during this period, as traffic, especially that of tobacco, was gradually diverted to the port of Kavala, to the east.

the street layout of the business area of Salonica. In 1856, the warehouses of *İştira* burnt down in a fire. The reconstruction of the quarter constituted the first attempt to apply the new Ottoman building code in Salonica – it also constituted the occasion for the drafting of the first detailed map of the city. During the 1870s, the demolition of the coastal walls and the construction of the quay added a new area of commercial uses. Perhaps the major change in the Frankish Quarter came, however, when the authorities decided to draw a street that would run vertically to the sea and connect the quay, at the point of the Customs House, to the Government Hall and the hills above. The Sabri Paşa Boulevard would soon evolve into the heart of the district, bringing together the tiny shops of the smaller merchants and the ever-larger establishments of the biggest traders of the city.

Time in the marketplace revolved around a set of repeated activities that brought together all businessmen in the city. Saturday was recognised as the day of rest, thanks to the Jewish predominance in the city. All commercial activity ceased and arriving ships had to wait until Sunday to load or unload, as the Jewish porters and boatmen would not be in their usual posts in the dock.¹³⁵ As a result, Friday would be the day when payments were made and debts settled. The local merchants would strive to close their accounts before the end of the day and maintain their credibility in a business environment, where credit and good faith were paramount.¹³⁶ The periodical nature of the week was highlighted by the schedule of the trains, the passenger steamers that called on the port, and the different post offices that served the city. Between them, they served as an important conduit of news on outside events and fluctuations in the prices of commodities and the rate of exchange for the different currencies in circulation.¹³⁷

The latter was in fact essential information for local commerce, since merchants trading in Salonica had to contend with transactions in a number of different currencies, as the Ottoman currency never achieved a monopoly within the empire. This situation led to a volatile exchange rate, especially in the early years of commercial expansion, and, unavoidably, to speculation in the currency market.¹³⁸

¹³⁵ Nehama, 1393-1396.

¹³⁶ Ibid.; Papamichos-Chronakis, 184-188.

¹³⁷ The publication of the scheduled arrivals of boats, trains and the post was a standard feature of the yearbooks. See for example *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik XVIII* [XVII] 1322 [1905], 338-343.

¹³⁸ The fiscal problems of the empire and its inability to fully overcome them led to the imposition of what Şevket Pamuk terms the ‘limping golden standard.’ Pamuk, *Monetary*

Combined with existing aspects of the Ottoman economy, such as the still limited commercialisation of the provincial economy, there was always the possibility of a shortfall of liquidity with serious implications for local commerce. In the short-term, credit had been traditionally provided at a high interest by local money-lenders, usually merchants who loaned part of their profits.¹³⁹ From the mid-nineteenth century on, their operations expanded to include other kinds of services, helping their clients through the complicated web of currency transactions and deferred payments that defined the city's market.¹⁴⁰ Even when formal banking institutions were established in Salonica, starting with the Ottoman Bank (*Banque Ottomane Impériale*) in 1863, their role did not diverge from that model: They regulated and stabilised the exchange rate, communicated crucial information about local conditions,¹⁴¹ and provided limited credit.¹⁴² Their lending strategy was conservative, and their exposure to high-risk loans was limited. The smaller money-lenders and bankers placed themselves as intermediaries between the bank and the lesser trading houses, using their own high credit to borrow money from the former and re-lending it at higher rates of interest. The two most successful local banking operations, that of the Allatini brothers and of Saul Modiano, would grow into incorporated banks in their own right, dominating the local economy for the next twenty years or so.¹⁴³

The banks were located in the commercial quarters of Salonica, near the establishments of their clients. They found lodgings in the former mansions of the local elite, who were now building their new houses in the suburbs, to the east of the city proper. The Ottoman Bank was housed in the Abbot mansion, located in the

history of the Ottoman empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 216-220. See also Elena Frangakis-Syrett, "Banking in Izmir in the early twentieth century", *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 24, 2 (December 2009), 115-132.

¹³⁹ The yearbook for 1315 [1897] counts 22 "banks and bankers" in the city; nineteen names are recorded in 1325 [1907]. See *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik XV [XIV]*, 298, XX [XIX], 578.

¹⁴⁰ Chatziiosif, 168.

¹⁴¹ It seems that the German consulate would routinely forward to the Ottoman Bank enquiries of German traders that searched for suitable partners and agents in the region on local merchants. The bank would then provide information on how much credit the exporters could open to a given merchant, and how 'moral' he was regarded as. For examples, see PA-AA Gk Saloniki, 40, Hirsch to Consulate, October 15, 1885; Gritzner to consulate, December 10, 1885.

¹⁴² Banks preferred to lend only to the most credit-worthy local businessmen. According to Chekimoglou, who cites the example of all bankruptcies of 1907, the five banks of the city underwrote only 10% of the outstanding debt, the rest involving lesser money-lenders (20%) or debts between merchants (70%). Chekimoglou, *Ypothesi Modiano*, 22, fn. 18.

¹⁴³ *Idem*, *Trapezes kai Thessaloniki*, 38, 86; *idem*, *Ypothesi Modiano*, 31-35.

heart of the Frankish quarter, from about the early 1870s.¹⁴⁴ The *Banque de Salonique* was founded in 1888 as a partnership between the Allatini banking house, the Österreichische Länderbank and the Comptoir d'Escompte, and its administration was decided between Vienna, Paris and the office of Alfred Misrahi, the director of the Salonica branch.¹⁴⁵ The bank was initially located within the building complex in the Frankish Quarter that had also contained the mansion of the Allatini family. The block was eventually demolished and rebuilt into an arcade, with office space on the upper floor.¹⁴⁶ The *Banque Saul* was the third major bank in the city and represented the incorporation of all money-lending activities of Saul Modiano and his sons within a modern banking institution. The bank was located in the *Cite Saul*, the family's commercial complex on Sabri Paşa Boulevard.

The local market was not shaped solely by the forces of supply, demand and the availability of capital. The Ottoman authorities took an active role on imposing their presence upon commercial transactions, in attempt to tap into the growing volumes of trade to cover their own fiscal needs, but also to ensure that they maintained an oversight upon the activities of merchants, and especially foreign merchants. The introduction of a new commercial code in the 1850s, modelled after the French example, was an attempt to regulate state jurisdiction and at the same time make merchants surrender part of the autonomy they enjoyed since the trade agreements of the 1830s. Certainly, the parallel judicial systems that operated within the empire would give enough leeway to those trading in ports like Salonica. In May 1884, the Spanish consulate announced that it would make arrangements for the bankruptcy of Ephraim Levi, a local trader, after having proved to the Ottoman authorities that Levi was indeed a Spanish subject.¹⁴⁷ Suspicious of the Ottoman legal practice in the case of litigations, since it usually favoured the servicing of smaller lenders first, in the name of fairness, local bankers avoided lending on

¹⁴⁴ John Karatzoglou, *The Imperial Ottoman Bank in Salonica: The first 25 years, 1864-1890* (Istanbul: Ottoman Bank Archives and Research Centre, 2003), 8-9.

¹⁴⁵ Dangas, 113-114.

¹⁴⁶ Kornilia Trakasopoulou-Tzima, "To archontiko ton Allatini sto Fragkomachala: I exelixi tou astikou chorou kai o architektonikos typos" [The Allatini mansion in the Frankish quarter: the evolution of urban space the architectural style], in *Neoklasiki Poli kai architektoniki: panellinio synedrio, praktika* [The Neoclassical city and [its] architecture: national conference, minutes] (Thessaloniki: Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Department of Architecture, 1983), 161-171.

¹⁴⁷ *Faros* 837, 28/4/1884 [May 10, 1884].

mortgage, insisting on the temporary transfer of the mortgaged assets for the loan's duration.¹⁴⁸

If the Salonica traders could work around Ottoman commercial justice, they were still obliged to confront the city's Customs Office. The Customs assessed what it deemed to be the correct duties on the merchandise it processed, according to a wide set of criteria: Ottoman and foreign traders were subject to different export and import dues, these dues also differed according to the nature of the goods,¹⁴⁹ as well as to whether they came from or were destined to an Ottoman port, an Ottoman dominion, or a foreign country. Adding to that were emergency measures that interfered with commerce – the prohibition of cereal exports in times of shortage, or forbidding the entry of ships from ports where there were cases of the plague or cholera. Merchants dealing with the local Customs House officials constantly complained about what they regarded as a complex and arbitrary web of red tape, administrative incompetence and corruption.¹⁵⁰ Nobody could be fully certain what the eventual dues would amount to, nor how long their merchandise would be kept in the Customs warehouse.¹⁵¹ From the perspective of the state, however, the Customs House played a crucial role, as it was located in the liminal place between the empire and the outside world. In that context, it was the space of final arbitration on matters of citizenship and sovereignty on people and goods. Since the same issues had been so hotly contested between the European powers and the Ottoman state, the Customs House was perhaps the only place where the latter could freely display the full range of its authority.

¹⁴⁸ Chekimoglou, *Ypothesi Modiano*, 26-27.

¹⁴⁹ When a certain Baruxachi, a merchant based in nearby Karies, imported 16 puncheons of "Mediterranean Rum" from Britain, the shipment was stopped at the Customs House. The rationale of the officials was that, although imported British spirits were exempt from import dues, that exemption did not apply to spirits imported with the specific intent of using them in the local production of *raki*. The British manufacturers were forced to explain that, though the rum was of a lesser quality than what they provided the British market with, it was nonetheless fit to be consumed on its own. FO 195/2298, Lamb to Barclay, July 26, 1908.

¹⁵⁰ FO 78/4288, Blunt to Salisbury, March 3, 1890.

¹⁵¹ In 1875, *Matalon Padre & Figli*, a trading house in Salonica, brought 5 bales of Egyptian cotton, to sell it on behalf of their German partners, *Liepmann & C^e* of Alexandria. Though the latter had paid the fee for domestic consumption in Egypt, still technically an Ottoman dominion, the Salonica Customs officials refused to process the cargo, unless the full import fees were paid. PA-AA Gk Saloniki, 37, Matalon to Abbott, January 17, 1875.

In 1882 a Chamber of Commerce (*Ticaret Odasi*) was founded in Salonica.¹⁵² Its founding and future operation was envisaged as a way to regulate commercial activity in the city and defuse any complications between the authorities and the local traders. Its first president was Mehmed Kapancı Efendi, and the first council included local dignitaries like Bohor and Beniko Saltiel, Isakino Fernandez-Allatini, Jacob Modiano, and Loir, the director of the Ottoman Bank in the city.¹⁵³ The Chamber would soon be renamed to the Chamber of Agriculture, Commerce and Industry (*Ziraat, Ticaret ve Sanaat Odasi*), but its membership was largely restricted to local merchants; its president would always be a Muslim, with Osman Ali Efendi and Mustafa Hüsnü Efendi, a trader in dry goods, holding the post between them up to 1907. Going through the make-up of the body in the following years, one finds the same names of influential local merchants: The Saltiels, Nehama Mallach, the director of the *Banque de Salonique* Alfred Misrahi, Stefanos Tattis, Haim Saiaz. Carlo Allatini made an appearance in the chamber council in 1905. Jacob and Levi Modiano and Joseph [Giuseppe] Misrahi held a monopoly of the positions of the first and second syndic [*müşavir*]. Angel Hatzi Misheff, trader and an interpreter at the Russian consulate, represented the Bulgarian element.¹⁵⁴

The Chamber of Commerce offered influential local traders a unique way to lobby the Ottoman authorities for their demands *vis-à-vis* the application of legislation, their transactions with the Customs Office and, gradually, the terms of dealing with the foreign companies that owned the train and port infrastructure and threatened to impose a monopoly on the commercial traffic of the city. Council members of the chamber would frequently be invited to the different administrative committees of the province and acquired some leverage on the process of approval for their own business deals by the state. It must be noted that membership in the council was structured into four ranks, depending on their contribution and their particular trade. As such, the select group of merchants who belonged to the first class of members could both have their predominance formally recognised and at the

¹⁵² Papamichos-Chronakis, 163-164. The first committee is recorded in *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik IX* [VIII], 1303 [1886], 104-105.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.* Note that the first council was divided between members and foreign members (*aza-i ecnebi*), a distinction that was evidently abolished later.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*; *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik X* [IX], 1307 [1890], 115-116; XI [X], 1310 [1892], 54; XII [XI], 1311 [1893], 94-95; XIII [XII], 1312 [1894], 72-73; XIV [XIII], 1313 [1895], 69-70; XV [XIV], 1315 [1897], 166-167; XVI [XV], 1318 [1900], 104; XVII [XVI], 1320 [1902], 156; XVIII [XVII], 1322 [1905], 95-96; XIX [XVIII], 1324 [1906], 133-134; XX [XIX], 1325 [1907], 133-134.

same time project their demands as demands of all chamber members, or even the commercial classes of the city.¹⁵⁵ Thus, the chamber took up the duty to research and to regulate the local market, drafting lists of commodity prices and current currency exchange rates. An attempt, however, to found a Commodity Exchange in the city faltered in the face of opposition from the Allatini and the Modiano families.¹⁵⁶

The attempt to set up a commodity exchange corresponded to long-standing fears for the volatility of prices that depended not only on global demand but also on stable conditions and increasing investment in the economy of the city's hinterland. This was especially crucial, as local exports would increasingly depend on a single cash-crop: tobacco. While its cultivation had already started in the mid-nineteenth century, it was to really take off by 1900, encouraged by strong demand in the US market.¹⁵⁷ However, the monopoly status of the crop placed a restraint on the merchants' profits. After the creation of the Ottoman Public Debt Administration in 1881, the monopoly on tobacco was one of the revenues the state had pledged for the servicing of its debt. In 1883, the newly formed *Société de la Régie cointéressée des tabacs de l'Empire Ottomane* assumed the monopoly right to all tobacco sold or processed within the empire; the *Régie* did not have a similar monopoly on exported tobacco, but producers were obliged to pass their produce through sanctioned warehouses, where its destination could be determined.¹⁵⁸ Export merchants in each tobacco-growing region were required to use designated ports, as well as to pay rights of consummation before being allowed to trade;¹⁵⁹ producers had to deal with suppressed prices, as the *Régie* attempted to reduce production.¹⁶⁰ The policies of the monopoly would soon arouse the hostility of the state and local traders, and rampant tobacco smuggling became cause of considerable loss for the company.¹⁶¹ Violent

¹⁵⁵ Papamichos-Chronakis, 166-167.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 179-182. For Papamichos-Chronakis, this suggests that the two families consciously distanced themselves from the Chamber of Commerce in an attempt to retain their position as representatives of local traders, in virtue of their economic predominance. As shown above, their constant presence (personally in the case of the Modianos, through Alfred and Joseph Misrahi for the Allatinis) somewhat undermines this argument.

¹⁵⁷ Birdal, 129-130; Quataert, *Social disintegration and popular resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908: Reactions to European economic penetration* (New York: New York University Press, 1983), 36.

¹⁵⁸ Birdal, 132, 135-136.

¹⁵⁹ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Barclay, July 21, 1908.

¹⁶⁰ Quataert, *Disintegration and resistance*, 23-24.

¹⁶¹ The *Régie* only managed to register 70-85% of tobacco grown in the major centres, and about half of the production in the rest of the country. Ibid., 21.

incidents between smugglers and company staff were frequent, and the tensions they caused threatened the commercial ties between Salonica and its hinterland.

These connections were vital in maintaining the city as an important urban centre, even beyond their commercial significance. With Ottoman port-cities historically suffering from high mortality rates throughout the early modern period, their population was sustained at high levels only thanks to a continuous stream of migrants from elsewhere – meaning, in the case of Salonica, Jews from the Western Mediterranean and Greek Orthodox and Muslims from the Macedonian interior. With growing job opportunities in the commercial and industrial sectors at the end of the nineteenth century (and, equally, with public safety in the countryside deteriorating), that stream would soon become a wave. Apart from Macedonian peasants, Salonica became refuge for thousands of displaced individuals, be they Muslims from Bosnia and Bulgaria, or Jews escaping persecution in Russia or Greece.¹⁶² Many of those migrants did not stay in the city, moving on to other Ottoman ports or, increasingly, to the New World. Those that did, however, were enough to lead to a tripling of the local population between 1860 and 1910 and reach 150,000 by 1912. At the same time, they played an important role in the local economy, keeping wages subdued and profit margins high.

Salonica was equally attractive to the different provincial elite groups. It was the undisputed economic centre of the Ottoman Balkans, and all commercial activity had to pass through its port or train station. Moreover, its schools, its societies and charitable institutions, its vibrant social life and market, made the city a model for the towns of the interior – a model readily accessible thanks to the expanding transportation network. Though the provincial bureaucracy eventually extended its presence to the county (*kaza*) level, high-level representations to state officials still needed to take place in the city. Salonica's non-Muslim communities were expected to provide guidance and material assistance to their coreligionists throughout the province.¹⁶³

The city's elites had long been strengthened by new groups, whose arrival rejuvenated the commercial links between the city and the outside world. The arrival of Greek Orthodox merchants in the second third of the nineteenth century helped

¹⁶² Dilek Akyalçın-Kaya, "Immigration into the Ottoman Territory: The case of Salonica in the late nineteenth century," in eds. Freitag et al., 177-189.

¹⁶³ Molho, "La renouveau de la communauté juive", 92

the community recover from the massacre and deprivations of the 1820s. The Italian Jewish families, who began to settle in Salonica in the late 1700s, found themselves in control of the local economy by the end of the following century. Their dominance was in turn brought into question by the arrival of a new generation of Greek Orthodox merchants from Western and Central Macedonia, who began making their presence in the city felt during the 1880s. As before, they drew their economic strength from controlling the routes that linked the countryside and the port, the small farmers and the import and export merchants. A group of entrepreneurs from the town of Naoussa [Ağustos], including Giorgos Kyrtsis, Dimitris Tourpalis, and the Logkos family, experimented with using the local waterfalls as a power source for the production of textiles. Their mills soon evolved into major industrial units that rivalled the production capabilities of any Ottoman city. The position of these entrepreneurs received a major boost, when two Greek-based banks, the *Banque d'Orient* and the *Banque d'Athènes* opened branches in Salonica.¹⁶⁴ By the early twentieth century, the commerce of Salonica had been divided between foreign trade, dominated by the Jewish businessmen, and the trade with the countryside, where the Greek Macedonian traders had strong representation.

In comparison to merchant groups that had arrived to Salonica in the past, these new elites did not attempt to fully integrate in local society. Their presence in the city represented only one node in a wider network of trade routes and family members acting as commercial agents. The source of their economic power and their social status remained in their respective hometowns in the countryside. They visited their native place often and would frequently target it with their charitable contributions.¹⁶⁵ Conversely, they were slow to adjust to the aspects of commercial and social life in Salonica. Though they soon became involved in the administration of the Greek Orthodox community, indeed, helping to revive it, they were not represented in the institutions of local administration and commerce until the very end of the period.¹⁶⁶ Unlike the older generations of Greek Orthodox elites in Salonica, they did not much cultivate close relations with either the Muslim or the

¹⁶⁴ Chatziiosif, 162-164.

¹⁶⁵ Papamichos-Chronakis, 59-63.

¹⁶⁶ We see Kostakis Melfos and Giorgos Turpalis in the municipal council in 1907. *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik* XX [XIX] [1907], 150.

Jewish elites of the city, and remained closely attached to the local Greek consulate.¹⁶⁷

For the casual observer, the newly arrived Greek Orthodox merchants had evolved into the mirror image of the established Jewish elites. Their identity was emphatically ethnic and regional. Salonica was only important for their collective self-imagination insofar as it was the natural capital city of Macedonia. Otherwise, it was a place, where the Greek Orthodox found themselves outnumbered and out-competed by the Jewish element. Conversely, it was exactly that predominance that made Salonica so central in Jewish identity. Salonica was a markedly Jewish city, both to the unsympathetic visitor and to the Jews themselves. That allowed the Jewish elites to freely equate Jewishness with locality in their discourse, and enjoying a highly visible position in the city's commercial and social life. With the Greek Orthodox merchants extending their reach in local commerce and banking, the once undisputed link between the essence of the city and its Jewish population now appeared under threat.¹⁶⁸ Fanned by the press,¹⁶⁹ instances of economic competition would often evolve into open confrontations between the two communities.¹⁷⁰

Nonetheless, Salonica's economic and social life appeared able to overcome such tensions. The institutions and practices around which local society was structured, continued to function and guaranteed that ethnic antagonism would remain inside certain limits. Jewish fears and Orthodox aspirations aside, the local market remained a set of interconnected parts, which linked it both to its hinterland and to the ports of the empire and beyond. The leading businessmen of the three communities of the city may not have been represented equally in its economic life, but all contributed to maintaining a steady and profitable level of economic activity. More militant members of the Greek Orthodox community - usually recent arrivals

¹⁶⁷ This development is perhaps unsurprising, bearing in mind that the Macedonian countryside had been for decades plagued by the confrontation between a Greek and a Bulgarian Orthodox element – a confrontation which in the early twentieth century erupted in open warfare. Thanos Veremis, "From the national state to the stateless nation, 1821-1910" in *Modern Greece: Nationalisms and nationality*, eds. Veremis, Martin Blinkhorn (Athens: ELIAMEP, 1990), 9-22.

¹⁶⁸ Dumont, "The Social Structure", 68-70.

¹⁶⁹ In August 1908 both *Alitheia* and *Faros*, the two Greek newspapers of the city began publishing the novel "The Devil in Turkey" by S. Xenos in series. The novel, whose plot revolved around the theme of the Blood Libel, forced the intervention of the authorities and its publication was discontinued. The incident led to much acrimony between the Greek Orthodox and Jewish newspapers. Kandylikis, 142.

¹⁷⁰ See the discussion in Papamichos-Chronakis, 63-71.

from Greece - did indeed suggest that Greek Orthodox businesses boycott their Jewish competitors. They would, however, have been quickly dismissed by the resident elites, not only because they did not feel adequately strong for the task, but because they regarded Jewish commercial activities as essential for the economic life of the region.¹⁷¹

Conclusion

In the second half of the nineteenth century two distinct groups emerged in Salonica (and the Ottoman Empire in general) as result of state policy and dominant trends in the Ottoman and world economy: a commercial bourgeoisie, in this case dominated by local Jews, but with a strong representation of the Greek Orthodox and the *dönme* element, and a bureaucracy comprised from career military and civil officials, which steadily placed an increasing part of urban life under its oversight. The interplay between these two groups, which had soon established themselves at the top of local societies, would profoundly shape the late Ottoman port-city. Their agendas were initially conflicting, the bureaucracy anxious to impose state control on and to minimise European presence in the local market, and the bourgeoisie wishing to defend its relative autonomy, to which it owed its wealth and status. Nonetheless, the two groups soon managed work out a balance between them, which was sustained within a number of intermediary spaces, from the representative councils of local administration, to the commissions and committees of local notables that were entrusted with regulating aspects of local economy. The relations between the two groups, indeed the relations within them, were unequal and hierarchical. They managed to survive, however, for more than thirty years, buoyed by a discourse of urban reform that was universally accepted in the city and the promise of steady economic growth and stability.

In the following years, the symbolic and the economic aspect of this cohabitation would find their full expression in the radical transformation of the urban fabric of Salonica. The bureaucratic structures, the intermediary administrative bodies, and the economic might of the business elites would converge on urban space and impose themselves on the cityscape. Architectural style, concepts of planning and the regulation of space, patterns of land ownership, and practices of

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 208.

everyday life in Salonica would all change as a result of number of initiatives, some thought out in Istanbul, but all applied locally. The following chapter aims to offer a detailed account of that process.

Rebuilding the Ottoman City: The Transformation of Salonica's Cityscape

Chapter Two

One day in May 1870, a large number of Salonicans gathered by the city's coastal walls, some crowding its ramparts, while others approaching from the sea on boats. At the head of the crowd was Sabri Paşa, the governor-general of the province, accompanied by the heads of all three of the city's religious communities, the consular corps, the military and civil officials, and all local citizens of note. Even though the walls had been last repaired as recently as the 1830s, they were now thought to be a detriment to the city's development. While the decision was taken to retain the Tophane fort in the northwest end of the walls, and the prison of *Kanlı Kule* (the "bloody tower", renamed White Tower as part of the beautification of the waterfront) in the southeast, everything in between was to be pulled down. Their rubble would be used to straighten the shoreline and extend it into the sea, thus making space for a line of waterfront houses and a promenade that would run parallel to the water. The crowds had come to observe what they correctly judged to be a defining moment in the city's future. At the height of the ceremony, when the sultan's orders that authorised the project were read, Sabri Paşa was presented with a silver hammer and started chipping away at the wall, to the jubilant applause from all those present.¹

The demolition of the coastal walls of Salonica in 1870 marked a period of urban expansion and transformation, which can be divided into a number of distinct phases. Initially, the construction of the quay led to the emergence of a new district along the waterfront. The quay (*rihtim*) functioned as a modern façade to the city, and served as a model, in terms of architectural design and planning, for the developments that followed. About ten years later, the walls that flanked the Eastern and Western approaches to the city were also pulled down, leading to expansion of the city to both sides of its historical core. The centre, on the other hand, remained largely unaffected by such developments, until a devastating fire in 1890 destroyed a large area within the heart of the city. A municipal decree forbade immediate

¹ Yerolympos, *Urban Transformations in the Balkans (1820-1920)* (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1996), 63-64, citing French diplomatic sources.

reconstruction, and a new plan completed three years later imposed a grid pattern on the affected neighbourhoods, and set clear regulations for all newly constructed buildings. The construction boom that had until that point defined the new suburbs would now extend to the centre.

The earliest such initiatives were launched by the provincial government and its newly-appointed, “dynamic” officials. The affluent local notables welcomed such interventions, and took advantage of the new spaces opened up in the process. They would inscribe their growing importance onto the urban and suburban fabric by constructing lavish private houses in the eclecticist and neo-classicist styles that had become the rage in Southern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean in the late 19th century. They would also reinvest a significant part of their profits from trade and agriculture in the real estate market. Revenues received from the auctioning and renting of state land, and taxes collected from private owners and the transfer of property, especially taking into account the rising prices, covered most of the costs of the different projects. Eventually, the initiative on the different projects passed from the *vilayet* to the municipality, signalling a growing involvement in the process of urban restructuring by local civil society. The cityscape continued to expand and evolve under the combined influence of state and municipal ordinances, the interests of property owners and contractors, and a vernacular discourse on the modernisation of public and domestic space.²

The present chapter will attempt to highlight the transformation of the cityscape, and connect it to the state and non-state actors present in the city. It will draw heavily on a collection of most valuable sources that retrace the evolution of the late Ottoman city and are preserved in the historical Archive of Macedonia (*Istoriko Arheio Makedonias*, IAM), in Thessaloniki: The tax registries (*esas defteris*) of 1906 provide a full list of neighbourhoods, streets, properties and their owners (or more precisely the person responsible for paying tax on the property).³

² Compare to Glover, 130ff.

³ Cem Bahar, *A neighborhood in Ottoman Istanbul: Fruit vendors and civil servants in the Kasap İlyas mahalle* (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 2003), 20-30, gives a detailed description of the *esas defteri* as a source. Bahar uses these registries in an attempt to reconstruct a specific quarter in Istanbul. The only study that has so far employed the *esas defters* of Salonica is Vasilios Dimitriadis, *I topografia tis Thessalonikis kata tin epohi tis Turkokratias, 1430-1912* [A topography of Thessaloniki under the Turks, 1430-1912] (Thessaloniki: Etairia Makedonikon Spoudon, 1983). Beyond being one of the pioneers of the use of Ottoman sources in Greece, Dimitriadis is invaluable in having attempted to demarcate the neighbourhoods of Ottoman Salonica, and reconstructing the street layout of the city in 1906. That being his main concern, however, he offers little

Additionally, the archives contain the full series of cadastral registers kept by the Ottoman authorities of the city: more than seventy volumes of “roll-call” registers (*yoklama defteris*) and transfer registers (*defter-i hakkanîs*).⁴ I have made partial and selective use of this material, focusing on the registers from the early 1890s and the *esas defteris* of 1906, that is at the beginning and the end of the period of most rapid construction activity in the city.

Some initial remarks on how urban space was structured before the period under study will allow for a comparison with later developments. Then each of the three major waves of urban expansion and change will be studied in order. Apart from the changes imposed on the city themselves, I will be examining the impact of existing Ottoman legislation that governed urban planning in the empire and defined the jurisdiction of local governments therein – as well as the inspiration provided to Salonica’s urban reformers by similar initiatives taken in other Ottoman cities at about the same period. At the same time, I will be tracing the presence of the city’s elites with respect to the local property market, and will juxtapose the aims, means and strategies of those involved in the process of transforming the late Ottoman port of Salonica.

The ‘Traditional’ City and its Manifestations

Travellers visiting Salonica in the mid-19th century invariably described a city encapsulated in a timeless present. With its skyline dominated by its many minarets, the absence of a central square serving as the main public space, its mass of winding streets, narrow alleys and *culs-de-sac*, its mixture of ancient monuments and ramshackle wooden houses, Salonica was seemingly a typical example of a city of the Near East. The visitors’ reaction oscillated between exoticism and disdain. European travellers would more often than not compare Ottoman Salonica with an idealised image of ancient Thessaloniki, and lament the disappearance of the Greco-Roman grid and the forums that had constituted the core of the Hellenistic city, both in the physical and the political sense. Others would pit Ottoman Salonica against the cities of their own countries, which were experiencing at their time various projects

information on ownership patterns and the use of land.

⁴ For what these forms of registers entail, see Martha Mundy and Richard Saumarez Smith, *Governing property, making the modern state: Law, administration, and production in Ottoman Syria* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 70-73, 83.

aiming at bringing the cityscape in tune with the times. Their opinions, indeed the opinions of European travellers, visitors, and residents throughout North Africa and the Middle East, would be, after a few decades, instrumental in the formulation of the first typologies of the “Islamic City” by French and German Orientalists.

The verdict was that the public sphere, which had sustained European urbanism over the centuries, was in the Ottoman Empire (indeed, in the Muslim world) subsumed under the disparate individual interests, mainly because of the influence of Islamic law, the prevalent moral code, and the administrative practices of Muslim states. On one hand, none of the Four Schools of Islamic law seemed to recognise an autonomous status for public space, preferring to safeguard the rights of the individual in respect to issues pertaining to the administration of urban space (the form and height of buildings, the width and direction of streets etc.). At the same time, the political authorities preferred to take a hands-off approach to city governance, leaving individuals and collectivities (urban clans, neighbours, guilds, religious and ethnic minorities) to resolve differences between themselves. The cities that emerged as a result were compartmentalised into enclaves, often physically separated from each other, and all space within them was treated as a projection of the private sphere, thus affecting both legal rights and behavioural norms.⁵ The Islamic city remained thus unchanged, until European commercial interests, tentative modernisation by local rulers, and the outright imposition of colonialism brought them ‘back’ into the historical trajectory.⁶

We now know that such discourses on Islamic urbanism were in fact based on specific case studies (mainly in Maghreb and Syria), in a specific time period (the turn of the twentieth century), projected into the past and held as representative of the whole Muslim world. In the example of Salonica, the elements that constituted the ‘traditional’ city, that is the city before the initiation of large-scale spatial intervention on the part of the Ottoman authorities, are not always compatible with the typologies of the ‘Islamic City’. This holds true not only for the original Orientalist discourse, but also for the more recent attempts to study Islamic

⁵ Besim S. Hakim, “Law and the city”, in *The City in the Islamic World*, eds. Salma K. Jayyusi et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 76.

⁶ For a critical account of the emergence of the Islamic city as an analytical category, as well as of the relevant literature, see Janet L. Abu-Lughod, “The Islamic City: Historic myth, Islamic essence, and contemporary relevance”, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 19 (1987), 155-176.

urbanism, which emerged from 1980 onwards.⁷ Even works that specifically deal with urban settlements in the Balkans during Ottoman rule do not necessarily capture the realities of Salonica, whose size and commercial importance put it apart from other cities and towns of the region.⁸ As result, certain aspects of Salonica conform to proposed models, while others do not.

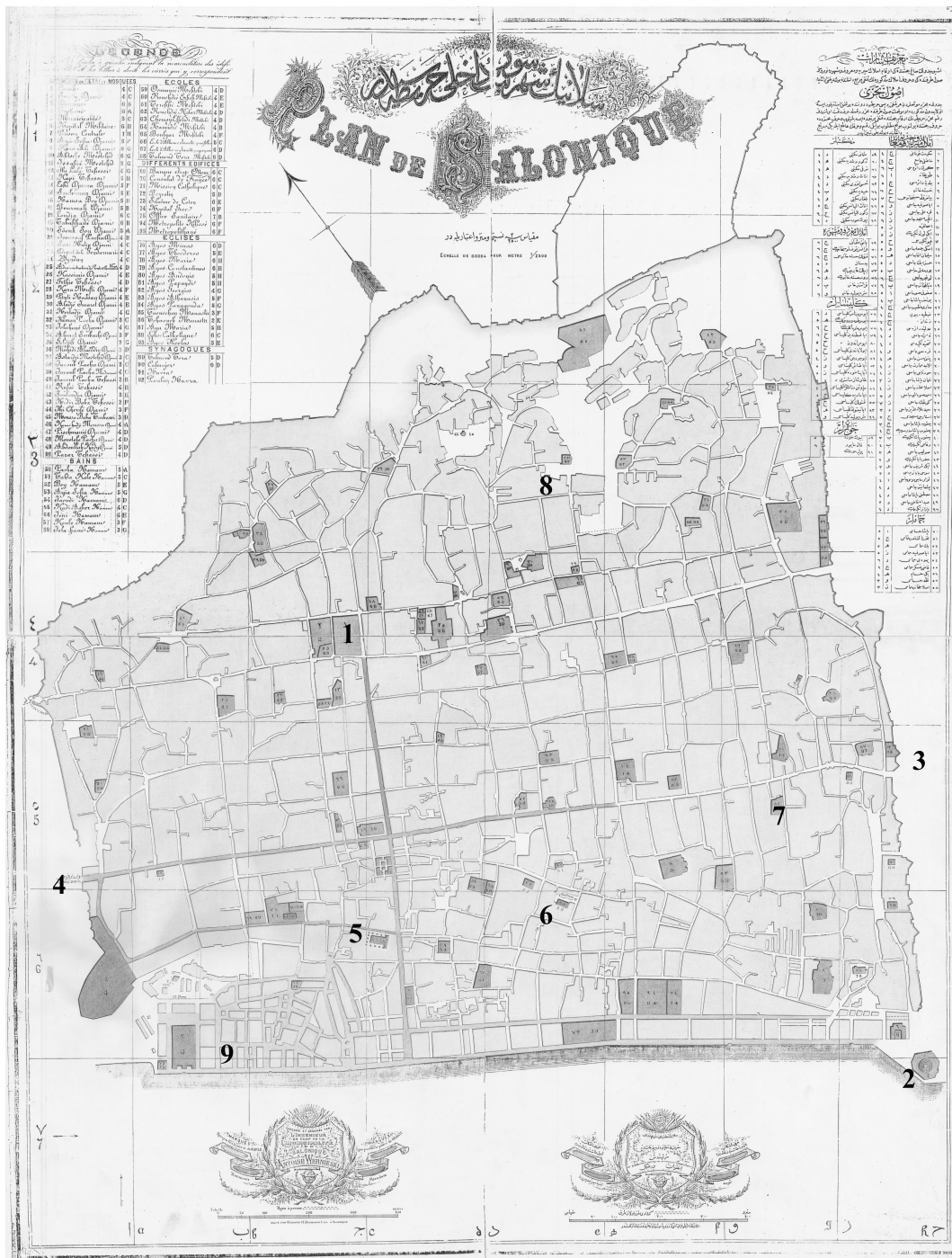
One of the city's main features was the wall that fully surrounded it, delineated its boundaries and confined its growth. City walls may have been common enough in the urban centres of the Arab provinces, but in the Balkans, where most settlements had at best a tower or fort for protection, they were the exception. The fortifications, as they stood in the 19th century, followed more or less the course of the Roman and Byzantine walls, but had received extensive repairs throughout the centuries of Ottoman rule, the last being in the early 1830s, when the threat of pirate attacks following the Greek Revolution was still strong.⁹ Within the walls, the city was spatially divided between the quarters that lay closest to the sea, where most commercial activity took place, and the ones that lay on the hills, overlooking the city, where the few government buildings were also located. [See Map 2] The two parts of town were separated by the "Long Way", the street that ran parallel to the sea connecting the city's two main gates, and which constituted the last remnant of the grid that had defined the Hellenistic city.¹⁰ Neighbourhoods on both sides of this informal divide never became fully segregated in ethnic and religious terms, nor did they constitute physically enclosed and detached spaces as in the case of Middle Eastern *haras*. Nonetheless,

⁷ This emerging literature addresses many of the issues with previous works on the subject, but is still heavily biased towards case studies located in the Levant and Northern Africa. For such a formulation, including ample references to the contemporary literature, see André Raymond, "The spatial organization of the city", in *The City in the Islamic World*, 47-70.

⁸ See Pierre Pinon, "The Ottoman cities of the Balkans", *ibid.*, 143-158. Nikolai Todorov's seminal *The Balkan City, 1400-1900* (Seattle, Washington, and London: University of Washington Press, 1983), is a study of social and economic functions rather than of urban forms and their evolution, and in any case draws heavily from towns and cities of Bulgaria.

⁹ See footnote 1 of the present chapter.

¹⁰ If the conclusions of Hugh Kennedy, "From *polis* to *madina*: urban change in late antique and early Islamic Syria", *Past & Present* 106 (February 1985), 3-27, hold true for other regions as well, we can assume that the gradual disappearance of the grid under a mass of buildings and an irregular street layout was a process that predated the Ottoman conquest by many centuries. Pinon, 151, claims that "in Salonica the Hellenistic network (orthogonal plan) is, despite some variations in the detail, particularly well preserved in lower quarters", but his statement cannot be confirmed by extant evidence, including the maps drawn before 1890 and the subsequent restructuring of these areas. Even the Long Way itself was not actually straight, until the construction works performed by the municipality in 1906-1907.



[Map 2] Antoine Wernieski, *Plan de Salonique*, early 1880s. Source: BOA, Y.EE. 64/4. Key: (1) Government Mansion (2) Kanlı Kule [White Tower] (3) Kelemeriye Gate (4) Vardar Gate (5) Frankish Quarter (6) Jewish Quarters (7) Greek Orthodox Quarters (8) Upper Town and Muslim Quarters (9) *İştirā* Quarter and the Port.

the lower and upper quarters of the city were generally regarded as non-Muslim and Muslim respectively – something that became increasingly pronounced from the 18th century onwards, when the steady trickle of Jewish immigration into the city, mainly from Italy, led to the gradual diminishing of the Muslim presence in the lower

quarters. The divide was often expressed in symbolic terms, with the upper quarters enjoying the cleansing effects of the northern winds, while the lower quarters were exposed to the humid southern winds, which were widely believed to be linked to the plague and disease in general. A second division distinguished the “Frankish” quarter, located in the north-western corner of the city, nearest to the port, where most commercial activity was located, with the rest of the city, where space was mostly residential.¹¹

Houses in the city were almost always made of timber, and were usually detached from each other, their front never oriented towards the street they were aligned to, the door opening instead onto a courtyard or a garden that insulated the house from the outside world.¹² The house itself was usually constructed around a larger central room, the *hayat* or *sofa*, where the other rooms (*oda*), if any, opened.¹³ Larger houses frequently had a second floor, which projected into the street by means of corbelling (*şahniş*, *cumba*), were painted in bright colours, and had many windows.¹⁴ That type of house is still today remembered as the “Turkish house” in the Ottoman successor states in the Balkans, and is regarded as the quintessential traditional style; it must be noted, however, that its emergence is itself a result of the changing conditions of the 18th century, and that it cannot be considered representative of urban architecture before that period.¹⁵ Housing blocks were largely irregular, thus affecting the course of the adjoining streets. One can assume that, with properties being divided into many shares with each subsequent generation, the need for more housing would result in new constructions appropriating parts of the streets.¹⁶

The gradual division of properties into smaller and smaller shares made the ownership status of urban buildings a very complex issue. All the more so since there was no single law that governed property ownership, its transfer by selling or

¹¹ While most of the major markets of the city were concentrated around the “Frankish” quarter, there seems to be no absolute separation between commercial and residential functions in the city, with various guilds operating smaller markets within otherwise residential quarters. In comparison, see Raymond, “Spatial organization”, 59.

¹² Pinon, 153.

¹³ See Doğan Kuban, *The Turkish Hayat House* (Istanbul: Eren, 1995); Todorov, 164-172, offers substantial quantitative documentation on house sizes and prices in the Bulgarian cities of Vidin, Sofia, and Rusçuk for the 18th century.

¹⁴ Pinon, 148; Gilles Veinstein, “The Ottoman town (fifteenth-eighteenth centuries”, in *The Islamic City*, 216-217.

¹⁵ *Idib.*

¹⁶ Pinon, 155.

inheritance, and its taxation; instead, such issues were administered by the Islamic judges (*kadı*s) through the application of Islamic law (*şeriat*), administrative ordinances issued from Istanbul (*kanun*), which were by the mid-19th century represented in the city by the secular courts (*nizamiye*), by Greek Orthodox and Jewish canonical law, for the numerous non-Muslim inhabitants of the city – and even European courts, that operated in the respective foreign consulates and adjudicated cases that arose between foreign subjects.¹⁷ The recognition of the validity of parallel legal systems went hand in hand with the recognition of parallel ownership rights for the same properties. Distinction was made between the property owner and the owner of usufruct rights. In the Ottoman context, the state held ownership of most rural lands (*miri* properties), while urban properties could be privately held (*mülk*) or belong to a religious foundation (*vakıf*, plural *evkâf*). Usufruct rights, on the other hand, were subject to a small regular fee, and could be transferred or inherited.¹⁸

How complex the resulting situation was for those that bought or sold property in the city, can be seen in a transaction from February 1894: Ahmed Reşid Efendi sought to buy the share to the Bey Hamam (bathhouse) that belonged to Mehmed Mustafa, son of Abülatif Efendi. As Mehmed Mustafa was the owner of two legally distinct shares of the property (one of which contained “the half of one third of eight shares out of [a total of] nine shares”), and since the right to the building was distinct from the right to exercise a profession in the said property (*gedik*), the transfer was recorded in the register as four different transactions. To make things even more complex, Ahmed Reşid Efendi bought only the usufruct rights; ownership of the bathhouse belonged to the *vakıf* of Makbul İbrahim Paşa, while the *gedik* was property of a different *vakıf*, that of Sultan Mahmud II. The transfer must have been approved by the administrators of both *evkâf*, and next to the 46,000 *kuruş* he gave to the seller, the buyer also took up the paying of a regular fee to the two institutions, acknowledging their perpetual rights on the property.¹⁹

Such foundations owned a substantial part of residential and commercial properties in the city. A *vakıf* is defined as one or more properties, whose owner

¹⁷ Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 47-48, 52-53, 57-58.

¹⁸ Huri İslamoğlu, “Property as contested domain: A revaluation of the Ottoman Lando Code of 1858”, in *New perspectives on property and land in the Middle East*, ed. Roger Owen (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2000), 3-61.

¹⁹ IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 11, 10. The fee (*icare-i mü’ccele*) was 24 *kuruş* for the *gedik* and 12 *kuruş* for the building itself.

endows them for a pious and charitable purpose, designating the persons or charities that will benefit from the revenues collected from these properties, as well as the administrators of the foundation thus founded.²⁰ The properties and revenues involved became unalienable in the process.²¹ A *vakıf* could be a house, a shop, or any kind of commercial building; agricultural land; a *gedik*, as we saw; or even a sum of money, a part of which could be lent at an interest. Such foundations were generally associated with Ottoman Muslims, but Jews and Christians could and often did found their own.²² As the purpose of each *vakıf*, namely providing for their respective beneficiaries, existed in perpetuity, but the revenues could fail – the yields of a given plot might decline, a house might be lost to fire – the administrators tried to expand the economic base of the foundations. With foundations expanding, declining, and being founded anew, the institution played a major role in keeping the city changing throughout the Ottoman period.²³

While in theory, there were several restrictions imposed on the use of such properties, the realities of living in a city like Salonica, where the Muslim element was a minority, meant that the owners of usufruct rights had a large enough leeway in their activities, especially if the administrators were sympathetic: When Dimitrios Harisis, an influential businessman who had relocated to Marseille but maintained ties to the city, died in 1887, he left a substantial sum of money to the Greek Orthodox community, under the terms that it would be used for the construction and maintenance of a poorhouse in his paternal home, a building very close to the Orthodox cathedral. Fulfilling the terms of the will, however, proved to be difficult, since not only did the building house the British Consulate at the time, but, as it was a *vakıf* property, it would be illegal to be used by a different charity. The situation remained unresolved even after the building was burnt down in the 1890, and pitted the community against Harisis' widow, who was also the executor of his estate. In 1898, a compromise was found, and the acquiescence of both the Ottoman

²⁰ See R. Peters, R. Deghuilem, "Wakf", in *Encyclopaedia of Islam, Second Edition*, eds. P. Bearman et al. (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 59-63, 87-92.

²¹ Gregory C. Kozlowski, *Muslim endowments and society in British India* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 1-5, 13-16.

²² If there were any such foundations in late Ottoman Salonica, their presence in the sources visited is obscured by other collective owners, like the Jewish and Orthodox communities, or specific synagogues and churches.

²³ For the lifespan of a particular *vakıf* in 18th century Salonica, see Ginio, "The shaping of a sacred space: The *tekke* of Zühuri Şeyh Ahmet Efendi in eighteenth-century Salonica", *The Medieval History Journal* 9, 2 (2006), 271-296.

authorities and the administrators of the foundation allowed for the completion of the poorhouse.²⁴

The percentage of *vakif* properties in relation to the city as a whole is difficult to establish, as different records give different estimates: The tax registers (*esas defters*) of 1906 make very few mentions of *vakif* properties in the appropriate tables. On the other hand, such references are very frequent in the transfer registers. In 1917, after a fire had destroyed large parts of the city centre, the authorities performed a full registration of all housing blocks and individual properties in the affected areas, which included most of the lower quarters and a significant part of the upper ones, as well. In the end, more than half of the registered properties had been *vakif*. This included the vast majority of commercial properties in the city, and about 60% of properties in the middle lower quarters. Even in the predominantly Greek Orthodox neighbourhoods located to the East and Southeast of the city centre, *vakif* holdings represented about one quarter to one third of the total. Conversely, almost all properties outside the old city walls were freeholds (*mülk*).²⁵

Such was the regime governing the ownership of landed property in nineteenth century Salonica. The *Tanzimat* reforms did include the introduction of new legislation regarding land ownership, starting with the Land Law of 1858, but this was not a restructuring of the previous system based on different legal principles, but rather an attempt to formalise existing relations between the state and the owners. The aim of the Land Law, which was primarily focused on rural land, was to give title deeds to those holding *miri* lands. The property tax that was tied to the dispersal of formal rights was designed to replace the regular fees that had been so far paid by the usufruct owners to the state.²⁶ The process initiated in 1858 also included the registration of all property by the competent state authorities in registers like the *yoklamas* and the *defter-i hakkanîs*.²⁷ In the following years, the Ottoman

²⁴ Chekimoglou and Kirki Georgiadou-Tsimino, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikotitas sti Thessaloniki, t. B₁: I Othomaniki periodos* [The history of entrepreneurship in Thessaloniki, vol. B₁: The Ottoman period] (Thessaloniki: Politistiki Etairia Epiheirimation Boreiou Ellados, 2004), 241.

²⁵ Chekimoglou and Thaleia Mantopoulou-Panagiotopoulou, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikotitas sti Thessaloniki, t. B₂*, 26-27.

²⁶ Donald Quataert, "The Age of Reforms, 1800-1914", in *An economic and social history of the Ottoman Empire, 1300-1914, vol. II*, eds. Halil İnalcik and Quataert (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 256-261; İslamoğlu, "Property as contested domain," 27-28.

²⁷ Compare to what Jyoti Hosagrahar says about the registration of properties and the regulation of the property market in colonial India: "The commodification of land meant that

government took measures to normalise property rights in the cities by resolving its long-standing dispute with foreign subjects (both foreign-born, and former Ottoman subjects who had acquired foreign protection), who could not, until then, legally own property within the empire.²⁸ Their right to hold property was eventually recognised in the Law of Subjecthood (*Tabiiyet-i Osmaniye Kanunu*) of 1867, provided they were subjected to Ottoman legislation and the Ottoman legal system. This compromise aimed at streamlining the application and collection of property taxes from the urban properties, whose value was ever increasing.²⁹

This was the context within which the property market in Salonica began to emerge at about this period. Muslim land-owners had traditionally invested part of the earnings from their estates in the nearby countryside in buildings and property inside the city. From 1860 onwards, a substantial part of the profits that had been accrued by the burgeoning commercial houses through the trade of cereals, cotton and, increasingly, tobacco, were reinvested in local real estate, either through direct purchases, or indirectly, by providing loans in exchange for mortgages. The chronic shortages of liquidity in the market and the risks inherent in commercial undertakings led to the emergence of a network of credit flows that tied the smaller merchants to the bigger commercial houses of the city, the Allatinis, the Modianos, and their partner firms. Effectively, large money-lenders acted as intermediaries. They employed their good reputation and personal connections with the local banking branches to issue bonds at a relatively low interest rate, then invested the money in bonds issued by smaller players at a higher interest. Money-lenders made a profit from the difference between the interest in which they borrowed money and the interest in which they lent.³⁰ Debtors were usually obliged to put up their properties for security. Formal mortgages were not very frequent, as the creditors put little faith in the Ottoman legislation on bankruptcy and the Ottoman court system. They preferred that the debtor temporarily transfer ownership of their property to the creditor, until the terms of the loan were fulfilled.³¹ This practice was sanctioned in

every piece of property had to be rationally evaluated, measured, and classified according to its physical attributes.” Hosagrahar, 117.

²⁸ Such restrictions were circumscribed by employing proxy owners, or registering properties in the name of spouses that remained Ottoman subjects. Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 48, 53.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 66-73.

³⁰ Chekimoglou, *Ypothesi Modiano*, 17-23.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 23-24.

Ottoman law as *ferağ bilvefa* and was applicable not only for freehold properties (*mülk*), but also for the usufruct rights to *miri* and *vakıf* properties.³²

Privileged access to credit at favourable rates for some of the local entrepreneurs gradually led to the emergence of large property holders in the city. Navigating through the complexities of Ottoman law and practices related to property was no issue for the astute businessmen of the city.³³ The Allatinis had their family mansion in the centre of the Frankish quarter; they owned a number of shops both inside the quarter, on the “Long Way”, and in most of the major bazaars of the city.³⁴ The families of Modiano, Mallach, Franses, Misrahi, Fernandez, Abbot, Roggoti, Hatzilazarou, and other local traders all had stakes in the commercial heart of the city.³⁵ It is clear that the sustainability of such ventures depended on the quick recuperation of the invested capital,³⁶ as well as the constant increase in property prices. The large-scale projects of urban renovation initiated by the Ottoman authorities in the coming years would prove instrumental to that effect.

The First Attempts at Urban Renovation and the Construction of the Quay

The issue of urban renovation and planning captured the interest of Ottoman reformers from very early on. Aware of the criticisms emanating from visiting and resident foreigners, the officials who coordinated the early stages of the *Tanzimat* process were keen to prove that they could regulate urban space as efficiently as their counterparts in the Western European cities they held as models. The first laws – the so-called Building Law, or *Ebniye Kanunu* - that dealt with town planning and determined urban elements like the width of streets, the height of houses, the

³² Mundy and Smith, 38, 46.

³³ Chekimoglou and Mantopoulou- Panagiotopoulou, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikotitas sti Thessaloniki, t. B₂*, 31, claim that the prevalence of *vakıf* holdings put Jewish and Orthodox property owners at a disadvantage against their Muslim competitors. This is not evident from the Ottoman sources.

³⁴ Trakasopoulou-Tzima, “To arhontiko ton Allatini sto Fragkomahala,” 161-171.

³⁵ The list of properties in the city’s “market” and main commercial streets can be found in IAM, *Esas Defteri* 4.

³⁶ By the beginning of the 20th century, local bankers estimated that each property in the city brought in revenues up to 8% of its total worth. Since properties acquired as mortgage had probably cost their current owners a lot less than their market value, the investment could be recouped in as little as five years. Chekimoglou, *Ypothesi Modiano*, 26-27.

materials used in construction and the layout of the streets, were drafted in the late 1840s, and only applied to Istanbul. Despite great initial expectations, a lack of funds and the complicated weave of ownership rights meant that the implementation of the new regulations had to be restricted to those quarters with low enough population density. The core neighbourhoods of the city only saw minor interventions – the reorientation of a street, or the opening up of a blind alley, until a disaster like an earthquake or a fire allowed for more concentrated action. Local authorities and city planners started taking over the reconstruction efforts following such events, and tried to keep citizens from rebuilding their houses and properties on their old spots, with the same materials. In the future all reconstruction had to adhere to the existing planning laws, which called for the meticulous registration of property owners, wider and straighter streets, lower buildings, and the regulation of residential and commercial spaces. The experiences of the Istanbul local authorities following the fires of 1856 and 1865 in, respectively, Aksaray and HocaPaşa, and the rebuilding of these two quarters, led to the redrafting and expansion of the planning regulations.³⁷

Between the Reform Edict of 1856 and the provincial legislation of 1864/67, a belief emerged that the reforms should no longer be restricted to the capital but needed to extend to the provinces as well. A new generation of statesmen, trained in the reformist spirit of the 1850s and endowed with a clearly defined authority, as well as resources, was encouraged to make drastic changes in their respective posts. The formidable Midhat Paşa, whose career spanned a large portion of the empire, became a symbol of the reforming provincial governor, but was hardly alone in this task. In other cases, like in Izmir, it was the wealthier citizens, most of whom enjoyed foreign protection, or even held foreign citizenship, who gave shape to the reforming initiatives, and urban renovation evolved through the negotiation between the local state representatives and the local elites.³⁸ Such activities intensified and spread out even more in the following years. Not only did they help create a set of expectations among urban citizens regarding what the reforms' process meant for their cities, but they also fashioned an idiom of Ottoman public and private architecture, that became ubiquitous during the Hamidian period.

³⁷ Stéphane Yerasimos, "A propos des reformes urbaines des Tanzimat", in *Villes Ottomanes*, eds. Dumont and Georgeon, 17-32; Çelik, *The Remaking of Istanbul*, 52 ff.

³⁸ Zandi-Sayek, *Ottoman Izmir*, 4-6.

This is the context in which the first tentative attempts to implement the new regulations on urban planning in the city of Salonica should be examined: The replanning of the İştira quarter following a fire in 1856, and the abortive attempt to redesign and straighten the course of the “Long Way” between the gates of Vardar and Kelemeriye. The same applies to the activities of Sabri Paşa, appointed to the post of governor-general in 1869. A “man of the Tanzimat” himself, Sabri Paşa had already made a name for himself in the provincial administration, while serving in the Danube, as a deputy to Midhat Paşa, and in Izmir, where he may have been involved in the designs for the local quay. Since there were plans to construct a quay in Salonica already since 1863, the French consular correspondence speculated that it was his experience in the matter which led to his appointment. Indeed, as soon as he was appointed, Sabri Paşa brought the plans for the quay up to date and attempted to involve the local society in the operations.³⁹

The planning and construction of the quay of Salonica was the first major transformation of the city’s urban fabric. The plan called for the demolition of the coastal walls and towers of the city, and the use of the debris to straighten the waterfront and gain land from the sea. Sabri Paşa successfully petitioned Istanbul to award the construction contract to the provincial public works bureau under the supervision of the Italian engineer Paolo Vitalli, who had apparently assisted Sabri Paşa in Izmir. The project would result in roughly 90,000 m² of freed land, one third of which would be reserved for public uses and the rest auctioned off to private bidders. The projected boulevard would also be used as a mooring station for incoming ships - and the lighters that served those too large to dock. Since the state seemed unable to contribute financially, the auctions would have to cover the cost, calculated at about 100,000 *liras*. The sale of new property met with great interest. Almost immediately all but a very few of the offered plots were auctioned off at a total price of about 85,000 *liras*.⁴⁰

That sense of euphoria did not last for long. By 1871 half of the collected sum of money had already been spent, but the project had little progress to show for it. Investors began asking for the return of their money and they contemplated the

³⁹ Yerolympos, *Urban Transformations*, 63, cites French diplomatic sources from the city, but also mentions that the Paşa’s involvement in the Izmir quay is not mentioned in studies of its construction.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 63-64. See also Yerolympos. *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dýsis*, 135-139. Compare the history of the construction of the Izmir quay as presented in Zandi-Sayek, “Struggles over the shore: building the quay of Izmir,” *City & Society* 12, 1 (2000), 55-78.

additional sell-off of the land which the original plan had reserved for public use. An official investigation addressed rumours of corruption. Though the locals suspected it would end in exoneration, the final report accused Sabri Paşa of having embezzled 12,000 *liras* along with Vitalli, in order to buy agricultural land in the area; in total a sum of about 20,000 were left unaccounted for. Embarrassed by the result and fearful of the possibility of compensating the buyers, the Ottoman government refused to endorse the results of the investigation and, although the *paşa* was recalled from his post, he continued his career in the upper echelons of the Ottoman bureaucracy and retained his popularity with the local population.⁴¹ The engineer Vitalli was the only one officially condemned, and was subsequently fired from his position. Work on the quay continued, but at an extremely slow pace, until the project's final conclusion in the early 1880s.⁴²

The design for the quay involved the laying down of two streets, parallel to the sea and each other, from the Customs Office and the İştira neighbourhood to the west to the White Tower to the east. Officially, they were the White Tower (*Beyaz Kule*) and the Military Command (*İdare-i Askeriye*) Boulevards, but in most occasions they were simply referred to as the First and Second Quay Boulevards. The land that separated them was auctioned off to private investors. As the construction neared its completion, and the streets of the quay were connected to the pre-existing network, a number of building blocks gradually emerged. Despite the initial setbacks, the interest of local investors on real-estate located on the quay remained high throughout this period.

With the quay project finally reaching completion, construction in the allocated plots of land picked up pace. The street quickly developed into one of the main commercial areas of the city. In the tax registers of 1906 (*esas defteris*) that covered the waterfront district, there were almost 150 addresses recorded for the Quay Boulevard and its extension toward the port (*Rüsûmât İdaresi Caddesi*); out of that number, only about 31 corresponded to residential buildings (mostly described as *hânes*, houses, but there were a few dubbed as *apartmans* and *konaks*, i.e. mansions, as well). In contrast, there were 53 shops (*dükkân* and *mağaza*), a department store (*dükkânhâne*), and a fish market (*balikhâne*) containing 20 stores.⁴³ At the same

⁴¹ Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dysis*, 131-132.

⁴² Yerolympos, *Urban Transformations*, 66-67. See also *Faros* 603, September 19 [October 1], 1881; 678, June 16 [28], 1882.

⁴³ IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 116. See also Dimitriadis, *Topografía*, 203-207.

time, a large number of venues pertaining to the entertainment and leisure of locals and visitors appeared along the waterfront. The 1906 *defters* register 20 cafés, five beerhalls (*birahâne*), two taverns (*meyhâne*), two hotels, two restaurants (lokanta), one casino and four theatres (*tiyatrohâne*).⁴⁴ There were also a couple of buildings designated as clubs (*külûb*), and a cluster of military buildings that belonged to the state and were situated next to the White Tower.

The area right behind the waterfront, including the back streets and the first parallel boulevard, was somewhat more residential. Residential buildings comprised almost half of the properties surveyed there (68 out of 147). These were generally larger and higher than the ones on the waterfront itself: Buildings of two or three storeys were frequent, and more than ten of the buildings surveyed were classified as *konaks*. There was an equally strong presence of commercial buildings here (54 *mağazas* and *dükkâns*), while entertainment venues were comparably fewer in number (four cafés, five taverns and beerhalls, four restaurants).⁴⁵ Even so, however, the density of construction was not especially high. Some of the buildings, both on the quay and the back streets, especially among the cafés and beerhalls, had a garden or courtyard, and as late as 1906 a number of properties were still described as lots (*arsa*), either empty or containing a simple shack (*baraka*).⁴⁶

The great commercial and financial houses of the city, and especially the Modiano clan, were well represented among the property owners of the quay. In 1906, more than 35 properties were listed as owned by “the sons of merchant Saul” (*Saul pazargânzâdelers*) or “the heirs of Saul Modiano” (*Saul Modiano veresesi*), and another ten by the lawyer Liyaci, son of Davi Modiano. While almost three quarters of the Modiano holdings were shops, there were also two cafés, two hotels, some pharmacies, and a number of residential buildings that included a three-storey *konak* with twenty rooms.⁴⁷ These either represented purchases that Saul Modiano had completed during his lifetime and bequeathed to his sons, or individual purchases the latter made over the years. One must bear in mind that the 1906 registers transmit a static image that does not necessarily correspond to the reality of the real estate market in Salonica. Conversely, the study of the registers of property transfers (the *yoklama defters* and the *defter-i hakkânîs*) reveal that, rather than slowly

⁴⁴ IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 116.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 111-124.

accumulating real-estate titles over time, the Modiano properties constantly changed hands, with the family buying, when the price was deemed advantageous, or selling, when cash was required for their commercial and financial holdings.⁴⁸

Covering the space of a whole block, the Saiaz spinning mill and the large warehouse next to it stood out of the surrounding buildings. Shalom Saiaz built the factory in 1879 in a plot next to the family's properties in the adjacent Baru neighbourhood.⁴⁹ The factory employed a 300-person workforce, exclusively Jewish and predominantly female, maintained 8,000 mechanical looms, and processed silkworm cocoons into silk thread, mostly destined for export. As the only large, steam-driven industrial facility within the city, the filature stood in contrast to the commercial and entertainment enterprises around it, and the conflicting uses of space on the waterfront led to a long-running dispute between the Saiaz family on the one hand, and other property owners on the other. Despite constant complaints about the soot that came from the factory's tall chimney or the loud siren that signalled the beginning and end of each shift, the filature continued its operation until 1917.⁵⁰

The three sons of İbrahim Kapancı, Yusuf, Mehmed and Ahmed, also owned a significant number of properties on the waterfront. Most of them were concentrated on the north-western end of the quay, around the little square formed where Sabri Paşa Boulevard reached the sea. Ahmed Kapancı owned a hotel at that location, as well as the three shops and the café that were located at the ground floor of the building.⁵¹ Right next to the hotel, Mehmed Kapancı owned the *Café Bellevue*, which

⁴⁸ Thus in June 1892, Jacko Modiano bought 6 shops on the quay from Fakima, wife of Levi Isaac Kazaz, for a total sum of 90,000 *kuruş*. Sixteen months later, he sold them to the monk Haritos, son of Anagnostis, for a profit of 10,000 *kuruş*. What is interesting is that the estimated value of the sold properties had dropped in the meantime from 95,000 to 80,000 *kuruş*. See IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 9, March-August 1308, 54; *Defter-i Hakkani* 11, 1309, 48.

⁴⁹ These included houses, shops, and the family synagogue named after Shalom Saiaz. See Chekimoglou and Mantopoulou-Panagiotopoulou, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikotitas sti Thessaloniki*, t. B₂, 228-230.

⁵⁰ Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 198-199. Ironically, by 1906 the Saiaz family had largely moved away from their factory, and were listed as inhabitants of the Hamidiye neighbourhood. IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 120.

⁵¹ The ownership of this particular building is a testimony to the complexity of Ottoman property law, and strategies applied by property owners, to operate within that context. Originally, that property, was divided in 19 shares between Ahmed and Yusuf Kapancı, and İsmâ'i Rağib Efendi, each with 5.5 shares, and Galib and Refik Efendis, who held the remaining 2.5 shares. The latter split their share into three thirds and sold it to the other owners in July 1893 for 20,820 *kuruş* each, and Yusuf sold his share to his brother in November of the same year for 83.300 *kuruş*. IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 11, 39, 83. By 1906, the property was attributed to Ahmed Kapancı and company (*şürekâsi*). IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 115.

he rented out to interested parties.⁵² To Mehmed belonged another five shops, a café, a restaurant, and a house in the vicinity as well, while Yusuf and Ahmed owned some property, including the Sporting Club and the beer-hall “America”, at the other end of the quay.⁵³

A number of other prominent locals had stakes in the the waterfront district. The Hatzilazarou family owned a significant number of properties, including four cafés, a casino, a garden restaurant, a distillery for alcoholic beverages, and two large empty lots that awaited construction.⁵⁴ Other Greek Orthodox investors, especially the entrepreneurs from Ağustos [Naoussa], men like Giorgos Kirtsis or Hatzidimitrios Goutas, appear in the sources as owners of a small number of properties, including a café and a hotel.⁵⁵ Hacı Yusuf Ağâh owned three large cafés near the docks, as well as the houses above them.⁵⁶ Yusuf Paşa, in his capacity as financier [*kontratçı*], maintained a row of cafés and shops near the White Tower.⁵⁷ Joseph Elion and Jacob Florentin each owned two large *konaks* on the streets behind the waterfront.⁵⁸ While not holding a significant stake in the area by 1906, important notables of the city, like the Allatini family, Alfred Abbott, the future mayor Hulusi Beyefendi, or Mehmed Karakaş Efendi still owned some minor property.

Although all prominent inhabitants of Salonica appear to have been interested in the waterfront area real-estate, not all properties there belonged to locals. Many owners were absentee landlords, cashing in on the revenue their properties brought them from outside the city. The heirs of Cevâd Paşa, all residing in Istanbul, owned almost forty distinct properties on the quay, and as many in the nearby streets.⁵⁹ The steamer companies that serviced the port of the city had also invested heavily in the development on the quay. The Austrian Lloyd company’s directors owned a large warehouse complex just beyond the port end of the quay.⁶⁰ The headquarters of the *Messageries Maritimes* were located nearby, at the beginning of the Quay

⁵² Ibid. See also Baer, *The Dönme*, 46; *Faros* 1641, October 14 [26], 1892.

⁵³ IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 121-123 and 113, 120, respectively.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 113-122.

⁵⁵ IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 11, 60; *Esas Defteri* 7, 114-115, 124.

⁵⁶ IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 11, 44. His heirs apparently sold off their share in the family property, as they are not recorded in the 1906 registry.

⁵⁷ IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 115.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 119-120.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 11-121. The figure included the 19 stores at the fish market, and the department store on the water.

⁶⁰ The Ottoman authorities estimated its value at 667,000 *kuruş*. IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 10, 11.

Boulevard; a number of shops and a café at the adjacent alley, aptly named *Mesajeri Aralıği*, also belonged to the French company.⁶¹

Expanding beyond the Historical Centre

Even before the full completion of the construction of the quay, the local authorities had become convinced not only that large scale interventions in the urban fabric could leave a deep and beneficial imprint on the image of the city, but also that the resulting investment in real estate could allow for the self-financing of such projects. After all, the existing urban fabric was proving incapable of accommodating the steady growth of the population of the city, the result of internal migration and advances in public hygiene. The complex ownership status of many properties in the city posed a major obstacle for such initiatives taking place within the historical centre: When construction began on the Sabri Paşa Boulevard that would run vertical to the sea and connect the quay with the administrative buildings of the upper town, completion was stalled throughout the 1880s by the refusal of a single owner to give his house up for demolition.⁶²

A solution was found in expanding the city beyond its historical core, into the expanses situated to its East and West. The demolition of the walls that flanked Salonica would relieve the ‘suffocating’ city from the problems of overcrowding, and planning for the new neighbourhoods would give the city authorities the opportunity to implement the new building regulations on a large scale. The project was launched in 1879 on the south-eastern segment of the wall, which connected the White Tower to the Kelemeriye Gate, and a few years later work was extended to the north-western part of the city.⁶³ By 1888, the provincial authorities had begun demolishing a third wall segment, between the former Kelemeriye Gate and the Orthodox cemetery at Evangelistra.⁶⁴

Where that first demolished segment of the wall stood, state engineers drew plans for the construction of a model city quarter. A wide, tree-lined boulevard was

⁶¹ IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 111, 117, 121.

⁶² Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dysis*, 197.

⁶³ Yerolympos, “Urbanisme et Modernisation en Grèce du Nord à l’Epoque des Tanzimat (de 1839 à la Fin du XXe s.)”, in *Villes Ottomanes*, eds. Paul Dumont and François Georgeon (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1992), 63-67.

⁶⁴ BOA, HH.THR 463/69, 19 Zilkade 1325/16 Temmuz 1324 [July 29, 1908]; HH.THR 469/70, 4 Zilhicce 1305/31 Temmuz 1304 [August 11, 1888].

designed to run along what used to be the course of the wall, ending where the quay met the White Tower. The land on the both sides of the street belonged to the sultan, and, with the acquiescence of the Ministry of the Public List (*Hazine-i Hassa*) that administered it, it was divided into plots, upon which 36 spacious mansions were built. The mansions were built in the eclecticist style and upon a number of pre-set plans: two floors and eight to twelve rooms for the ones on the western side of the boulevard, one floor and six rooms for the ones across the street.⁶⁵ While remaining state property, they were rented out to private individuals and became especially popular among the Greek Orthodox elites of the city, as well as the resident European population. To honour the contribution of the sultan, the boulevard was named the *Hamidiye*, and the name was officially extended to the whole area that lay to the immediate east of the city. The sultan acknowledged the success of the venture by donating a monumental fountain, which was placed at the beginning of the boulevard, in the plaza that was opened up where the Kelemeriye Gate once stood.⁶⁶

The authorities coupled the demolition of the walls with the drafting of an initial plan for the new neighbourhoods. As hoped, the opening up of these new areas to development attracted much attention from the affluent citizens of Salonica. Local merchants, financiers, large landowners, and anybody with enough money started investing in purchases on both sides of the city, in the expectation that prices would rise. And the prices did rise, as the population of the city continued to increase, as more and more citizens chose to resettle in the suburbs, as networks of public utilities were constructed.⁶⁷ For the most part, the municipality encouraged this trend of real estate speculation. The city plan was twice extended in 1906 and 1911, into areas where construction had not even begun yet.⁶⁸ A scheme to straighten the coastline by reclaiming land from the sea, which was sponsored by the Public List, gave owners of waterside plots the opportunity to enlarge their estates, since they were given preference in the resulting auctions.⁶⁹

In a manner similar to the construction of the quay, the major part of the land under development became concentrated in the hands of a few individual families. Even a casual survey through the land registers kept by the Ottoman authorities

⁶⁵ IAM, *Esas Defteri* 6, 23-24.

⁶⁶ Yerolympos, *Transformations*, 68-70.

⁶⁷ Dimitriadis, *Topografia*, 222-223.

⁶⁸ Kolonas, "I ektos ton toihon epektasi", 32-35.

⁶⁹ BOA, HH.THR 65/18, 17 Zülkade 1313/18 Nisan 1312 [April 30, 1896]; 16 Mayıs 1312 [May 28, 1896]; 20 Mayıs 1312 [June 1, 1896].

reveals a remarkable and constant stream of purchases. Between March 1892 and November 1893, Jacko Modiano had alone purchased about 450,000 *kuruş* worth of real-estate, mostly empty land, in both sides of the city. Adele Charnaud, wife of Frederick, transferred the ownership to a mansion and the surrounding seashore estate to two of her children, Philomena and Edward, for 315,000 *kuruş*. In February 1894, Hamdi Beyefendi, by then already appointed mayor of the city, spent 150,000 *kuruş* to buy land to the west of the city.⁷⁰

As more and more land was purchased and developed, the new quarters of Salonica started to take shape. In the Hamidiye neighbourhood, the municipality paved a wide boulevard parallel to the sea. The street became known by its French name, *Grande Rue des Champagnes*, or its more appropriate Ottoman Turkish *Yalılar Caddesi*, the Boulevard of the waterside mansions. Such buildings had quickly spread along the coast, from the vicinity of the White Tower, right after the massive barracks of the Third Army and the organised beach run by the municipality, to beyond the flour mill of the Allatini family, where the shore turned sharply to the South-west and formed the cape of *Küçük Karaburun*. There were villas and mansions on the other side of the street as well, standing side by side to the occasional shop, warehouse or coffee-house. Gradually, the quarter expanded northwards, away from the sea.

The Hamidiye neighbourhood was not only used in speculative trading in real estate. The city's upper classes soon started moving to the neighbourhood themselves. By the beginning of the 20th century the Modiano family had all moved to mansions along the *Yalılar* Boulevard. Their estates bordered those of mayor Hamdi Bey and his son Osman Adil Efendi, the Muslim notable Hulusi Beyefendi, landowner Abdülkerim Efendi, the Kapancı brothers, Haim Saiaz, Mehmed Karakaş Efendi, the lawyer Emmanuel Salem, the Abbot and the Charnaud families, and finally the grand villa of the Allatinis, where Sultan Abdülhamid II would be later exiled after his removal from the throne in 1909.⁷¹ Lavish sums were spent in designing and decorating the mansions in ways that reflected their owners' wealth and status. The contracts were awarded to a small number of architects, men of European or Levantine origin, or Ottoman subjects who had studied abroad (Paris and the *Institut des Baux Arts* being the most popular) and returned to the empire to

⁷⁰ IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 9, 8-9; *Defter-i Hakkani* 10, 50; *Defter-i Hakkani* 11, 135, 142.

⁷¹ IAM, *Esas Defteri* 7, 1-14.

practice their trade. Elements of the styles which were in vogue in Europe at the time, be it classical revivalism, art nouveau or art décor, were fused with the indigenous architectural tradition and emerged as an eclecticist style, which was, to a certain point, shared by all Eastern Mediterranean port-cities.⁷²

The same process of urban development that had given Hamidiye an upper class dimension had the opposite effect at the other end of the city, the quarter that was known as Çayır (fallow land, pasture). The eastern suburbs had a mainly residential character, and with the exception of the Allatini flour mill and the tile and brick factory, also owned by the family, they contained no major industrial sites. The industry of the city was located mainly in Çayır, attracted there by the vicinity of the port and the railway station.⁷³ The increasing importance of Salonica as an industrial centre from the 1890s onwards led to the expansion of the neighbourhood, which housed both the facilities themselves as well as the houses of the workers. At about the same time, with the initiation of several major projects of infrastructure in the city, large areas just beyond the residential zones were expropriated and developed by the public utilities' companies.⁷⁴ Interestingly, right in the middle of that all there was the municipal gardens of *Beşçinar*, an entertainment venue on the waterside that had been founded by Sabri Paşa already in 1867. The gardens had been originally known as the State Gardens (*Memleket Bağçesi*), and soon became extremely popular with Salonicans of all creeds.

The Fire of 1890 and the Reconstruction of the City Centre

The demolition of the city walls, the creation of the quay and the expansion of the city brought about a profound change in the way the city functioned. The novel distinction between neighbourhoods within and outside the city centre led to the emergence of a different conception of space. The distances between the different

⁷² Yerolympos and Vassilis Kolonas, "Un urbanisme cosmopolite", in *Salonique, 1850-1918. La "ville des juifs" et la reveil des Balkans*, ed. Gilles Veinstein (Paris: Autrement, 1992), 158-176; Kolonas and Lena Papamathaiaki, *O architektonas Vitaliano Posseli kai to ergo tou sti Thessaloniki* [The architect Vitaliano Posseli and his work in Thessaloniki] (Thessaloniki: Paratiritis, 1980). For a study of the developments throughout the Ottoman Empire, see Çelik, *Empire, architecture, and the city: French-Ottoman encounters, 1830-1914* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008).

⁷³ Dimitriadis, 235-238.

⁷⁴ For example, in July 1893 the director of the Ottoman Company of the Waters of Salonica spent 875,000 *kuruş* in purchasing about 6,600 m² of land in the area – only one of several purchases in that year. IAM, *Defter-i Hakkani* 11, 89.

areas of the city had become too long to traverse on foot, and they had now to be commuted by carriage, boat, or the trams, whose operation began in 1893. The legislation on city planning was enforced on a large scale by the staff of the municipal and provincial technical bureaus. The leading families of the city were given a chance to leave the cramped environs they had inhabited, and relocate to a setting that matched their growing prestige. Local and European observers alike were very much aware that the quay and the city extensions, especially the Hamidiye quarter, functioned as a showcase of the strides Salonica had made from 1870 onwards.

The developments in the waterfront and the suburbs stood in sharp contrast with the neighbourhoods of the city centre, which had been largely unaffected by any similar intervention. Contemporary planning and building standards may have been applied elsewhere, but these areas retained their former characteristics: the irregular street pattern, with the *culs-de-sac* and blind, narrow alleys, and the ramshackle condition of buildings built from timber and tin. The two plans commissioned by the engineers of the municipality in the 1880s, that of A. Werniesky in 1882 and that of A. Campanaki in 1889, reveal both the layout of these areas and the absence of any imminent plans on the part of the local authorities for the “beautification” of the area.⁷⁵

Salonica had evolved into a bifurcated city. Obscured behind the façade of the buildings of the quay, the “traditional” residential areas persevered. Foreign travellers arriving at the city by steamer did not fail to express their amazement at the difference between the splendid promenade and the squalor seen only a few streets away.⁷⁶ The resilience of these neighbourhoods posed a challenge for local reform-minded individuals, who regarded them as a problem. Populated as they were by the - predominantly Jewish - urban poor, they were inscribed in discourses of hygiene, public safety, but also class and ethnicity. Deploring the level of dirt in the city while there is a cholera epidemic in the Red Sea coast, *Faros tis Makedonias*, the Greek newspaper of the city, comments:

The municipal authorities should take into consideration their responsibility and resolve to clean the stagnation and rot in the hovels

⁷⁵ The two maps can be found in the BOA, Y.EE. 64/4 and FO 925/3429 respectively.

⁷⁶ Mark Mazower, *City of Ghosts*, 189-193.

*and hans, where plenty Jewish families live, because of either poverty or spendthrift.*⁷⁷

While the existing ownership status of the neighbourhoods in question prohibited any serious initiative by the Ottoman authorities, a natural disaster, in this case fire, opened the way for the replanning of Salonica's city centre on a large scale. Fire has always been part of urban life in Salonica. Throughout the late 1880s, there was a string of small incidents, blamed alternatively on building owners wanting to cash in on their fire insurance, or the insurance companies themselves, practicing an unorthodox sort of advertisement for their services.⁷⁸ The situation was made worse by the state of the streets, where flammable materials were simply being disposed of on the sides of buildings, and the lack of adequate equipment for the city's fire brigade.⁷⁹ However, their impact was nothing compared to the fire that erupted in September 1890: By the time the flames had been put out, a significant part of the city centre was gone.

Events proceeded in the following way: On the night of September the 3rd, 1890 a fire started in the centre of Salonica and went on burning until the afternoon of the next day. Ironically, the previous day had been one of celebration. The 2nd of September, August 22 in the Julian calendar, was a major local festival, as the local Orthodox would hold the joint commemoration of the Assumption of Virgin Mary and of St. Eleoussa. Peasants had flocked into the city from the surrounding villages to bring their goods or shop at the fair, and they, along with crowds of locals from all confessions, took part in the festivities. The general merriment did not stop at sundown, carrying on in streets illuminated by the lights put up on churches and coffee-houses. Most people ended up in *Prodrom*, the open space where the Roman hippodrome used to be, and kept on celebrating until the middle of night.

By that time, a fire had broken up, allegedly at a Jewish *raki* distillery behind the monastery of St. Theodora. Fanned by the strong northern wind which had appeared not long before, the flames quickly spread to the surrounding buildings. The celebratory mood of the city was replaced by horror, as the fire could not be

⁷⁷ *Faros* 603, September 19 [October 1], 1881; for the campaigns of the press and the municipality, see also Yerolympos, "Conscience citadine et intérêt municipal à Salonique a respectivement le fin du XIX siècle", in *Vivre dans l'empire Ottoman: Sociabilités et relations intercommunautaires (XVIIe-XXe siècles)*, eds. Paul Dumont and François Georgeon (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997), 123-144.

⁷⁸ Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dysis*, 208.

⁷⁹ *Faros* 595, September 1 [13], 1881.

contained, despite the efforts of the *vali* Galip paşa, who appeared in person to coordinate the efforts of the fire brigade. The local firemen, though, could not effectively penetrate the labyrinth of the inner city with their pumps and abandoned them to the flames, when they heard that their own houses were on fire. The situation was not brought under control until the following afternoon, and the last flames died out only a day after.⁸⁰

Amazingly, considering the scale of the disaster, no deaths were reported. Nonetheless, material losses incurred by the fire were enormous. The British consul calculated the cost to about 600,000 pounds, one third of which had been insured. A significant number of public buildings, including a large portion of the city's synagogues, the Orthodox cathedral, the larger schools of the non-Muslim communities, as well as the Greek and British consulates, were destroyed. The fire had left thousands of homeless, who were not taking shelter in the courtyards and interiors of mosques, churches and synagogues. Normally, they would have been provided with construction materials and rebuilt their properties at about the same place where they had stood before. Rebuilding, however, was not a priority for the authorities, whose planners saw a great opportunity to bring the affected areas in pace with their modernising vision for the city.⁸¹ The municipality refused to provide the homeless inhabitants with materials, instead declaring its intention to draft a new city plan, and forbidding all building activity in the affected areas until its completion.⁸²

The former inhabitants were gradually relocated to the outskirts of the city, initially temporary, then permanently, as settlements were designed and built for them through international donations.⁸³ The sultan took the relief committee under his imperial protection and donated 500 *lira* from the Privy Purse.⁸⁴ The Jewish community, who had been renting houses in the area for their coreligionists appealed to the European Jewry and, especially, Baron Maurice de Hirsch, who had

⁸⁰ The description of events of that night can be found in *Faros* 1454, August 25 [September 7], 1890; another set of testimonies in FO 78/4287, Blunt to White, telegram, September 4, 5 and 5.

⁸¹ In this, they followed a procedure repeated all too often in Ottoman cities. For these "town-planning fires", see ; Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dýsis*, 240-241.

⁸² FO 78/4287, Blunt to White, telegram, September 5 and 6, 1890; Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dýsis*: 226-228.

⁸³ BOA, Y.PRK.BSK, 28 Ramazan 1308 [May 7, 1891]; Y.PRK.A. 6/6, 11 Safer 1308 [September 26, 1890].

⁸⁴ FO 78/4487, Blunt to White, September 5, 1890; BOA, Y.PRK.AZJ 17/93, 30 Ramazan 1308 [May 7, 1891].

maintained a strong interest in the Jews of Salonica. The plight of those made homeless by the fire became entangled to the fate of the Ashkenazi refugees, who began arriving at the city from 1891 onwards, fleeing persecution in the Russian Empire.⁸⁵

By comparing the maps of Wernieski and Kampanaki to the ones drafted after the fire, and seeing which areas of the city centre acquired a rectangular street layout, we can deduct that the fire destroyed a vast trapezoid right in the middle of the city. The fire had spread east- and southwards, starting from near the monastery of St. Theodora. The western limit of the burnt zone was the line that ran between the outskirts of the Pulya quarter, to the North, and the *Idare-i Askeriye*, the first street parallel to the quay. The latter marked the southern extent of the fire, which went as far east as the Kara Ali mosque. At certain points, the fire had crossed onto the quay proper, and several buildings on the waterfront were destroyed.⁸⁶ It seems, however, that most of the promenade had escaped destruction. Finally, the North-eastern border ran from the Kara Ali mosque back to Pulya, passing by the Ayasofya mosque and the adjacent bath-house. Within the burnt areas were the predominantly Jewish neighbourhoods of Baru, Leviye, Ayasofya, Kaldırgöç and parts of Pulya, the small Greek quarter around the cathedral and the westernmost portion of the Greek neighbourhood of Kabir Manastır.⁸⁷

In early 1892, the municipality presented the public with its new plan. Its engineers had redrawn the streets according to a roughly rectangular pattern, thus imposing a slightly imperfect grid at the heart of the “traditional” city.⁸⁸ The streets were named after the pre-existing alleys or well-known individuals or landmarks in the area. Six wide streets were drawn parallel the quay. Of these, *Kapanaca* and *Makaronia/Haham Matalon*, namely the ones closer to the waterfront, were the longest and traversed a significant part of the city. More streets ran vertically to the sea, down to the quay. The streets of *Pulya Havrası* and *Ayasofya Cami’i* connected the waterfront to the “Long Way”, the latter going even beyond, up to the hills of the

⁸⁵ Akyalcin-Kaya, “Immigration into the Ottoman territory,” 183-186.

⁸⁶ One of the occasional mentions of burnt (*muhterik*) buildings on plots on the quay is in IAM, *Defter-i Hakkanî* 11, 54: A house and three shops that had belonged to Reina, wife of Isaac Novarro and were gradually sold off over the course of 1893.

⁸⁷ This survey has been based on the maps of Wernieski and Kampanaki mentioned earlier, as well as Dimitriadis, *Topografia*, 73-76, 162-166, 168, 170.

⁸⁸ The new layout had to connect to existing streets beyond the destruction zone, and navigate around blocks that had escaped the fire, like the Saiaz family properties in the Baru quarter, just behind their waterside factory.

Muslim quarter. A large square was opened in front of the mosque of Ayasofya. The resulting plots were re-distributed to the original owners, in relation to the size of their property before the fire and with adjustments made for the widening of the streets.⁸⁹

While the new plan was being drawn, interest in acquiring property in the affected zone increased. In March 1892-February 1893, a bit more than 80 properties that were either being explicitly referred to as burnt (*muhterik*) or lay in the area that was going to be reconstructed, changed hands. For the next year, when the plan was finalized and published, that figure had risen to 120. Most of these registry entries referred to the activities of small property owners, usually the inheritance of a family house. On the other hand, some of the city's most influential property holders would also expand their holdings into the replanned areas, often in partnership – even if their investment here paled in comparison to their activities in the quay and, even more so, in Hamidiye. In April of 1892, Karlo Allatini would buy from a branch of the Modiano family a share of a house in Baru for 6,000 *kuruş*; in the course of the next year, Allatini proceeded to buy the rest of the property portion by portion.⁹⁰

Interestingly, the mayor at the time, İbrahim Namık Beyefendi, also invested some money in the quarters his office was responsible for rebuilding. The records of October 1892 show him buying part of a plot of a burnt house, and a burnt house with an ironsmith's shop in the basement, along with its *gedik*, both around the Ayasofya mosque, for a total of 30,000 *kuruş*.⁹¹ Hamdi Bey, who had already been heavily involved in the construction of public utilities in the city, and who would succeed İbrahim Namık as head of the municipal council in 1893, also bought property in the area: a large house in the Pulya quarter, with a courtyard (*havlu*), a detached kitchen (*mutfak*) and a shop and warehouse (*mahzen*) at the basement, which had apparently escaped the fire as it was built with fireproof material (*kârgir*) – and a smaller house at the nearby Akçe Mescid quarter.⁹²

As soon as the completion of the new plan was announced, reconstruction commenced. The area was swiftly built up into a commercial and high-end residential area. While schools and houses of worship were mostly rebuilt where they had been located before the fire, the rest of the area was filled with new private

⁸⁹ Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatonis kai Dysis*, 230-231.

⁹⁰ IAM, *Defter-i Hakkanî* 9, 30; *Defter-i Hakkanî* 11, 64, 95, 142.

⁹¹ IAM, *Defter-i Hakkanî* 10, 6, 10.

⁹² IAM, *Defter-i Hakkanî* 11, 47; *Defter-i Hakkanî* 10, 34.

houses and business establishments, built in the new architectural styles, within the provision of the municipal regulations.⁹³ The result was a large area that combined residential and commercial uses of space, a mixed zone that stretched between the commercial centre to the Northwest and the more residential quarters to the Southeast.⁹⁴ The new buildings were some of the highest in the city, typically sporting three or even four storeys, and in many the typical *sofa-oda* structure had been replaced by a different arrangement defined by a *salon*.⁹⁵ All the same, building density remained rather low, if one takes into account the broader streets, and most buildings had a yard or garden, usually at the back. Ayasofya Cami'i Street became known as the "street of the beautiful houses." Conversely, this meant that the original inhabitants of the neighbourhood could never hope to return there. They had been removed by the fire, and now they were blocked by the municipality and the new needs of their landlords. A study made by representatives of the Alliance Israelite Universelle calculated the number of homeless Jews to about 1700 families. Most moved to settlements built to the East and West of the city centre. Thanks to the large donation by Baron Hirsch already mentioned, two model housing complexes were constructed in Hamidiye and in Çayır. They were designed to house two families in each house, respectively 164 and 153 families in each of the two housing quarters. Eventually the need for housing was so great, that more families were placed at each house. Despite the resulting overcrowding, however, the number of houses was still not enough for everybody. Moreover, the Jewish community, which was entrusted with managing the settlements, had difficulties in maintaining them, as most of the tenants could not even pay one lira a year for the rent.⁹⁶

Others had managed to find themselves a place in those parts of the city centre that had escaped the ravages of the fire, thus deteriorating the already crowded conditions. The fire of 1890 had initiated a gentrification process, which, however, did not go beyond the burnt area. The bifurcation between the "traditional" and the "modern" city was therefore not overcome, but was now replicated within the city centre itself, in much starker contrast.

⁹³ *Faros*, 1472, November 10 [22], 1890; 1500, February 23 [March 7], 1891.

⁹⁴ Chekimoglou and Mantopoulou-Panagiotopoulou, *Istoria tis Epixeirimatikotitas sti Thessaloniki*, t. B₂, 19-20.

⁹⁵ All terms mentioned in the registers compiled for the *esas defteris*.

⁹⁶ Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatonis kai Dysis*, 239-240.

While the implementation of the planning regulations had a beneficial effect on real-estate prices in the long run, in the short-term it frequently brought urban property owners into confrontation with the local authorities, as an example from the end of the Ottoman period shows. The *Ebniye Kanunu* stipulated that any urban area, where ten or more houses (*hane*) were made derelict by fire or any other reason, would revert to the status of field (*tarla*) and existing properties could be easier expropriated and redistributed. When the *Çukur Han*, a commercial building near the Vardar Gate, burnt down during the winter of 1906-1907, the municipality decided to tie the rebuilding of the affected area to the redevelopment of the wider area, and the redrawing of the *Vardar Kapısı* Boulevard. Some of the owners, including İsmail Ragıp Efendi and the formidable Allatini family protested that development and submitted a petition to that effect to the Ministry of the Interior in Istanbul. The two sides of the dispute based their claims on a different definition of a “house”: the owners, their claims supported by the map of the area, which was drawn after the fire, counted six “houses,” here in the sense of six separate buildings; the municipality, on the other hand, counted individual properties, rather than buildings, and pressed for its claim based on the relatively large surface area that was affected. The Council of State (*Şurâ-ı Devlet*), which was called on to arbitrate, eventually ruled in favour of the municipality.⁹⁷

Part “refugee camp” and part “Europeanised city”, the centre of Salonica remained thus divided until 1917, when an even larger and more destructive fire swept through the city and burned down both parts. The Greek administration, which took the responsibility of the reconstruction, and the French architect Ernest Hebrar, who designed the new plan, had a different philosophy and aims than the municipal engineers of the 1890s. The most extensive intervention carried out by the Ottoman authorities in the city was replaced by a new plan much larger in scope, and eventually forgotten.

A Case of Reconstruction: The Ayasofya Mosque

The mosque of Ayasofya was at the time one of the largest public and religious buildings of the city. Badly damaged by the 1890 fire, it was left unrepaired for the following 15 years or so. The tale of Ayasofya’s eventual restoration is a crucial part

⁹⁷ BOA, BEO 3471/260311, 14 Zilhicce 1326/25 Kanun-i Evvel 1324 [January 7, 1908].

of the reconstruction of the city centre of Salonica, one which offers important insight in the approach of the local Ottoman authorities, as well as other actors, to the process.

Ayasofya, the Aghia Sophia of the Byzantines, was built during the 8th century as a church dedicated to God's Divine Wisdom. Like its more famous namesake in Istanbul, it is a basilica inscribed into a cruciform structure which supports a large, central dome. After the conquest of Salonica by the Ottomans in 1430, the church briefly functioned as the cathedral of the city's Orthodox population, until 1524, when the Ottoman commander and later Grand Vizier Ibrahim Paşa, on his return from the victory at Mohac, decided to claim the building and convert it into a mosque. The mosque was officially named after the paşa, but remained collectively known as Ayasofya. The Muslim stewards of the building made some minor changes, adding a *mihrab* and a colonnaded portico to function as an outside prayer space (the *son cemaat mahali* of Ottoman mosque architecture), but importantly did not destroy the rich mosaic decoration, choosing instead to cover them under white plaster or banners which carried quranic inscriptions. The neighbourhood which evolved around the mosque during the centuries of Ottoman rule was ethnically diverse, with a small Jewish predominance, as it lay at the point where the quarters of the three communities intersected.⁹⁸

Though the Ayasofya *mahale* was at the edge of the burnt area, it too was heavily affected. The mosque itself was badly damaged. An Ottoman document from September 1900, a preliminary report on the necessary reconstruction works (*kesf-i evvel defteri*), gives us some idea of the sustained damage. The wooden components of the building, including the frames of doors and windows, the roof which surrounded and partially obscured the cupola, and the minaret's tip were completely destroyed. Even though most of the walls and columns were made of more durable materials, namely stone and marble, the intense heat that had been generated damaged them as well. The niche of the building (*mihrab*) appears to have had collapsed and the portico (*son cemaat mahali*) was badly damaged as well. Walls and stairs had cracks and parapets and reliefs had fallen off the walls. The rubble

⁹⁸ Kalliopi Theoharidou, *The architecture of Hagia Sophia, Thessaloniki, from its erection up to the Turkish conquest*, (Oxford: BAR International series 399, 1988).

from the mosque as well as the nearby buildings was unceremoniously piled in the courtyard, where it waited to be carried away and disposed of.⁹⁹

Ayasofya was passed over in the midst of the general reconstruction activity, as it received practically no repairs until about 15 years after it was damaged. Despite the provisions mentioned in the *kesf-i evvel defteri* for repairing the damage through the liberal use of cement and industrial bricks produced in the nearby Allatini factory, and new calls to action drafted in the following years, the mosque still remained in the state it was left after the fire, with the added dilapidations of fifteen years of abandonment – not even the rubble was cleared out of the courtyard. A sultanic decree was again issued in 1906/7 in respect to the needed restoration works, and this time the Ottoman government seems to have secured the financial contribution of the French ministry of Public Instruction and the *Mission Laïque*. The young French archaeologist Marcel Le Tourneau was sent to Salonica with the mission of recording the architectural and decorative features of Ayasofya and of making some first suggestions of their restoration and preservation.¹⁰⁰

When Le Tourneau arrived at the site, the only restorative actions he encountered was some rudimentary scaffolding that kept the walls from caving in. The mosque was securely locked and the key was found only after eight days of search on the part of the provincial authorities. When he managed to come inside, Le Tourneau was rewarded with a great discovery: The fire had burnt the banners carrying quranic inscriptions and peeled off most of the white plaster, while not irreparably damaging the mosaics underneath. Le Tourneau mentioned his preliminary findings to the Ottoman authorities and his superiors in France, petitioning for the necessary funds to begin the restoration works.¹⁰¹

The re-discovery of the Ayasofya mosaics seems to have galvanized the Ottoman authorities. Le Tourneau received the assistance of Hilmi Paşa, inspector-general of Ottoman Macedonia, Rauf Paşa, governor-general of Salonica, as well as Osman Hamdi Bey, director of Istanbul's Imperial Museum. Thanks to Hilmi Paşa's

⁹⁹ BOA, TFR.I.SL 106/10501, 20 Rabiülevvel 1324 [May 14, 1906]; Charles Diehl, Marcel le Tourneau, Henri Saladin, *Le monuments chretiens de Salonique* (Paris: E. Leroux, 1918), 137-138.

¹⁰⁰ BOA, TFR.I.SL 106/10501, 31 Ağustos 1316 [September 13, 1900]; BEO 2982/223621, 5 Zilhicce 1324 / 6 Kanun-ı Sani 1322 [January 19, 1907]; Diehl and le Tourneau, "Les mosaïques de Sainte-Sophie de Salonique", *Monuments et memoires* 16 (1909), 58-60; *Journal de Salonique* 1270, July 7, 1908.

¹⁰¹ BOA, BEO 3041/228043, 14 Rebiülevvel 1325 [April 27, 1907]; Diehl, le Tourneau and Saladin, 137-138; Diehl and le Tourneau, 39-41.

intervention, the international committee controlling the budget of the European provinces of the Empire granted 1,500 *liras* (32,000 francs) for work on Ayasofya's mosaics. The Ottoman authorities started the process of restoring the complex of the mosque. Though Le Tourneau remained at the site as an advisor and started documenting Ayasofya's mosaics and the Byzantine monuments of the city along with the famed French historian and scholar Charles Diehl, he may have been somewhat taken aback by the zeal of the vilayet's engineers: The side roof was removed and the lunettes of the *tympanon* as well as the windows of the southern gallery were unblocked. The small Byzantine gatehouse was demolished and replaced with an Ottoman-style pavilion. The interior was decorated with flower and plant decorations.¹⁰² The works proceeded rather slowly, and, though picking up in speed in anticipation of Sultan Mehmed V Reşad's visit in 1911, were still not completely finished at the time of the Balkan Wars.¹⁰³

It is important to understand why, in a period of intense construction activity in Salonica and while the Jewish and Orthodox communities inscribe their presence in the emerging cityscape of the centre by rebuilding their sites of worship, the restoration of the Ayasofya mosque takes more than twenty years to be completed. The local Ottoman authorities, which played a similar role for the Sunni Muslims of the city, had other priorities: While aware of the need to eventually make the necessary repairs, the authorities' limited funds were first channeled to the repair and erection of administrative and military buildings. The costs of the repairs to Ayasofya and other damaged mosques in the city fell to the Department of Religious Foundations, which did not possess the necessary funds.

The interest of the local authorities was picqued with Le Tourneau's intervention: The discovery of the mosaics (and the simple fact of foreign involvement in the matter) gave the mosque of Ayasofya a much greater importance than before. The preservation of artifacts of such artistic and historic value was instrumental in the Ottoman authorities' desire - be it Osman Hamdi Bey or the local state engineers and architects - to prove they could act as competent and "responsible" as their European counterparts. Ayasofya was restored and its exterior and interior radically transformed; the visit of sultan Mehmet Reşad tied the building

¹⁰² Ibid., 41-43; Diehl, le Tourneau and Saladin, VII-VIII; Theoharidou, 177-179.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 179-180; BOA, DH.MKT 2798/9, 10 Rebiülahir 1327 [May 1, 1909]; BOA, BEO 4017/301268, 30 Rebiülevvel 1330 [March 19, 1912].

to the dynasty and the state. Its symbolism was still Islamic, but representative of the reconfigurations which occurred during the long Ottoman nineteenth century: of an Islamic Empire open to the West, acting responsibly (and protective) in respect to the different heritages contained within, and ruled justly and legitimately by the constitutional monarch.¹⁰⁴

Conclusion

In the late nineteenth-century Salonica, the bureaucratic elites and the upper classes of the city shaped the cityscape in a way that would correspond to their modernist preconceptions, as well as to their material gain. Thanks to initiatives taken by the provincial administration and the municipality, the city acquired its first open spaces and expanded outside its historical core. The discourse of urban reform that fueled these developments evolved in parallel with a local real-estate market. The leading businessmen of the city invested increasing amounts of money in urban properties, making large profits thanks to constantly rising prices. At the same time, they took pains in making sure that their own houses matched their status and prestige in the city. The destructive fire of 1890 gave the local authorities a unique opportunity to exercise their legal power and technical knowledge, and the same principles of urban planning and real-estate speculation were extended to the city centre.

The transformation of the city would have seemed incomplete without the grand technical projects that were the hallmark of the nineteenth century. For Ottoman statesmen, the introduction of steamer traffic and railways in the empire would prove economically and strategically beneficial, bringing the Ottoman state on par with the European nations. For the local commercial elites, such projects would bring the produce of the countryside closer to the city, as well as presenting a profitable investment opportunity. As the construction of major public works in and near the city was being decided, the local elites took active part in the deliberations. Later, with the new amenities constructed and in operation, it was again the local elites who made sure that their interests, presented as the interests of the city, would be respected by the newly formed companies.

¹⁰⁴ For the connection between Ottoman imperialism and archaeological projects carried within the empire, see Zainab Bahrani, Zeynep Çelik and Edhem Eldem (eds.), *Scramble for the past: A history of archaeology in the Ottoman Empire* (Istanbul: SALT, 2011).

Technical Modernisation and Grand Projects in Late Ottoman Salonica

Chapter Three

The technological innovations that marked the course of the nineteenth century, especially its first and last quarters, had a deep impact on the world's cities, both directly and indirectly. The spread of the steam engine not only multiplied available industrial power, but, when applied in ship and rail, also revolutionised the field of transportation. The steamer and the train, together with the telegraph, allowed for much faster communication between cities and regions. New industrial processes made the mass production of steel and cast iron possible, as well as other, non-metallic materials. Numerous applications followed, from the paving of streets with granite or asphalt, to networks powered by steam pumps that provided running water and allowed for the removal of sewage, to buildings built with cement and reinforced with steel. These developments were underscored by the spread of scientific and technical education and the growing importance of applied knowledge – the Industrial Revolution was powered not so much by physicists and chemists as by engineers.

Though costly, the application of these new technologies on the urban level was a matter of both practical and symbolic necessity. The Industrial Revolution, that mixture of technological innovation and capitalist relations of production, had irrevocably disturbed the balance which existed between the rural and the urban in favour of the latter. In a process that originated from Europe and spread outwards to the rest of the world, rural economies became unable to support the economic activities that had sustained them. The flight of peasants to the cities exacerbated already existing problems - or created new ones: food and water shortages, the risk of fire or disease, crime and social unrest, pollution from industrial fumes and waste. The advancing technology and the new methods of ordering and overseeing urban space sought to address the situation.

The applications of technology radically transformed the landscape of the city as well as the lives of urban dwellers. As the public attempted to accommodate itself

with the rapid changes it was experiencing, technological progress acquired an ideological and symbolic dimension next to the strictly practical one. The saint-simonian vision of specialists solving the world's problems through the correct use of technology greatly influenced public discourse in France and beyond; from the architecture of the World Fairs, to impressionist painting, it also started to penetrate the established aesthetic.¹ Though not without its detractors, this vision was crucial for the radical scale projects of "urban renovation" that took place in the major European capitals from 1850 onwards. Paris as envisioned and transformed by George-Eugène Haussman provided a standard for the city of the 19th century, and created expectations among urban elites of how a city should look and what services and amenities it should provide.²

These developments were by no means restricted to Western Europe. Saint-Simonianism and its focus on technological progress had reached the Middle East during the 1820s and 1830s through French technical and military missions, and had played a major role in the inception of state-driven reform not only in the Ottoman Empire, but also in countries like Egypt or Tunisia. Acquiring and deploying contemporary technology in projects both small (such as steam-driven factories) and large (railroad building, the acquisition of a steamer navy, the Suez Canal) became an important part of the modernising process in the region. The material benefits that these projects were expected to bring played a major part in such plans, with Egyptian and Ottoman statesmen apparently convinced that the implementation of new technologies would allow for whole regions to rapidly catch up with Western Europe. In any case, the success in attracting the necessary funds, mastering the scientific and technical principles involved, and finding skilled enough workers to construct and operate the projects, would by itself serve as proof that their states were on par with Western Europe.³

¹ Patrick Joyce, *The Rule of Freedom: Liberalism and the modern city* (London: Verso, 2003); Bernhard Rieger, *Technology and the culture of modernity in Britain and Germany, 1890-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

² Haussman's rebuilding of Paris has long been seen as a defining moment in the history of the 19th century. The "prefect of the Seine" represented the common interests of the repressive Second Empire, the Parisian local authorities, and big capital in the name of the spirit of the times. Such an alliance that would be replicated in other European cities and define not only Western European urbanism, but the logic of capitalist expansion itself. See Walter Benjamin, *The Arcades project*, ed. Rolf Tiedemann (Cambridge, Mass. and London: Belknap Press, 1992); Harvey, *Paris: Capital of Modernity* (London: Routledge, 2003).

³ Quataert, *Manufacturing and Technology Transfer in the Ottoman Empire, 1800-1914* (Istanbul: Isis Press, 1992); Mitchell, *Rule of experts: Egypt, techno-politics, modernity*

Such optimism was soon dispelled by reality. The growing fiscal problems of the Ottoman Empire, Egypt and Tunisia meant that there were limited funds to invest in these projects. International loans and joint partnerships with foreign financiers were sought as a solution, but the resulting agreements were highly unequal, as the investors were awarded the management of the project and guaranteed fixed profits, with minimal contribution to the construction costs. Given the total absence of heavy industry in the Empire, all mechanical equipment, most of the materials and a large part of the technical and even the unskilled personnel had to be brought in from abroad, keeping any added value these projects might have brought to the Ottoman economy minimal.⁴ When the projects were completed and began to operate, it became evident in most cases, that their revenues were not enough to ensure profitability without renewed government subsidies, let alone allow for the repayment of the loans that were taken to finance their construction. The investments made by the Ottoman Empire and Egypt in large scale infrastructure projects left them exposed to the aftershocks of the 1873 economic crisis, and played an important role in these countries defaulting on their debt, in 1875 and 1876 respectively.⁵

At the cost of significant sources of revenue, the compromise of 1881 between the Ottoman government and its creditors helped the empire return to the financial markets, balanced the budget and reorganised the taxation system. The stabilisation of the empire's finances allowed for a renewed focus on major public work projects in joint partnership with foreign investors. The Ottoman government now assumed a much more assertive role, introducing provisions into the concessions issued. These technically ensured that the projects would have certain technical specifications, that they would be certified by inspection commissions sent by the Ministry of Commerce and Public Works (*Ticaret ve Naf'ia Nezareti*), that at least part of the labour would be Ottoman, and that the resulting company that would operate the works be listed as Ottoman and be subject to Ottoman company law. The state was

(Berkeley, California and London: University of California Press, 2002).

⁴ Quataert, "Limited Revolution: The impact of the Anatolian Railway on Turkish transportation and the provisioning of Istanbul, 1890-1908" in *Workers, peasants and economic change in the Ottoman Empire, 1730-1914* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1993), 64-66.

⁵ For the history of the two defaults see Edhem, "Ottoman financial integration with Europe: Foreign loans, the Ottoman Bank and the Ottoman Public Debt", *European Review* 13, 3 (July 2005), 431-445; David S. Landes, *Bankers and Pashas: International and economic imperialism in Egypt* (1958).

not always able to enforce its demands upon the concessionaires. Nonetheless, the period up to World War One witnessed a major expansion of the empire's infrastructure, including new railways, ports, track roads and urban amenities.

Salonica, as the biggest city and port in the Ottoman Balkans, was included in such plans from very early on. The completion in the late 1880s of the rail connection to Serbia, Hungary and Austria, along with the construction of a modern port about 15 years later, greatly enhanced the role of the city, as both a regional centre serving the entire region and a node in the transport networks that connected the Empire with Europe. Two more railway lines were constructed in the 1890s and connected the city to Manastir (Bitola) and Istanbul. Decisions on these capital-intensive projects were ultimately taken in the capital, at the conjunction of proposals and observations submitted by the Public Works ministry, the Ministry of the Civil List (*Hazine-i Hassa*), the Ministry of War, foreign investors and the diplomatic representatives of the Powers, who saw such projects as a way to forward their strategic interests in the area. They also involved, albeit to a restricted extent, the municipality and the provincial administration, and captured the imagination of public opinion in the city.

During the same period, another group of projects were initiated in Salonica. They were of smaller scale, and local authorities and elites played a much more prominent role in their completion. In the late 1880s the Ottoman government issued a number of concessions that included a tram network, the supply of running water, gas lighting and electricity. Such projects promised to radically transform the daily life of the locals, while the necessary capital was small enough so that it could be raised locally, or so it was hoped. The Ottoman government seems to have preferred to award these concessions to the municipality or prominent locals, or insisted that they at least be party in the resulting companies. The development of these public projects proceeded according to a set pattern, whereby the concessions would be awarded to a group of locals, who would try and raise funds in the city before selling them off to European investors. When the latter discovered that the terms of the concession were not always favourable, and that the profit margin, if any, was small, the original concessionaire would intervene on behalf of the company, utilising their own contacts at the local and the central government. Such an intermediary in Salonica was Nemlizade Hamdi Bey, the *dönme* notable and entrepreneur who marked the development of the city with his activities as concessionaire. After a

career between his family business and the local administration, Hamdi Bey actively entered the concession trade, attracting the interest of Belgian and other European financiers, who invested in these projects. In 1893 Hamdi Bey was appointed mayor; from that post he continued to liaison between the municipality and the companies that operated in the city, tying his fortunes with the modernisation and beautification of the city.

Hamdi Bey represented the commercial elites of the city, who strongly pushed for the initiation of public projects in the city and its hinterland. Improving the existing infrastructure was essential for expanding the productive base of the region, which would in turn increase commercial traffic through the city. At the same time, ensuring that such investments would accrue in the city and not in other nearby towns was important for maintaining the position of Salonica as the undisputed economic centre of the Ottoman Balkans. The businessmen, merchants and property-owners of the city formed a regional alliance of shared interests, which were represented by the local representative bodies: the municipality, the provincial council and the chamber of commerce. Their pressure and influence to Istanbul managed to score important victories, when it blocked the construction of additional railheads in Kavala and other ports of the Northern Aegean. When the foreign companies that operated the infrastructure of the area threatened local interests, the regional alliance mobilised against what it perceived as monopolistic and exploitative practices, and brought local authorities and public opinion with it.⁶

By the time of the Balkan Wars, Salonica was already being serviced by a number of infrastructure and amenity networks, which had changed both the image of the city and its importance in the context of the late Ottoman Empire. A careful observation of the main projects that had completed during this period ties to the main theme of the study: how did investment, of both an economic and a symbolic nature, by a number of inside and outside actors led to a profound transformation of Salonica's cityscape.

The Railroads of Salonica

⁶ For the concept of regional alliances, see Harvey, *The urbanization of capital* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1985), 155-162. For a semiological approach, see Maarten Hajer, "Discourse coalitions and the institutionalization of practice: the case of acid rain in Britain", in *The argumentative turn in policy analysis and planning*, eds. Frank Fischer and John Forester (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993), 45-48.

The history of the railroad in the Ottoman Empire began in the 1850s. The effects of the *Tanzimat* reforms had started to bear fruit and the Ottoman Empire, recently emerged from the Crimean War, had been accepted into the European Concert. The prospect of the Empire opening up to the West had created a sense of euphoria among Ottoman statesmen, the empire's elites and potential European investors. The lack of a reliable transportation network seemed to be a large hurdle for economic growth, and new projects were debated. The construction of railroads around certain commercial centres, like Istanbul, Izmir or Salonica, attracted considerable attention. Contemporary European observers counselled caution. The expansion of the rail network in Europe had been based on a good system of roads, which had supplied the produce of the countryside to the stations and was used to avoid any bottlenecks which built up because of insufficient capacity. Therefore, it was suggested that the construction of roads and highways should be prioritised over railroads, at least at first.⁷ Eventually, however, the Ottoman state decided to directly invest in railroad building. The train seemed to be a marker of modernity and its construction was supposed to offer cumulative effects, from a rapid increase in commercial traffic to the spread of technology and technical knowhow in the Empire. As access to the European financial markets had been established during the Crimean War, parts of the loans received could be used to finance construction.

A number of plans were drafted during the 1850s with regards to potential sites for the construction of railroads. The first tracks were laid in Western Anatolia, connecting Izmir to its hinterland – the towns of Kasaba and Aydın.⁸ The first plans for a railway network in the European provinces of the Empire were drafted by a French engineer, Ami Boué, in 1852. Boué envisaged four major lines connecting respectively Istanbul to Belgrade, Istanbul to Dıraç [Durrës], Belgrade to Yenişehir [Larissa] and Belgrade to İşkodra [Shkoder]. In Boué's plan, Salonica would be the junction between the lines which would connect Istanbul to the Adriatic and Serbia to the Aegean. He was, however, unable to attract the interest of either the Ottoman government or European investors.⁹

⁷ Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 40-41: "In France, Germany and Italy railways have supported the advance of civilisation already transformed by the development of roads (...) In the Ottoman Empire the spirit of ignorance and routine was still dominant both in the government and the general population."

⁸ See Quataert, "The Age of Reforms: 1812-1914", 807-809.

⁹ Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 37.

The interest for Macedonian railways was rekindled again in 1869, when Baron Maurice de Hirsch secured a concession from Istanbul to lay and operate 1500 miles of track throughout the Balkans, for a duration of ninety nine years. The network was supposed to incorporate independent lines in Bulgaria and Romania and connect the major Ottoman cities to Central Europe. With the Ottoman authorities promising to guarantee the revenue generated by the line at a rate of 22,000 francs per kilometre, Baron de Hirsch had no problem in finding investors. The company, named *Société Impériale des Chemins de Fer de Turquie en Europe* and later renamed *Compagnie des Chemins de fer Orientaux* had a starting capital of fifty million francs, raised primarily in the capital markets of Paris and Vienna.¹⁰

Construction started in Salonica in February 1871 and by the summer of the following year it had reached Mitrovitsa in Kosovo. The first trains started operating on the line in 1872.¹¹ Gradually, however, the growing fiscal problems of the Empire and the deteriorating situation with regards to public order in the Balkans made the continuation of work all but impossible. By the time the revolts in Bosnia, Herzegovina and Bulgaria erupted (1875-1876), Baron de Hirsch had moderated his initial project and was content with only connecting Salonica with the Hungarian network.¹² After long negotiations between Ottoman, Serbian and Austrian-Hungarian representatives, work to complete the line started again in the mid-1880s in a slightly modified plan.¹³ The line would connect to the Serbian network not from Mitrovitsa but from Vrania, a town just south of Üsküp.¹⁴ The first train from Paris arrived in May 1888 to a jubilant welcome by thousands of local residents, who lined both sides of the track before the terminal station, situated to the West of the city centre.¹⁵

The project captured public imagination in Salonica. Along with the expected construction of a new port, the train was expected to greatly increase commercial and traveller traffic and strengthen trade with the Macedonian hinterland, as well as Serbia and Central Europe. There were hopes that, as the railhead closest to Suez and the British sealanes, the city would replace Brindisi as the arrival port of the Indian

¹⁰ Ibid., 42-44.

¹¹ FO 295/3, Wilkinson to Granville, July 9, 1872.

¹² Anastasiadou, *Salonique*, 243-244.

¹³ *Faros tis Makedonias* 603, September 19 [October 1], 1881.

¹⁴ *Faros* 834, April 18 [30], 1884; Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 46-47.

¹⁵ *Faros* 1238, May 8 [20], 1888.

Mail, and thus see its importance and wealth greatly increase.¹⁶ On the other hand, sceptics pointed out that the increase in commerce worked both ways, and feared that the local market would be flooded by cheap Austrian imports now freely arriving with the train.¹⁷ A committee chaired by the governor-general was appointed, to discuss ways to stem any negative impact on the trade of the city.¹⁸ Though such fears remained largely unjustified, cost overheads, delays in the completion and evident deficiencies in the construction dampened the initial enthusiasm.¹⁹

The problems with the construction and the financing of the Oriental Railway created friction between the company and the Ottoman government. Each side accused the other of violating the original contract (*mukavele*) and document of scope (*şartname*) they had signed in 1872 and amended in 1885. Of particular interest were the claims of the company that the failure of the Ottoman government to construct modern port and quay facilities in the region.²⁰ An arbitration committee that convened in 1888 not only debated twenty seven questions in total and eventually adjudicated the sum of 1,754,352 francs in damages to the Ottoman government, but also recognised the claims of the company on the port. The settlement apparently failed to resolve all issues, for a new settlement followed in 1903. That compromise resolved twenty seven new issues, and referred six more for arbitration; the final verdict only came in 1906.²¹

The difficulties encountered by the Oriental Railways did not abate the interest in railroad building in Macedonia. Investors that looked for safe returns on their

¹⁶ *Faros* 840, May 9 [21], 1884. The British did indeed entertain such a possibility, but the technical commission sent to the city advised against it, citing the lack of a modern port connected to the railway network and lack of adequate security in the countryside. FO 195/1731, Blunt to embassy, October 6, 1891.

¹⁷ Yerolypos, "Conscience citadine et intérêt municipal," 171-173.

¹⁸ *Faros* 1296, January 17 [29], 1888.

¹⁹ As the railway began its operation, it became evident that the stations were frequently a considerable distance away from the settlements they were supposed to be serving. Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 45-46.

²⁰ Articles 12 and 17 of the 1872 convention stipulated that the Ottoman government had to construct ports, quays, warehouses and roads to facilitate traffic for the railways. The Ottoman government specifically pledged to spend 2,500,000 francs for the ports of Salonica and Varna and 5,000,000 francs for the port of Dedeğaç). Since most of these projects were never initiated, the company demanded compensation. BOA, ŞD 445/2, *Litige entre le Gouvernement Imperial Ottomane et le Compagnie d'Exploitation des Chemins de fer Orientaux. Arbitrage de son Excellence Monsieur Moret Y Prendergast: Procès Verbaux et Sentences*. (Paris, 1907), 35.

²¹ *Ibid*, 29, 42-43; Brant William Downes, "Constructing the modern Ottoman waterfront: Salonica and Beirut in the late nineteenth century," (PhD dissertation, Stanford University, Stanford, California, 2007), 137-138.

investment were attracted to the region by the guarantees offered by the Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt. Alternatively, the Great Powers vying for influence in the Ottoman Empire viewed such projects not primarily for their economic value, but for their strategic importance. As such they were keen in securing railroad concessions for their own nationals.²² In this game of influence, Germany had soon gained the upper hand. By the late 1880s, Austrian and German financiers, among whom the Deutsche Bank played a prominent role, bought the Oriental Railways off Baron Hirsch. At about the same time, German investor A. Kaulla was awarded the concession to build a line from Salonica to Manastir. The operating company was founded early 1891 with the backing of the Deutsche Bank of Berlin and a starting capital of 12,000,000 francs. Work started in 1891 and was completed in 1894.²³

The prospect of the entire rail network in the Balkans falling under the control of the Germans alarmed French diplomacy. The Ottomans were debating awarding a concession for a third railway line, a junction that would connect the Oriental railway to the line which linked Edirne to Dedeğaç [Alexandroupoli] – providing, in effect, a railway link between Salonica and Istanbul. Despite the doubtful economic prospects of the line, the Ottoman Bank stepped in and, thanks to its intervention, the concession was awarded in September 1892 not to the original British bidders, but to René Baudouy, a French banker with ties to the French Embassy. Baudouy would be responsible of laying 317 km of track that would connect the two existing lines and pass through the cities of Gümülcine [Komotini], Drama and Siroz [Serres]; he would also found a company to operate the line for the duration of ninety nine years.²⁴ The line went parallel the coast, but military considerations stipulated that it should never come closer than fifteen kilometres from the sea. There were plans to construct three railheads at Orfani, coming from Siroz; Kavala from Dram; and Porto-Lagos from İskece [Xanthi], but they were never completed, because of the intervention of the Ministry of War, as well as the lobbying of the Salonica Port Company, which was at the time constructing a new port in the city and wanted to maximise commercial traffic.²⁵

²² *Revue Technique d'Orient* 10, July 15, 1911.

²³ Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 50-53; *Faros* 1494, February 2 [14], 1891.

²⁴ *Faros* 1495, February 6 [18], 1891; BOA, HH.THR 210/35, *Traduction du Firman Imperial de Concession de la ligne de Jonction Salonique-Constantinople*.

²⁵ *Ibid*; FO 78/4496, Blunt to Rosebury, April 23, 1891; Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 249-250.

In April 1893, the “*Compagnie de chemin du fer Ottoman - Jonction Salonique-Constantinople*” was established in Istanbul with Baudouy, the Ottoman Bank and the *Maison V^{ne} D. Kemin et C^{ie}* as signatories. The company had a starting capital of 15,000,000 francs, distributed in 30,000 stocks valued each at 500 francs or 22 *liras*, and its initial board of directors was comprised of the leading French entrepreneurs and officials in the empire. Besides Baudouy, these included Baron de Bethmann, of *D. Kemin et C^{ie}*, Frank Auboyneau, director of the Ottoman Bank, Leon Berger and Vincent Caillard, directors at the Administration of the Ottoman Public Debt; Hamdi Bey was the single Ottoman on the board.²⁶ Construction started that same year and was completed by 1896.²⁷

A fourth line, which would have connected Salonica to Athens was planned but never materialised, despite the efforts of a “Salonica Railway” company, based in Athens, whose representatives in Salonica itself included the Allatini brothers and other important members of local society. Tensions between the Empire and Greece, which would result in the short war of 1897, and fears of the local entrepreneurs that the harbour of Salonica would lose in importance to Piraeus made the implementation of such a plan impossible at the time.²⁸

The implications of the construction of the three railroad lines for Macedonia cannot be understated. This is more so for Salonica, which emerged as the single railhead of a huge region.²⁹ The railroad facilitated easy access between the city and the fertile hinterland, as well as its major urban centres: Manastır, Üsküp, Karaferye, Siroz. The preceding period had been marked by the emergence of certain socio-economic trends, such as urbanisation, the commercialisation of agriculture and the introduction of cash crops like tobacco and cotton, and, in general, an orientation from the interior towards the coast. By facilitating the movement of not only goods, but also people and news, such trends were strengthened. Affordable ticket prices across the three companies allowed for frequent excursions in the countryside around the city, and made frequent travels to Vienna, Budapest or Istanbul, if not Paris, a

²⁶ BOA, HH.THR 210/35, *Statuts*, articles 2, 6 and 12.

²⁷ Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 57-58.

²⁸ FO 195/1654, Blunt to White, May 14 [26], 1889. Gounaris, “Greco-Turkish Railway Connection: Illusions and Bargains in the Late Nineteenth Century Balkans”, *Balkan Studies* 30 (1989), 311-332; Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dýsis*, 209.

²⁹ The single exception was Dedeğaç, about 300 kilometres to the east. Dedeğaç was a sleepy fishing town before the completion of the line that connected it to Edirne, and its subsequent development offers another argument for the importance of the railroad.

realistic possibility for Salonica's most affluent citizens.³⁰ For the rest, "trains of joy" connected the city with the countryside, and could be used for short drips on weekend or during holidays.³¹ A diverse crowd of town merchants, commercial agents, peasants, internal migrants, schoolchildren, and foreign correspondents, took to the train in growing numbers, and passenger traffic increased throughout the period.³²

That being said, the exponential growth across the region that the Ottoman government had anticipated and through which it had hoped to cover the costs of construction, did not materialise, nor did the profits of operating the respective lines match the expectations of the investors. In the convention signed between the Ottoman government and the Oriental Railways, the former guaranteed a brute income of 22,000 francs per kilometre for the entire line, which would have been reduced to 16,000 francs after ten years of operation.³³ In reality, actual revenues were lower than expected, and, combined with the Ottoman bankruptcy in 1876, the deal had to be renegotiated. Under the scope document of 1885, it was the company that was required to forward to the Ottoman government 1,500 francs per kilometre, a sum that became part of servicing the Ottoman public debt.³⁴ Despite the guarantee, in 1906, after more than thirty years of operation, profit for the company still amounted to a mere 1,200 francs per kilometre;³⁵ the brute income of the line per kilometre of track only exceeded 15,000 francs in 1910.³⁶ In the case of the Manastir railway, the fixed kilometric guarantee was set at 14,700 francs of revenue. Actual revenue was about 11,800 francs per kilometre in 1897, 13,486 francs in 1909 and

³⁰ For example, tickets for each passenger class at the Junction trains were priced at 27, 20 and 13 *paras* per kilometre travelled. BOA, HH.THR 210/35, *Cahier des charges*, article 23.

³¹ FO 195/1802, Blunt to Nicolson, July 8, 1893. See also Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 250-251.

³² In 1891, shortly after the completion of the connection to Serbia and Austria-Hungary, annual non-military traffic in the Oriental Railways had exceeded 100,000 passengers. By 1907, it had become three times higher. By comparison, traffic in the Junction line grew from just over 200,000 to twice that number by 1910, while civilian and military traffic in the Manastir line remained stable at about 100,000 passengers per year during the same year. Complete figures cited in Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 236-237, 240, 242.

³³ *Ibid*, 43.

³⁴ BOA, ŞD 445/2, *Litige*, 42-43; *Faros* 840, May 5 [17], 1884.

³⁵ *Ibid*, 30-31. Note that the profits are below the fixed guarantee. This has probably to do with the government claiming 45% of the profits, once the brute income of the line exceeded the sum of 10, 333 francs per kilometre.

³⁶ Kilometric revenue increased from 14,879 in 1909 to 17, 321 francs. See *Revue Technique d'Orient* 18, February 1, 1912.

16,288 francs in 1910.³⁷ With its economic viability sacrificed for the needs of the Ottoman military, the Junction railway was by far the most problematic. In 1909, after more than ten years in operation, its revenue per kilometre of track only reached 6,122 francs. Even though that amount increased to 8,369 francs the following year,³⁸ it was still far below the 15,500 francs agreed as guarantee.³⁹

These figures essentially reveal that the profit margins of investors and stockholders were only maintained at acceptable levels thanks to the sums forwarded by the Ottoman government, which essentially subsidised the railway network at a substantial cost to the budget. The costs were directly inscribed in the annual budget of the *vilayets* the lines passed through, and constituted a significant part of the latter's expenditures. In the fiscal year of 1902/1903, the province of Salonica by itself paid 192,000 *liras* out of total expenses of 423,500 *liras*. Eight years later, the provinces of Salonica, Manastir and Kosovo paid 414,033.57 *liras*, again for subsidies.⁴⁰ In 1910, with improving revenues in both the Oriental and Manastir Railways, only the Junction line reported revenue below the agreed guarantee - but the forwarded sum still amounted to about 150,000 *liras*, or more than 3,500,000 francs.⁴¹

Additional benefits to the empire by railroad construction were initially rather limited. The Oriental Railways contracted a French company for laying the tracks, which in turned employed mostly Italian labour.⁴² As the company was bought off by the Deutsche Bank in the late 1880s, the prevalence of Germans and Austrians among the higher staff became increasingly evident. Despite the persistent efforts of the Ottoman state and local authorities, the number of Ottoman subjects employed by the company remained small, more so in the company's upper echelons.⁴³ The experience of the construction of the Oriental Railways made the Ottoman side more

³⁷ *Chambre de Commerce Francaise de Constantinople, Buletin Mensuel – Revue Commerciale du Levant* 130, January 31, 1898; *Revue Technique d'Orient* 18, February 1, 1912.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ BOA, HH.THR, *Convention*, articles 31-32. Note that article 7 of the same convention stipulated that the Ottoman government could demand that concessionaire constructed a second, parallel track, "aussitôt que les recettes brutes kilométriques atteindront le chiffre de trente mille francs"!

⁴⁰ FO 195/2156, Billioti to O'Conor, May 28, 1903; FO 195/2381, Lamb to Lowther January 30, 1911.

⁴¹ *Revue Technique d'Orient* 18, February 1, 1912. For detailed tables of the sums paid as guarantee to the different companies, see Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 76-77, 84.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 265-266.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 47, 67-68.

weary when drafting and awarding railway concessions, in an attempt to ensure that the foreign railway companies would operate under a set framework. The contracts and documents of scope that accompanied the concessions made careful mention of the projects' technical specifications, subject to regular inspections by teams of engineers attached to the Ministry of Public Works. In the example of the Junction Railway, employees were required by the convention to wear the fez and be able speak Turkish – those at least that were in contact with the public. Technical personnel had to be selected from among alumni of the Imperial School of Civil Engineering (*Hendese-i mülkiye*) or at least be Ottoman subjects.⁴⁴

Ultimately, the railway network became a space of contestation, where the Ottomans fought to secure their rights to control and oversee its operation, Great Powers hoped to increase and expand their influence, and companies attempted to maximise their profits and freedom of action. As ethnic tensions grew in Macedonia, the strategic value of the network became even more pronounced, with trains carrying Ottoman soldiers, spies, illegal pamphlets or smuggled weapons. Bomb attacks by insurgent bands became frequent, and represented a direct challenge to the Ottoman control over the region.⁴⁵ Despite the substantial costs it induced to the Ottoman budget, and even though the revenues it eventually produced did not match the initial expectations of government officials and European investors alike, by the beginning of the 20th century the railroad was a major feature of social and economic life in the Ottoman Balkans and had played a major role in the transformation of Salonica and its emergence as the undisputed centre of the region. The speed and reliability of rail traffic not only favourably affected commercial traffic, but allowed for stronger ties between the city and the hinterland. Recent migrants to the city maintained networks and connections in their home towns, making Salonica, with its clubs, societies, schools, cafés, and hotels, a model for similar initiatives elsewhere.

The Modern Port

In the plans on the development of Macedonia that were presented to the Ottoman authorities from the 1850s onwards, the construction of a railway network was only

⁴⁴ BOA, HH.THR 210/35, *Convention*, article 19.

⁴⁵ FO 295/16, Graves to embassy, June 17, 1904.

part of a larger scheme of envisaged infrastructure projects. The increase in transportation capacity that the train would bring about required a comparable increase in the steamer traffic, as to allow for the exportation of the transported goods. The construction of modern port facilities in the region was therefore deemed necessary, and foreseen, as we have seen, in the concession for the Oriental Railways awarded to Baron Hirsch in 1872. As a city situated inside a large natural harbour, Salonica was an obvious choice for such an undertaking. The Roman and Byzantine port was located to the Southeast of the city, but had eventually silted up and was moved to the Northwest of the centre; the warehouses and trade houses constructed next to the port, just outside the city walls, constituted the *İstira* neighbourhood. During the first half of the 19th century, the port had allowed Salonica to outpace other important commercial and administrative centres in the region, like Edirne or Yanya, whose importance gradually faded. The port had provided the first connection to the outside world, be it Western Europe or the major ports of Eastern Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The first steamer route connecting the city to Istanbul was initiated by the Lloyd steamer company of Trieste in 1840; by 1842 Salonica enjoyed regular connections to most regional ports, as well as to France, Italy and Trieste followed.⁴⁶

Nonetheless, throughout the 19th century, the city remained without a modern, deep-sea port, with local and foreign observers all commenting that the unsatisfactory conditions that prevailed acted as a major obstacle in the growth of commerce. The plans to construct a port alongside the railway were cancelled, as the projected budget of 2.5 million francs was soon revealed to be insufficient for the project at hand, and the impending Ottoman bankruptcy made further investment impossible. As revealed in a memorandum presented to the British Consulate General by local merchants in 1890, the existing facilities were insufficient for the needs of the city and its trade. Available storage space was severely limited, and the port completely devoid of modern cranes or even wharves. The completion of the quay had allowed for a somewhat larger capacity, but it was already becoming congested. The merchandise of all but the smallest ships had to be carried ashore by lightermen and porters, who charged “exorbitant” amounts for their services. The mostly Jewish porters formed a five thousand strong group, and operated in small,

⁴⁶ Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*.

family units, each specialising in specific jobs.⁴⁷ Their guild enjoyed a monopoly in the port, since merchants and agents were not allowed to employ their own porters.⁴⁸ The lack of a rail line covering the small distance between the port and the station meant that all products that arrived or would continue to their destination by train, had to be carried to the station on foot as well.⁴⁹

The increase in shipping traffic, partially a result of the completion of the railway connection to Serbia and Central Europe, was significant enough to convince the Ottoman authorities in Istanbul of the desirability of an enlarged and modernised port in Salonica.⁵⁰ The Ottoman government appeared aware of the problems created by the reliance on foreign shipping.⁵¹ That awareness, combined with the disagreements that arose between the state and the Oriental Railways at about the same time, made keeping the ownership of the new port in Ottoman hands appear necessary. In 1887, the concession to construct a new port, including all modern facilities, next to the neighbourhood of *İştira*, in lands belonging to the sultan, was given to the Ministry of the Civil List to manage.⁵² An open debate on the proposed plans for the new harbour followed in the press and within the different Ottoman ministries.⁵³ Though the newspapers of the city expressed the wish to see the contract for the construction of the port awarded to local companies, the necessary capital was impossible to be raised in the city.⁵⁴

The Civil List proceeded to look for a foreign contractor to undertake the majority of the building costs, in exchange of managing the port and taking a share of its profits for a set period of time. A draft convention and document of scope were drafted, and the necessary sum that the ministry would provide was estimated at 6

⁴⁷ H. Şükrü İlicak, "Jewish Socialism in Ottoman Salonica", *Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 2, 3 (2002), 122.

⁴⁸ FO 78/4288, Blunt to Salisbury, March 5, 1890. It appears that the guild had enough political clout with Customs' officials and local authorities to block any appeals for the modernisation of the harbour. See Donald Quataert, "Premiers fumées d'usine: Some general factors favouring the development of industry in Salonica", in *Workers, peasants and economic change in the Ottoman Empire*, ed. Quataert, 159-160.

⁴⁹ The lack of such a connection influenced the decision of the British government to retain Brindisi as the point of arrival of the Indian Mail. See FO 195/1731, Blunt to embassy, October 6, 1891.

⁵⁰ Traffic almost doubled, from 491,153 in 1883 tonnes to 943,153 tonnes in 1892. FO 195/1802, Blunt to Ford, April 9, 1883.

⁵¹ Downes, 72-74.

⁵² BOA, BEO 1051/82580, 17 Muharrem 1305 [September 13, 1889].

⁵³ FO 295/9, Blunt to Ford, April 10, 1892.

⁵⁴ *Asır*, 15 June 1895, quoted in Downes, 81.

million francs.⁵⁵ In 1893, the ministry negotiated a deal along these lines with French engineers Albert Dufour,⁵⁶ and Adolphe Gérard, but no agreement was reached.⁵⁷ In the same year, British engineers Kinniple and Jaffrey, who had been corresponding with the Civil List on the project since 1891, teamed up with Colonel G.E. Church of Dashwell House, and made a detailed bid for the concession. They submitted plans of their own, which raised the estimated cost of the project to 300,000 pounds sterling (about 7.5 million francs), and included, next to the port itself, the enlargement of the quay.⁵⁸ The cost was deemed too high and that proposal was eventually rejected as well.

In the following years interest in the concession grew, with French investors taking the advantage over competitors in what appeared to be a crucial project not only for Salonica but for the whole region. A first convention was signed between Portugal Efendi, minister of the Civil List, on one side, and French naval officer, commandant Chopart and Marius Michel Paşa on the other.⁵⁹ The agreement included the creation of a company to oversee the construction of the port, and operate it for the next 20 years. The share capital of the company was fixed at 1 million francs, divided in 2,000 shares with a nominal value of 500 francs each, with half of the sum paid by the Civil List and the other half contributed by the French. The two sides acknowledged that the total cost of the project was not to exceed 5 million francs; the rest of the necessary capital would be sought in the bond market. The Civil List guaranteed a 5% return on the bonds and shares issued, as well as the full amortisation of the latter by the expiration of the concession. Michel Paşa, in turn, was entrusted with finding a suitable contractor, so that construction could begin.⁶⁰

⁵⁵ BOA, HH.THR 210/23.

⁵⁶ FO 78/4496, Blunt to the Principal Secretary for Foreign Affairs, July 23, 1893.

⁵⁷ Vilma Hastaoglou-Martinidis, "French interests in the building of Salonica's port, 1872-1912. Entrepreneurial firms and urban and architectural innovations," (paper presented in the international conference *Thessaloniki: A city in transition 1912-2012*, Thessaloniki, October 18-21, 2012). I want to thank professor Hastaoglu-Martinidis for making the manuscript available to me.

⁵⁸ BOA, HH.THR 210/23.

⁵⁹ Ibid. Marius Michel was a pioneer in investment in Ottoman infrastructure, playing a major role in the construction of a network of lighthouses across the empire. For his efforts he was both knighted in France and given the honorific of *paşa*. See Jacques Thobie, *L'administration générale des phares de l'Empire Ottoman et la Société Collas et Michel* (Paris:L'Harmattan, 2004).

⁶⁰ BOA, HH.THR 210/23, *Projet de Convention*, articles 1-4.

That contractor was Edmund Bartissol, a French engineer with experience in constructing ports and railways across the world, former deputy in the French parliament and member of the *Legion d'Honneur*. In June 1896 an imperial ordinance (*irade*) offered a detailed description the upcoming project. A *ferman* of the sultan formally acknowledged Bartissol as the concessionaire the following month and was followed by the signing of the convention between the two sides, as well as the documents of scope for both the construction and the operation of the port.⁶¹ The duration of the concession was extended to 24 years and the total cost of the project estimated for yet another time, now at 6.5 million francs. One fifth of that amount would be covered by the Civil List, with the remainder being raised by the concessionaire.⁶² The Ottoman side guaranteed that, in case of insufficient funds at hand, it would use income drawn from the budget of the province of Salonica.⁶³ The concessionaire was also given permission to expropriate all lands necessary for the construction of the port that belonged to the Civil List or the Ottoman state itself.⁶⁴

The plan made provisions for the construction of two moles, about 200 metres in length and 50-90 metres in width, along with a large wave breaker. Four steam-powered cranes, weighing respectively 15, 5, 2 and 2 tonnes each, would service the incoming steamer traffic. The concessionaire would construct seven warehouses of 1,000 m² each, and two smaller ones of 500 m². The port would be connected to the gas and water networks that had been constructed in the previous years, and a 3,000 metre rail track would link it to the existing railways.⁶⁵ Mooring fees were set at 3-6 *paras* per tonne per day, and three classes of goods were defined for calculating the fees for embarking and disembarking, with goods arriving (or destined for re-transportation) by the train enjoying discounted rates.⁶⁶ The municipality would receive 3% of the company's annual income, or a minimum of a thousand *liras*, as a compensation of lost income from the fees it received from ships that moored at the quay. After this fee was subtracted, along with administration costs, interest paid to

⁶¹ BOA, HH.THR 210/29.

⁶² BOA, HH.THR 221/1, *Convention*, articles 12-14.

⁶³ *Ibid*, articles 12-14. These funds were rents received from properties in the city and other towns in the *vilayet*, taxes collected from shepherds, and the dues paid by fisheries in the gulfs of Salonica and Kavala, totalling 14,600 *liras*.

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, articles 18.

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, *Devis et Cahier des Charges*, article 10.

⁶⁶ *Ibid*, *Cahier des Charges d'Exploitation*, article 15.

bond- and share-holders and money set aside for their amortisation, the remainder would be equally shared between the company and the Civil List.⁶⁷

In October 1897, Bartissol founded, with the consent of the Ottoman government, the *Société de Construction de Port du Salonique*, a joint-stock company with its seat in Istanbul. In the seven-member Board of Administrators, Bartissol reserved the president's seat for himself, and placed three members of his family (the engineer J. Robert, and the rear-admirals L. Cauber and J. Nabona), and three local entrepreneurs: Levi Modiano, son of Saul Modiano, the lawyer Emmanuel Salem, and Hacibar Efendi.⁶⁸ Bartissol formally transferred the right to the concession to the new company, which would in turn reimburse him for any expenses that occurred during the construction. The new company would start with a share capital of 5 million francs, comprised of 10 thousand shares of 500 francs each, and promised an interest rate of 5% to stockholders for the duration of the works and until the eventual amortisation of their investment.⁶⁹

By that time, Bartissol had already brought his people to Salonica and construction of the port had begun. In the search for material to utilise in the embankments and fills needed for the project, the company asked for permission to set up a light rail (*decovil*), which was to connect the quarries at the hills of *Şeyh Su*, to the east of the city, with a large workstation next to the White Tower, and then the main site of the port, located across town.⁷⁰ The necessary equipment was brought to Salonica from France, Greece, Beirut and other places, where Bartissol's company maintained a presence. The main asset of the construction crew was a large dredge bought by the concessionaire in the Netherlands and christened *Portugal*, presumably to honour the minister of the Civil List.⁷¹ Lack of specialised workers, especially carpenters, presented an obstacle early on, but work progressed steadily.⁷² Between February and March 1897, the decovil railway transported 1,237m³ of soil from the quarries which was used in the embankment fills.⁷³ For March 1897, the

⁶⁷ Ibid, articles 12, 14.

⁶⁸ Hastaoglu-Martinidis, "French interests", 8; Eduard Pech, *Manuel des Societes Anonymes fonctionnant en Turquie* (Istanbul, Gérard Frères, 1911).

⁶⁹ BOA, HH.THR 210/29.

⁷⁰ BOA, HH.THR 210/5, 210/9.

⁷¹ Lists of equipment that arrived in the city were attached to the monthly progress reports sent to the Civil List by the company, contained in HH.THR 210/27, 210/31, 210/40, 211/1, 211/6 and other folders in the *Hazine-i Hassa*. See also Downes 153.

⁷² BOA, HH.THR 210/27.

⁷³ BOA, HH.THR 210/4.

company reported only 920 workdays in its payroll. In December the construction of the moles and the wave breaker was celebrated in an official ceremony, in the presence of the governor-general and most local officials and notables.⁷⁴ From then on, the speed of construction accelerated; the number of workdays reported for that month increased to 3733, 13,040 workdays in July 1898 and 15,107 workdays in December of that same year.⁷⁵

As construction progressed, however, a number of difficulties arose, which damaged the relationship between the company and the city. A series of accidents, some deadly, marred the public image of the project and brought Bartissol's professionalism to question.⁷⁶ When the company restricted access to the quay and reserved the surroundings of the White Tower for its own uses, daily life in the city was severely disrupted. With the works nearing completion, *Journal de Salonique* reported that

(...) we will be delivered from a nightmare; we will no longer have under our eyes this railroad that runs the length of the quay, we will no longer hear the strident whistle of the locomotive, we will no longer have the cyclones of smoke that frighten our pretty women.⁷⁷

At about the same time the new harbour fees became public, and the local merchants started protesting. The new port would be a great boon for steamer traffic; though steamers represented the major bulk of commercial traffic in terms of tonnage, about three quarters of the vessels calling to port in Salonica were still sailing ships, which mostly catered to the needs of the smaller local merchants and commercial firms. They were severely affected by the imposed changes in the fees' regime: As the responsibility of the quay was transferred from the municipality to the company, the latter raised mooring fees, in an attempt to discourage ships captains from disembarking there, and to increase the number of ships docking in the new port.⁷⁸ The most vocal among the local merchants now declared that an excellent natural port like Salonica's had not required much in terms of cranes and

⁷⁴ BOA, HH.THR 210/40.

⁷⁵ HH.THR 210/27, 210/40, 211/6.

⁷⁶ Downes, 140.

⁷⁷ *Journal de Salonique*, September 9, 1901, as cited and translated in Downes, 151.

⁷⁸ *Ibid*, 121, 144.

wharves anyway.⁷⁹ A growing body of Salonica's citizens were feeling that the costs of the port were too high, and the benefits too few.

The situation for the company took a turn for the worse when the port company became embroiled in a legal dispute with the Oriental Railways. The contract that Bartissol had signed included the construction of a rail connection between the new port and the existing facilities. The port company had also undertaken the construction of a new train terminal, a central station that would bring together all three rail services that operated in Salonica.⁸⁰ The Oriental Railways, which had laid claims to the project of the new port as early as the 1880s, had strongly protested the actions of the Civil List and the convention signed with Bartissol, and refused to consent to the construction of the new station, or, for that matter, to any development that threatened to undercut its position in Salonica's commerce.⁸¹ In 1901, with the construction of the port almost completed, the Oriental Railways took action and, with support from the Austrian consulate, actively blocked the port company's workers from completing the construction of the line between the port and its own station.

The Ottoman government was caught off guard by the dispute and attempted to stall for time, rather than face a legal action from either side. They refused to formalise the completion of construction on the grounds that the project could not be regarded as fully complete before the line was constructed as well. With the port already operational, but unable to collect the full dues from the incoming ships, because the project was technically still incomplete, the port company faced severe losses. In an attempt to exert pressure on the Ottoman government, it evicted the Customs' officers, whose building was a property of the company, from the premises of the port. The action caused long delays to ships loading and unloading in Salonica. Local merchants wishing to transport goods over the few hundred metres that separated the two symbols of the city's transformation, its train station and its port, had already been forced to rely on porters and carts – an irony which was not

⁷⁹ FO 195/2111, Billioti to Bunsen, December 22, 1901; FO 195/2156, Billioti to Whitehead, February 18, 1903.

⁸⁰ BOA, HH.THR 210/8.

⁸¹ BOA, HH.THR 210/10, 210/20.

lost to them.⁸² They were now, because of the dispute between the two companies, faced with the possibility of the collapse of commerce in the city.

Temporary arrangements kept the port going, while both the port company and the Civil List accused the other of breaching the terms of the concession and demanded hundreds of thousands of francs in compensation from each other. The issues had moved beyond the rail line, into matters of real estate, and specifically around the ownership of the buildings the company had constructed inside the port, and the rent the company had or did not have to pay for the properties it occupied along the quay, while construction works took place.⁸³ Eventually, a compromise was reached in 1904 with the signing of a new convention and document of scope for the exploitation of the port. The new documents extended the duration of the concession to 40 years, starting in July 1904. They also provided a final official estimate for the cost of the project, now calculated at 8 million francs.⁸⁴ The company pledged the 20-year bonds it had issued and were currently in circulation did not exceed 4.7 million francs in value, and that it would buy these bonds off within a period of 4 years and replace them with new, 40-year bonds.⁸⁵ The convention made provisions for existing investors, with 5% interest promised to bondholders and an annual sum of 465,000 francs set aside for the amortisation of the starting capital.⁸⁶ The deal was sealed with the official reception of the port by the Ottoman authorities in the months that followed.⁸⁷

The convention of 1904 entrusted the company with the task to enlarge the city's quay from its current 12 metres to 20 metres. In 1898 a similar proposal had been submitted by the company directly to the municipality. The enlargement of the quay would have cost a sum of 608,000 francs, payable within 20 years. The company's bid had generated intense public debate, with proponents arguing for its necessity, while detractors invoking the prospect of increased docking fees. Even though the technical commission of the municipality had approved the project, the

⁸² FO 195/1849, Blunt to Currie, 20/11/1893; Downes, 142-145. For similar developments in the port of Istanbul, in this instance because of porters' and boatmen's resistance to the port company, see Quataert, "The port worker guild and the Istanbul Quay Company", in *idem*, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1983), 103-108.

⁸³ BOA, HH.THR 221/1, *Siege Social*, March 30, 1905.

⁸⁴ BOA, ŞD 445/2, *Convention relative au Port de Salonique*, articles 1-2. The Civil List had covered 1.5 million of the total cost.

⁸⁵ *Ibid*, article 6.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, articles 3-5.

⁸⁷ *Ibid*, *Rapport concernant la réception définitive du port de Salonique*.

municipal council eventually had rejected it.⁸⁸ The port company had resubmitted its bid in the second half of 1901. That time it had been approved, and construction had actually started, before it fell victim to the deterioration of relations between the port company and the Ottoman authorities, and all work had ground to a halt.⁸⁹ The signing of the convention of 1904 permanently settled the matter, and construction resumed soon afterwards. The terms of said convention, however, marked a departure from what the earlier convention of 1896 specified on the quay. Though the municipality would retain ownership of the enlarged quay, it was required to pay an annual sum of 500 *liras* to the company, while the latter still retained exploitation rights on docking ships.⁹⁰

The convention of 1904 also reiterated the obligations of the company to construct the central station and complete the link to the railway network.⁹¹ The rapprochement between the port company and the state was, however, not enough to overcome the existing obstacles that had stopped the completion of the project before, as the Oriental Railways refused to budge from its position and abandon what it perceived as its vital interests. Despite the compromise reached in 1903 between the state and the railway company, which resolved a number of long-standing issues, there was no agreement on the matter of the Oriental Railways' stake in the port of Salonica; that question, along with other five, was referred to an arbitrator appointed for this task by the Emperor of Austria, in the capacity of a neutral party. Inside the arbitration court, the railway company claimed that their rights to the port, as stated in the 1872 concession, had been violated by the decision of the Ottoman government to award the concession to Bartissol. The Ottoman side, on the other hand, demanded that the railway company allowed for the completion of the rail connection between the port and the station, and asked for a thousand francs for each day of delay as reparations. While noting that the conflict had placed the city in a situation "probably unique, of a railway which is separated by 1,500 metres from the port to which it ends at", the arbitrators acknowledged the claims of the company, ruled that the connecting line should belong to it rather than the port, and ordered that all goods that were carried to the port by train be loaded or unloaded free of

⁸⁸ Downes, 119ff.

⁸⁹ Ibid 144-145.

⁹⁰ BOA, ŞD 445/2, article 11.

⁹¹ Ibid, article 13; HH.THR 221/1, *Siege Social*, June 20, 1905 .

charge.⁹² The decision of the court of arbitration resulted to an agreement between the port company, the railway company and the Ottoman state, and construction on the line began until it became operational in 1910.⁹³

Ironically, by that time the port was already seen as too small to accommodate the ever-increasing steamer traffic. Steamers that could not get a place under its cranes were forced to follow the honoured tradition of dropping anchor a distance from the port and move their cargo to customs through smaller boats and barges. The longer turnaround caused complaints and led to calls for renewed investment in Salonica and its port.⁹⁴ In May 1910, local engineer Eli Modiano won the Dutch auction (*münakassa*) to construct a new customs house building.⁹⁵ The new building, a giant construction designed by the Levantine architect Alexandre Vallauray, followed the design of the Sirkeci train station, itself one of Vallauray's works, and its construction employed the reinforced concrete technique patented by the famed French engineer Francois Hennebique.⁹⁶ Engineers of the port company and a technical commission set up by the Ottoman government agreed on the necessity of constructing a further set of moles in the city. It was decided that the port would expand towards the southeast of its current position, that is, towards the city centre and along the quay.

The expansion of the port in the direction of the quay threatened to restrict the city's access to the sea, in a reversal of forty years of transformative initiatives taken by the local authorities, and would have dealt a heavy blow to local real estate values. Already in 1902, a group of house- and warehouse owners submitted a formal complaint to the municipality. Their properties that had been built on land reclaimed by the sea, following the demolition of the coastal wall in 1869, were now located next to construction site of the new port. The owners claimed that the construction placed their properties away from the sea and insisted that, since they had bought those same properties from the municipality for a steep price, they were entitled to compensation.⁹⁷ Their complaint was at the time dismissed, but the

⁹² BOA, ŞD 445/2, *Litige*, 61-62.

⁹³ Downes., 145-148.

⁹⁴ The growing power the boatmen's guild played in city affairs at the time following the Young Turk revolution will be examined in a later chapter and may have played a role in the plans to expand the port.

⁹⁵ BOA, BEO 3745/280833. Modiano placed a bid of 51,000 *liras*.

⁹⁶ Hastaoglou-Martinidis, "French interests", [11].

⁹⁷ Downes, 111.

prospect of expansion along the quay galvanised opposition. Successful lobbying meant that the plans of the port company were blocked at both the municipal and the *vilayet* councils, and that the Ottoman government decided that the projected expansion of the port should take place towards the opposite direction, instead, on the swamplands to the northwest of the city.⁹⁸

The Tram

At about the same time Salonica became a major railhead and the first plans for the construction of a new city port were being deliberated, the Ottoman government issued a number of concession for projects that, though smaller in scope than the railroad and the new port, had an equally important impact in the transformation the cityscape and city life. In their case, local actors in the municipality and among the elites had an important contribution in the planning, construction and operation. Since the capital requirements were relatively small, the projects attracted considerable interest among local entrepreneurs.

The prospect of constructing a horse-drawn tramway network in Salonica was first contemplated in the mid-1880s. As Salonica was built amphitheatrically across the bay, its layout made the tramway a quite practical solution, with only a couple of lines running through the main avenues being enough to provide cover for most of the population. A plan drafted in 1886 called for the construction of a line between the train station and the White Tower, which would then extend all the way to the estate of Kerim Ağa, a location in the middle of the eastern suburb. In Istanbul, the officials at the Grand Vizierate argued for keeping the concession in the hands of the state, by issuing it in the name of the municipality. They argued that the construction of the line would require the intervention of the municipality in any case, as the streets where the tram would pass needed to be paved, and that the financing the extension of the line would be guaranteed by the ensuing public demand. The concession included a deadline for completion, set at two years after the start of

⁹⁸ Ibid., 163-166. Downes suggests that the regional alliance that had spurred the development of the city splintered on the proposed expansion of the port, with merchants supporting the expansion and “the city’s largest landowners” denouncing it. In this, he overlooks the fact that the large property owners in the city *were* its most important merchants and vice-versa. While the port company and the French consul that supported it saw no harm in expanding their operations towards the heart of the city, they encountered the determined opposition of the local elites.

construction, as well as a preliminary budget, estimated at 878,692 *kuruş*; it was expected that the project would generate enough revenue to cover the construction costs in two years of operation.⁹⁹ The exact plan was initially going to be drafted by the engineers of the technical bureau of the province and paid for by the municipality itself, with help from local entrepreneurs.¹⁰⁰

It became, however, almost immediately clear that the municipality simply did not have the funds necessary for the project, whose cost estimates had by now increased to 16-20,000 *liras*.¹⁰¹ The Ministry of Public Works favoured awarding the concession to a private individual. Their preferred candidate was Budrus Nafilyan Efendi, an Ottoman architect based in Istanbul. Nafilyan, who had already shown interest for the tram concession in 1886, now submitted a comprehensive bid. He offered to take the concession jointly with the municipality, to which he would pay an annual sum of 300 *liras*, so as to cover the costs induced by the pavement of the streets – and extend the line eastwards, up to the Allatini flour mill. The bid was approved by a commission that had been set by the Public Works ministry. The Civil List was given the task to investigate the issue and came up with a different suggestion: Its inquiry proposed that it should take over the implementation of the concession itself, since it possessed the concessions to the quay and the future port, as well as significant properties (*arza ve arazi*) in the city.¹⁰² Initially, the recommendations of the two ministries were both refused, the preferred solution being instead to keep the concession within the municipality, and let it form a company for the construction and operation of the line in the hope of attracting investors, especially among the businessmen of the city.¹⁰³ When that interest failed to materialize, however, it was decided that the municipality would assume the responsibility and the costs for paving and preparing the streets for the tram, while the company, whose concession would be now granted to private investors, would assume planning and operating the line, as well as laying the actual tracks.

In the process that followed, Nafilyan found his bid challenged by İlya Beyzâde Ali Bey, a Muslim notable of Salonica, who submitted an offer of his own. Ali Bey offered to pay 500 *liras* annually for a concession of only 35 years in length,

⁹⁹ BOA, İ.MMS 106/4553, 15 Mart 1302 [March 17, 1886].

¹⁰⁰ Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatonlis kai Dysis*, 209.

¹⁰¹ BOA, İ.MMS 106/4553, 24 Mart 1304 [April 5, 1888].

¹⁰² BOA, Y.MTV 37/99, 7 Şubat 1304 [February 19, 1888].

¹⁰³ BOA, İ.MMS 106/4553, 24 Mart 1304 [April 5, 1888]; A.}MKT.MHK 497/27, 1 Mayıs 1304 [May 13, 1888].

and pledged he would procure the animals that would draw the streetcars from within the empire.¹⁰⁴ With the Public Works ministry now expressing support for what it viewed as a better bid compared to Nafilyan Efendi's original proposal,¹⁰⁵ Nafilyan was forced to include in his bid Hamdi Bey, already recognised as one of Salonica's notables (*Selânik vücuhünden*) thanks to the connections and property he possessed (*ashab-ı 'alâka ve arazından*).¹⁰⁶ The two bidders' willingness to improve their offer,¹⁰⁷ as well as Hamdi Bey's connections in Salonica and Istanbul eventually secured them the concession, over the complaints of Ali Bey.¹⁰⁸ Although Nafilyan Efendi withdrew from the project shortly after for unspecified reasons, the Ottoman government remained confident that Hamdi Bey, based on information received on his influence and wealth (*iş'ar-i mahalliye ve kendisinin haber verilen servet ve iktidarına göre*), could undertake the responsibility on such "moderate" (*mu'tedil*) terms, and ratified the concession to his name.¹⁰⁹

Hamdi Bey, however, was unable or unwilling to raise capital for the tram company by himself. After the founding of the *Compagnie Ottomane des Tramvays de Salonique* with a starting capital of 500,000 francs, and transferring the concession to the company, as was required, the majority of the shares were bought by investors from Belgium, where Hamdi Bey had extensive business contacts.¹¹⁰ He, in turn, was given a seat at the company's board, along with his son, Osman Adil Bey, and the lawyer Emanuel Salem.¹¹¹ Thanks to his influence, the annual sum paid to the municipality was eventually reduced to only 150 *liras*.¹¹²

Construction started soon after, on two parallel lines, one that would pass through *Vardar Kapısı* Street, connecting the gardens of *Beşçınar* and the train station of the Oriental Railways in the West to the Kelemeriye Gate to the East; and another that would run parallel the waterfront, linking Olympos Square to the White Tower and beyond, to the suburbs east of the city centre, where the depot would be

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 6 Ağustos 1305 [August 18, 1889].

¹⁰⁵ BOA, İ.MMS 106/4553, 15 Haziran - 1 Ağustos 1305 [June 27 - August 13, 1889].

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 2 Ağustos 1304 [August 14, 1888].

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. They agreed to increase the proposed annual fee of 300 *liras* to 400 after five years of operating the line, and 500 after ten. They also matched Ali Bey's offer regarding the duration of the concession and the provision of draft animals.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid, 6 Ağustos 1305 [August 18, 1889].

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ BOA, İ.MMS 106/4553, *Mukavele*name, article 6.

¹¹¹ Pech, 172.

¹¹² Mentioned in BOA, DH.MKT 823/70, 29 Kanun-ı Sâni 1319 [February 10, 1904] and İ.HUS 113/82, 26 Kanun-ı Sani 1319 [February 7, 1904].

situated. A short junction along Hamidiye Boulevard would join the two lines. A number of clauses regarding the technical aspects of the project were included in the document of scope, to ensure that the addition of the tram to street traffic in the city would disrupt other activities as little as possible. It was decided that the tram should not pass through the quay, used heavily by pedestrians as well as unloading ships but instead run along the first parallel street (the “Second Quay Boulevard”, *Rıhtım İkinci Caddesi*); a minimum distance between the lines and the sidewalks was also specified.¹¹³

In practice, construction took a significantly different course than what had been stipulated. By October 1892 construction was almost complete, but there were reports of significant faults. Though the width of the tram lines was set to between 105 and 145 cm, the company engineers delivered a 97 cm wide line, which meant that the carriages already imported were useless, as the gauge was now too narrow. The intervals that were supposed to be kept between the line and the sidewalks were mostly ignored. The boulevards of Hamidiye, Vardar Kapısı and Yalılar were wide enough to compensate and guarantee tram, carriage and pedestrian traffic. On the other hand, Ottoman officials found out that the company, in breach of the stipulations of the concession, insisted in building the line on the quay itself, and predicted that problems would arise. The width of available space on the quay was about eight metres, another three metres were sidewalk, while one metre was taken by the mooring chains. With the quay used both by boatmen and strolling pedestrians, the arrival of the tram threatened to cause not only congestion, but accidents as well. The fact that parts of the line, especially near stops, were supposed to be double complicated the matter even further.¹¹⁴

The provisional findings of the committee caused alarm in Istanbul. With about seventy days left before the official opening of the project, all construction was halted and the matter was deferred to the Council of State (*Şura-ı Devlet*). A technical commission was sent to Salonica and advised against formally receiving the tram line, before all existing issues were resolved by the company, but the report was rejected.¹¹⁵ It was instead proposed that the company would be made to adhere at least to the provisions of the concessions in these segments of the line that had not

¹¹³ BOA, İ.MMS 106/4553, *Şartname*.

¹¹⁴ BOA, BEO 188/14026, 22 Teşrin-i Evvel 1308 [December 4, 1892].

¹¹⁵ BOA, ŞD 2957/8, 8 Teşrin-i Evvel 1308 [November 20, 1892].

yet been finished. This, however, was eventually seen as impractical, as 600 metres of track had already been laid at the quay.¹¹⁶ In February 1893, a five-member technical commission led by Colonel Şefarettin Bey was dispatched by the Public Works Council (*Meclis-i Nafi'a*) for a final inspection, perhaps as a last attempt by Istanbul to show it was not simply rubberstamping a *fait-accomplis*. With the delivery of the project already delayed, and with the company and the municipality pressuring for a final resolution, even that committee was recalled before it could draft its report.¹¹⁷ The first segment of the line was officially inaugurated in May 7, 1893, with the ceremony being attended by the governor-general of the province, the civil and military officials, the city notables and a large crowd.¹¹⁸

When the tram started its operation, the network had a total length of four kilometres. New segments added in the following years in accordance with the original plans more than doubled that figure, making public transportation available to most of the city. A 5,221 metre segment began at Olympos square, next to the harbour, ran along the quay, past the White Tower, and ended at the main tram depot, which was located at the far end of the eastern suburbs, and where the cars were stationed and the horses which drew them were stabled. A second segment, of a length of 3,639 metres, connected the public gardens of *Beşçınar* to the west of the city, where a second depot was situated, with the centre, running past the train station. Some years after, a third line was added to the network, running along the length of Hamidiye Boulevard from the White Tower to the Municipal Hospital.¹¹⁹ [See Map 3] The company maintained sixty carriages – half of them operating in winter and half during summer – and employed about 120 workers.¹²⁰ A hundred and sixty horses were used to draw the carriages through the city, though the company had pledged to gradually replace them with steam-powered carriages by the time its concession had expired.¹²¹ Even though the tickets were relatively expensive, tram service became very popular with the public, with daily passenger traffic increasing

¹¹⁶ BOA, BEO 188/14026, 22 Teşrin-i Evvel 1308 [December 4, 1892].

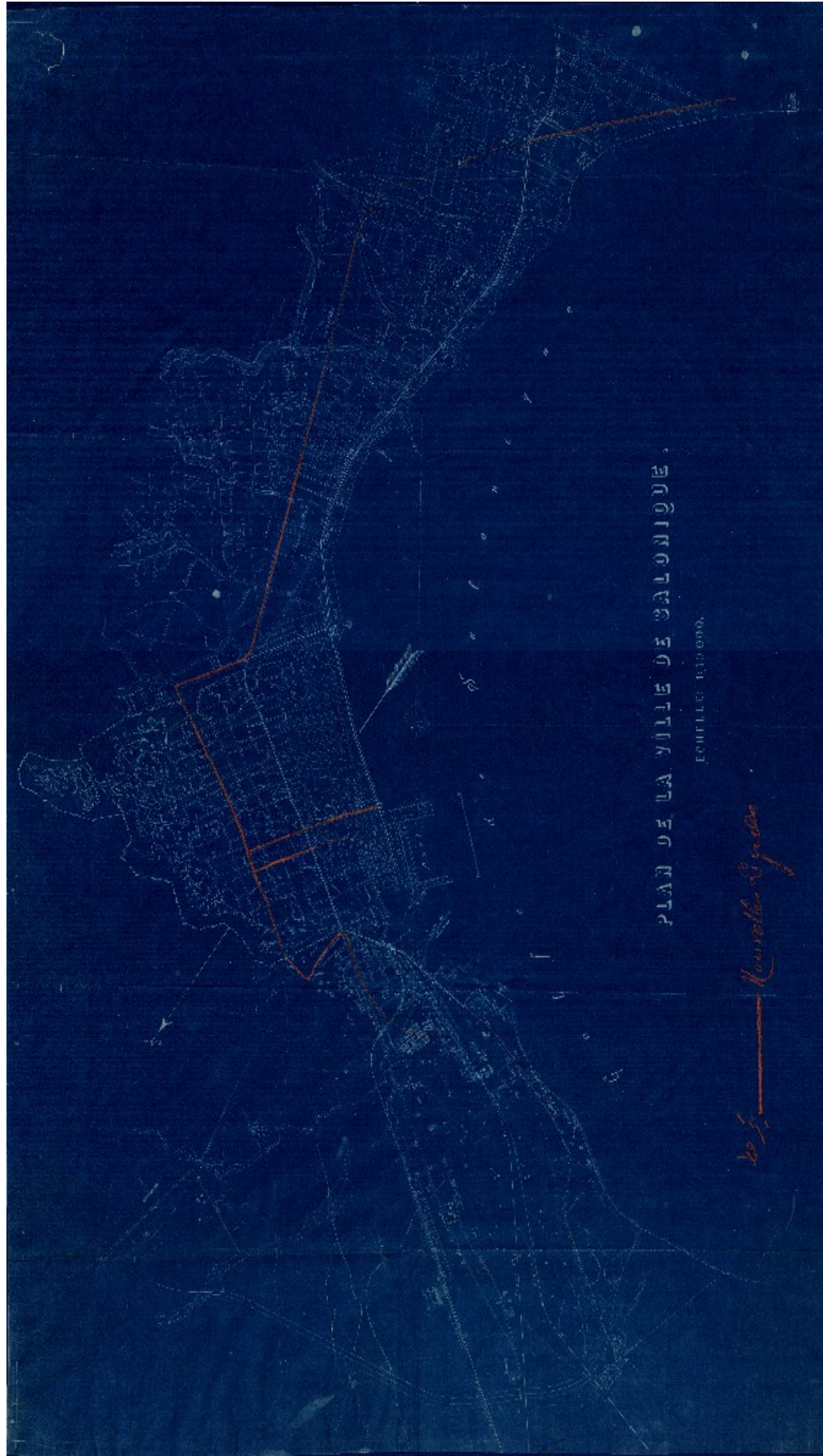
¹¹⁷ Ibid, 13 Nisan, 20 Nisan 1309 [May 2, 1893].

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 25 Nisan, 26 Nisan 1309 [May 8, 1893].

¹¹⁹ Yerolympos, *Metaxy Anatólis kai Dysis*, 233; Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 239. See also BOA, BEO 296/22179, 20 Eylül 1309 [October 2, 1893].

¹²⁰ Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 240.

¹²¹ Ibid and BOA, İ.HUS 107/141, 9 Temmuz 1319 [July 22, 1903]. Interestingly enough, the animals were not bought from within the empire after all, but were mostly of Serbian and Hungarian stock.



[Map 3] Salonica and its tram network at the late 1890s: Completed lines are in white, planned extensions in orange.
Source: BOA ŞD 1233/23

from about 8,000 in 1894 to more than 10,000 at the turn of the century.¹²²

The success the tram enjoyed in the city was mirrored in the financial success of the company. In spring of 1895, the trading value of the shares, whose nominal price was, as we have seen, set at 500 francs, had risen significantly, and the company formally requested from the Ottoman government the right to split them up into smaller shares, thus allowing for easier trading. The Council of Public Works, which dealt with the request, acknowledged the validity of the demand, and allowed a slight amendment to the company's convention to allow for such an effect, with the condition that the new shares would not be priced less than 50 francs each, and that they would infer equal legal rights to their owners.¹²³

It appears, however, that the Ottoman authorities were less satisfied with the monopoly the tram company enjoyed in Salonica, and which it took action to defend. In February 1901 the company petitioned against the issue of a concession for the provision of an omnibus service in Salonica, as contrary to the terms of its own concession.¹²⁴ In 1903, the tram celebrated its first ten years of operation; with pending discussions on the issue of a concession for providing Salonica and Izmir with electricity, the company attempted to secure its position in the city. It submitted a formal petition, requesting the extension of the duration of its current concession from 35 to 60 years. The matter was deferred to the Fiscal Committee (*Maliye Komisyonu*), chaired by the Grand Vizier.¹²⁵ During the proceedings of the committee, it was observed that

during the first ten years the concession was in operation, successive complaints were filed against the company, either by the municipality or by the public, because it did not fully conform to the stipulations of the document of scope and the convention – complaints the company did not take into consideration...¹²⁶

¹²² Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 240. Anastassiadou compares that number with the estimated 20,000 passengers per day using the tram in Istanbul, a city six times bigger than Salonica.

¹²³ BOA, ŞD 1203/44, BEO 668/50040, 6 Haziran 1311 [June 18, 1895].

¹²⁴ BOA. BEO 1568/117575, 1 Şubat 1316 [February 14, 1901].

¹²⁵ BOA. İ.TNF 12/5, 28 Haziran 1319 [July 11, 1903].

¹²⁶ [Ş]irket-i mezkûre müdet-i imtiyazının ilk on senesinde mukavele ve şartname ahkâmına tamamıyla tevfiğ olunmamasından dolayı gerek belediye gerek ahali tarafından vukubulan şikayet-i mütevaliyeye şirketçe havale-i sem itibar eydilmemekte olmasıyla [...]. See BOA, BEO 2219/166356, 20 Temmuz 1319 [August 2, 1903].

Most of these complaints seem to have revolved around the company's refusal to invest in the modernisation of the network. Indeed, the company insisted that the current service, as well as any future extensions, remain horse-drawn (*hayvan vasıtasıyla*), and vetoed the amendment of the concession, which would have added a paragraph concerning the future electrification of the service. Conversely, the recently-formed electricity company lobbied the Fiscal Committee to refuse the extension of the tram company's concession, and asked for a right of preference for any future investments in Salonica's public transportation.¹²⁷

Faced yet again with the competing interests of two concessionaires, the Ottoman government briefly considered scrapping the existing concession of the tram company altogether, and replacing it with a new, more favourable one, whereby the existing tracks, stationary and mobile property and guaranteed revenues would be transferred to a new company. That plan being rejected as impractical (*maslahata gayr-ı müvafik bulunduđu*), the Committee eventually acquiesced to most of the requests of the tram company.¹²⁸ The duration of its concession was increased to sixty years, with the annual fee paid to the municipality remaining at 150 *liras*.¹²⁹ It was given the right to operate all existing tram lines in the city, without any obligation to replace its horse-drawn service with a steam-powered or electrical one.¹³⁰ In exchange the company agreed not to increase its ticket prices (*tarife-i hazırat*) and to make a monetary contribution to certain projects sanctioned by the sultan: one thousand *liras* were donated for the construction of the Hejaz Railway, while one hundred *liras* were each donated to the *Dar'ül'aceze* and the *Dar'üşşafaka*.¹³¹ The electricity company received the rights of any future expansion of the line as compensation.¹³²

The agreement between the Ottoman government and the two companies paved the way for the gradual electrification of the tram service throughout the city.¹³³ The

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Ibid.

¹²⁹ BOA, İ.HUS 107/68, 28 Haziran 1319 [August 11, 1903]; İ.HUS 107/141, 9 Temmuz 1319 [August 22, 1903].

¹³⁰ BOA, BEO 2219/166356, 20 Temmuz 1319 [September 2, 1903]; İ.HUS 107/68, 28 Haziran 1319 [July 11, 1903]; İ.HUS 107/141, 9 Temmuz 1319 [July 22, 1903]

¹³¹ These were respectively a Poorhouse and public school in Istanbul. BOA, BEO 2112/158334, 28 Haziran 1319 [July 11, 1903]; İ.HUS 11/97, 21 Teşrin-i Evvel 1319 [November 4, 1903]; BEO 2219/166356, 20 Temmuz 1319 [August 2, 1903].

¹³² Ibid..

¹³³ The process was completed by 1907-1908. See BOA, Y.A.HUS 523/72, 26 Haziran 1324 [July 9, 1908].

tram company continued to enjoy its entrenched position, and remained an essentially Belgian company.¹³⁴ The relationship between the company and the municipality remained symbiotic, with the latter lobbying for the behalf of the company, but also taking action to guarantee the continuation and expansion of service at affordable prices.¹³⁵ The situation began to change after 1908, as the consensual model of local politics disappeared along with Hamdi Bey and his successors, and it became clear that the existing network was not sufficient for the growing needs of the city (*şehrin ihtiyacat-i haziresine kefayet eydemediğin cihetine*).¹³⁶ In 1910 the municipality, by now politicised by the constant struggle between supporters and opponents of the Committee of Union and Progress, intervened in the planning for new tram lines in the city centre, asking that the company provide double lines for a significant part of the network, and that it lowered the prices it charged the passengers.¹³⁷ The Ottoman government debated making a single concession (*tevhid*) out the tram concession, the concession for its extensions, which belonged to the electricity company, and the electricity concession itself. The process of founding the envisaged Electric Tram Company of Salonica (*Selânik Elektrikli Tramvay Şirketi*) was interrupted by the Balkan Wars.¹³⁸

The Water Supply of the City

During its long history, Salonica was constantly plagued with water shortages. Water was provided for the city by springs in the nearby hills. Since the late Roman period, a system of aqueducts and canals connected the city with springs to the east, north and northwest. As Byzantine control over Macedonia collapsed in the centuries preceding the Ottoman conquest, Salonica became isolated from its countryside and the condition of the pipes and drains that supplied the city with water inevitably declined. As soon as Murat II took the city by force in 1430, he gave orders for extensive repairs in the pipes and drains connecting Salonica to the springs of Hortac, some twenty kilometres to the East. He founded a new settlement, called

¹³⁴ In June 1908, three Belgian members of the board, including the Director of the Belgian Mint, were decorated by Sultan Abdulhamid II. See BOA,İ.TAL 453/27, 10 Haziran 1324 [June 23, 1908].

¹³⁵ Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 241.

¹³⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 2904/41, 4 Ağustos 1325 [August 17, 1909].

¹³⁷ Downes, 109, citing *Le Journal de Salonique*, March 8, 1910.

¹³⁸ BOA, BEO 4007/300519, 11 Şubat 1327 [February 24, 1911].

Yenikoy, to the North of the city, whose inhabitants were charged with taking care of the aqueducts and act as guards for the area outside the walls. The water was brought through the walls to a large reservoir located within the grounds of the Blatades monastery, or Cavuş Manastır, as it was known by the local Muslims. The monks were responsible for maintaining the reservoir and were accordingly given extensive privileges with regards to taxation.¹³⁹ From the monastery, situated up on the hill, near the city walls, the water was brought down to the city through a number of drains, which supplied the public fountains and the Bey Hamam, the baths that Murat II ordered built and were completed in 1444.¹⁴⁰ Another bathhouse was built close to the western walls through the *vakıf* maintained by the family of Evrenos Bey, a famed warrior who played a crucial role in the conquest and settlement of Macedonia and whose descendants owned extensive property in the city; two more were built by Sultan Beyazid II.¹⁴¹

Murat II's intervention proved more than enough to sustain the city during the 15th century, but with the arrival of the Sephardic Jewish refugees first from Spain and then from Portugal and Italy, the increase of the population brought renewed pressure on the existing water supply. Makbul İbrahim Pasa, the *beylerbey* of Rumeli and later Grand Vizier, restored the system which had provided water from the springs at Lembet, to the northwest of the city. A cistern was built next to the former church of the Apostles, now a mosque with the appropriate name Soğuk Su, or cold water.¹⁴² During the 16th century three more bathhouses were constructed: the Paşa Hamamı and the baths of Ayasofya mosque were probably built sometime during the 1520s, while the Yeni Hamam must have been built in the last quarter of the century. The final major bathhouse of Salonica, the Yehudi Hamam, built inside the Jewish quarters and close to the central marketplace, is dated in the first half of the 17th century.¹⁴³ As the population continued to grow, the network of drains expanded, connecting the reservoirs and cisterns to the city's bathhouses, the growing number

¹³⁹ Yannis Tamiolakis, *I istoria tis ydreysis tis Thessalonikis* [The history of the water supply of Salonica] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1985), 16-27; Dimitriadis, *Topografía tis Thessalonikis*, 423-424.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 415-416.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 418-420.

¹⁴² Tamiolakis, 36-39.

¹⁴³ Dimitriadis, 416-419.

of public fountains, public establishments, like soup kitchens or the prison, as well as a number of private homes.¹⁴⁴

It seems that the Muslims of the city enjoyed better access to water compared to the local Jews or Orthodox Christians. Muslim households with direct access to the network were overrepresented by far with the regards to the city's demographics, and there were considerably fewer public fountains in the rest of the city compared to the Muslim quarters.¹⁴⁵ The later were placed in the hilly Upper Town, closer to the reservoirs. As well as a mark of the non-Muslims' inferiority within the Ottoman order, it was a result of social dynamics. The Muslim *vakıfs* regarded the construction of fountains as a pious activity; the word used was *sebil*, or road, since the donation of a fountain would show the road to Paradise to the donor.¹⁴⁶ This situation made water shortages all the more acute, all the more so since those households with private access withheld more and more water, until the many public fountains of the city started drying up.¹⁴⁷

Water shortages persisted, if not worsened, up until the 1880s, being especially severe during the summer months. Lack of water increased the fire hazard in the city, and led to the deterioration of sanitary conditions and to repeated appeals by the local press to the municipality. In 1883 a committee comprised of local notables and European residents was appointed in order to suggest measures which would improve public health. *Faros tis Makedonias*, the Greek newspaper of the city at the time, drew their attention to the issue of water. Because the supply by the public fountains was not enough to satisfy local demand, many inhabitants bought water from itinerant sellers. Unfortunately, the water sold on the streets was frequently impure, as sewage from the city had polluted the water table, which made the water provided by many artesian wells in the city unsafe to drink.¹⁴⁸

A concentrated attempt to modernise the water supply of the Salonica and solve the problem of shortages was initiated in 1888. A *firman* issued by the sultan gave Hamdi Bey the concession to supply the city with water, drawn either from wells in the vicinity or, if possible, from one of the nearby rivers. The concession

¹⁴⁴ Tamiolakis, 39-46, 49-52.

¹⁴⁵ Dimitriadis, 425-426.

¹⁴⁶ For the activity of the *vakıfs* in eighteenth-century Salonica, see Ginio, "The shaping of a sacred space."

¹⁴⁷, 125-127.

¹⁴⁸ *Faros tis Makedonias* 783, July 9 [21], 1883. See also *Faros* 595, September 1 [13], 1881 and 679, June 19 [July 1], 1882; see also Anastasiadou, *Salonique*, 227-228.

would last for fifty years. The concessionaire had to present the Ottoman government with a plan in eighteen months' time and have finished the project in five years' time. The concession stipulated a number of technical requirements, which were to be supervised by engineers appointed by the Ministry of Public Works. Equipped with the concession, Hamdi Bey went on to found the *Compagnie Ottomane des Eux de Salonique* with a starting capital of five million francs. The main investors in the project were the Belgian financiers to whom Hamdi Bey maintained access; the two engineers who drafted the plan of the network were Belgians as well.¹⁴⁹

Work started in 1890 under the direction of the Belgian engineer Aime Cypers, who would later become director of the company and Belgian consul in the city. The drilling began near the village of Kaşkarka, to the west of the city. The first five drillings were done by 1892 and five more were completed during the following year. The installation was connected to the existing network by a long pipe; a pumping station built in the middle, next to the municipal slaughterhouse, guaranteed the constant flow of water into the system thanks to the presence of two steam engines. Smaller petrol-powered pumps attached to the Soğuk Su reservoir ensured that water pressure remained stable.¹⁵⁰

The number of subscribers grew slowly. There were 2085 houses connected to the network, the number was 4378 in 1907 and 7141 in 1911.¹⁵¹ The local press tried to encourage its readership to sign in with the water company, since running water was a sign of the times and the expansion and improvement of the service depended on the company recuperating part of the investment.¹⁵² As its clients' number increased, so did the company expand its operations. The pre-existing pipes and drains were gradually replaced by those laid by the company, constructed of cast iron. Along the expanding network, the company placed fire hydrants. Eight more drills were conducted between 1907 and 1912. In the meantime, a third reservoir constructed near the municipal Hospital served the suburbs sprawling to the East of the city.¹⁵³ The company continued its operation after the annexation of Salonica into the Greek state after the Balkan Wars, until its eventual nationalisation in 1939.

¹⁴⁹ The *firman* is quoted in Tamiolakis, 68-70. See also BOA, A.)DVN.MKL, 32/25, 7 Şaban 1308 [March 22, 1891].

¹⁵⁰ Tamiolakis, 70-73.

¹⁵¹ Ibid. 76-77.

¹⁵² Anastassiadou, 230-231.

¹⁵³ Tamiolakis, 76-77.

City Lighting

Gas lighting was born at the turn of the 19th century as a product of the First Industrial Revolution - a result of independent research and experiments carried out across Western Europe. Coal-gas, produced by means of gasification of coal – a process which evolved throughout the century – represented a vast improvement over the various vegetable oils that were previously used in private and public lamps, as it both burned brighter and cost less. Soon after the first breakthroughs, cities started to become equipped with plants and systems of pipes that illuminated their private and public spaces. The impact lighting had on urban life cannot be overstated, as it heavily influenced all its aspects, from the perception of time and space, to patterns of public and private sociability and leisure, to debates on factory workers' discipline and criminality. Eventually, research on the practical applications of electricity advanced enough to make electrical lighting a viable alternative to gas. By that point, the public had grown accustomed to the new technology to make the marketing of electrical lighting a profitable enterprise.¹⁵⁴

Like most other public amenities, modern lighting arrived in Salonica during the 1880s, when the municipality installed a number of oil lamps in the streets of the city. The measure apparently aroused local interest, for it was followed by a debate on the merits of expanding that experiment throughout the city, following the examples of Izmir and Beirut. A British subject named Kirby was awarded in 1887 with a concession for providing the city with gas lighting for thirty five years.¹⁵⁵ The concessionaire was required to place a specific number of public lamps at places indicated by the municipality, for each of which he would receive a set annual fee: the first thirty one lamps would be placed for three; for the next two hundred lamps, the municipality would pay 2 *liras* per year per lamp. For all additional lamps placed, the fee would increase to 6.75 *liras*.¹⁵⁶ Out of the thirty one lamps mentioned above, thirteen were placed in the *Konak*, six at the seat of the provincial administration, one at the Town Hall, while the rest was divided between different

¹⁵⁴ Mark J. Bouman, "Luxury and control: The urbanity of street lighting in nineteenth-century cities", *Journal of Urban History* 14, 7 (November 1987), 7-37.

¹⁵⁵ Yerolympos, *Metaksy Anatonlis kai Dysis*, 207-208.

¹⁵⁶ BOA, TFR.I.M 22/2193, *Mukavelename*, article 10. In effect, the company installed the agreed 231 lamps, plus 223 additional ones, for which the municipality paid only 5 *liras* per year. See *ibid.*, 14 April 1906.

military buildings, including the barracks and the military hospital.¹⁵⁷ The price of gas sold to households and private businesses was determined at 48 centimes per cubic foot, but was eventually raised to 50 centimes, with the municipality agreeing to pay the difference as a subsidy.¹⁵⁸

A company, the *Société Ottomane du Gaz de Salonique*, was formed to construct and maintain the plants, pipes and lamps. Its starting capital was set at 33,000 *liras*, divided in six thousand shares. Almost all of these, including Kirby's, were bought off by a French consortium that included the *Compagnie Internationale du Gaz* and the *Compagnie Générale du Gaz pour la France* and had connections to influential French financiers in Istanbul, like Isaac de Camondo.¹⁵⁹ Technically an independent company, the gas company of Salonica signed a memorandum with the two French companies in December 1888, with the latter undertaking the task of completing the project.¹⁶⁰ Construction was over by March 1890 and the company celebrated with a large gala on the quay, where guests and the public were entertained by a light-show.¹⁶¹ Starting from the quay, the company moved on to place lamps in the major thoroughfares of the city, including Ayasofya, Hamidiye, and Yalılar Boulevards.¹⁶²

Despite the publicity, the financial performance of the enterprise remained disheartening. Even with a number of reliable customers, like the municipality or, later, the port company,¹⁶³ the costs of expanding and maintaining its equipment, along with the impact of unforeseen events, like the fire of 1890, which caused a backlash against the use of gas, meant that the company started its first year of operation with a loss of 2,017.32 *liras*, covered by the French owners. Investors were asked for patience, as stated in the annual report of the board of administrators: "A period of a few months was not sufficient to popularise gas lighting, nor make people appreciate its benefits. This requires time and efforts, which we must deliver without pause and with trust in the future."¹⁶⁴ The company embarked on an aggressive marketing strategy, eventually halving the charge per cubic metre of gas

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., undated document.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ BOA, TFR.I.M 25/2444, 14 March 1890. Camondo kept ten shares in the company, possibly in order to keep his place in the board.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Yerolympos, *Metaksy Anatonis kai Dysis*, 207-208; Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 235-236.

¹⁶² Ibid.

¹⁶³ See BOA, HH 210/8, 20 December 1896.

¹⁶⁴ BOA, TFR.I.M 25/2444, 2 April 1891.

from 50 to 25 centimes, in the hope of expanding its customer base among the private citizens of Salonica.¹⁶⁵ This led to a rapid increase in the number of clients, from 350 households in 1890 to 7200 in 1900.¹⁶⁶ These gains, however, were offset by the costs of expanding the network from the centre, where most street lamps stood, to the suburbs to the east, where most new clients were living.¹⁶⁷ As a result the company remained in the red throughout that period, albeit annual losses were reduced to less than 1000 *liras*.¹⁶⁸

Adding to the pressure the company already faced, in the late 1890s a British entrepreneur, Sir Ellis Ashmead-Bartlett, submitted a bid for a concession that would allow him to provide Salonica and Izmir with electricity.¹⁶⁹ Bartlett had apparently made a preliminary agreement with E. Bartissol and the port company that included the electrification of the port facilities and its connection to a network of electrical trams.¹⁷⁰ Faced with the potential of a competitor to what was already proved as a limited market, the gas company petitioned the Ottoman government, based on the fact that their concession gave them rights of preference to the electricity concession. Though the Ottoman side acknowledged the claims of the gas company and gave it thirty days to present its own bid, the company requested six months to deliberate, while at the same time threatened to take legal action for the alleged breach of contract.¹⁷¹ In the end, the gas company did not contest the electricity concession. The French consortium decided against investing more money in Salonica, and chose instead to cut its losses and withdraw from the city altogether, annulling the existing agreement with the Salonica gas company in 1900.¹⁷²

The impact that decision had on the company was significant. Money transfers from France all but ceased, while the service of the debt to the two French companies absorbed most of the annual revenues. As a result, losses ballooned, from 809.60 *liras* in 1900 to 2,195.97 *liras* in 1901, 3,999.93 *liras* in 1902 and 5,760.62 *liras* in 1903. By 1906, nineteen years after the concession had come into effect, the still loss-making company had not even been able to ameliorate its starting capital,

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, 29 March 1897.

¹⁶⁶ Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 238.

¹⁶⁷ An agreement to that effect was signed with the municipality in 1891, and the works cost about two thousand *liras*. See BOA, TFR.I.M 25/2444, 11 April 1894 [err.1892].

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ BOA, İ.HUS 75/188, 19 Haziran 1315 [July 1, 1899].

¹⁷⁰ Downes, 149.

¹⁷¹ BOA, BEO 1444/106753, 15 Teşrin-i Sâni 1315 [November 29, 1899].

¹⁷² BOA, TFR.I.M 25/2444, 30 March 1901.

let alone offer an interest to the investors. The company petitioned for an extension of its concession, as a chance to recuperate its losses; in exchange it promised to install 19 new street lamps for free, 200 lamps at an annual fee of 2 *liras* and another 100 lamps at 3 *liras* each, as well as an offer of 2,000 *liras* for the Hejaz Railway.¹⁷³ It is unclear how the company would finance that new investment, or what the answer from Istanbul was, but in all probability the concession was not extended, the Ottomans expecting the gradual replacement of gas lighting with electricity.

Conclusion

From early on, the technological innovations that had transformed Western European society and economy, captured the imagination of Ottoman reformers and featured prominently in plans for the modernisation of the empire. Early attempts to construct large-scale technical projects, by attracting European investors, engineers and skilled labourers, led to results far below expectations and were discontinued in the late 1870s because of political and economic difficulties. Activity peaked up again in the 1880s; with the empire's access to the financial markets restored, and the Ottoman finances guaranteed by the Public Debt Administration, interest for acquiring concessions issued by Istanbul for the construction of public works across the empire grew in Europe. Such concessions reflected the aspirations of the Hamidian regime regarding the growth of the economy and the modernisation of the empire's regions and cities; they also corresponded to the competition between the Great Powers, which championed awarding such projects to their own nationals, for reasons of strategic rather than economic significance.

The Ottoman government tried to secure that the projects would be completed and remain operational, while its financial exposure to the costs would remain minimal. On the other hand, the companies that were formed to construct and exploit these projects attempted to maximise their short-term profit, and could hope that their respective government would come to their aid, when necessary. In this context, concessions and agreements, whose provisions did not always accurately represent the conditions on the ground, were challenged and amended. The variety of actors involved in the process, and the different motives of those actors, meant that public works projects became a site of contestation between conflicting interests.

¹⁷³ BOA, TFR.I.M 22/2193, 14 April 1906.

The local authorities and citizens of Salonica were not passive recipients of the developments described above. They were aware of what such projects meant for their city, and were quick to make them part of their discourse of urban transformation and modernisation. They involved themselves, as employees, representatives or even investors. Their knowledge of local conditions, as well as their connections to the authorities, both in the city and in Istanbul, proved crucial for the establishment of the companies and for any changes in the original agreements in the latter's behalf. At the same time, when they felt that the "good of the city" was threatened, they were strong and united enough to defend their own interests over the actions of the companies.

In all, the public works projects that graced Salonica after 1870, and especially 1885, had a deep impact on the city, even if the economic calculations that lay behind them proved to have been rather optimistic. The position of Salonica as a major urban and economic centre within the context of the Eastern Mediterranean and the Ottoman Balkans was secured. The inhabitants became soon accustomed to the new amenities they were provided with, and which, as will be discussed in the next chapter, profoundly affected their daily lives.

Experiencing Urban Space: Association, Sociability, and Leisure

Chapter Four

*There were trams and Turkish beggars,
Mosques and minarets and churches,
Turkish baths and dirty cafés,
Picture palaces and kan-kans:
Daimler cars and Leyland lorries
Barging into buffalo wagons,
French and English private soldiers
Jostling seedy Eastern brigands.¹*

*Tous le milieux étaient représentés: l'avenue des
Champagnes, le Boulevard Hamidié et le quartier
ranc y avaient délégué le ban et le arrière-ban
de leur élégances.²*

The transformation of the cityscape of late Ottoman Salonica came part and parcel with the transformation of the way that cityscape was experienced and lived by the inhabitants. New spaces of leisure, sociability and consumption emerged in the city, in which new fashions and behaviours were practiced. The contingencies of steamer and railway transportation, of commerce and industry, and of the rise of the Ottoman bureaucracy changed the relationship of Salonica to the outside world, and even the manner in which time and space were conceptualised by the locals. Urban life followed the same trends that were transforming the social, economic and spatial environment of the city, and the ‘new’ patterns would be superimposed on the ‘old’. This process contained the same contradictions and fissures between elites and non-elites, the city and the countryside, ‘modern’ and ‘traditional’, which defined the period of late Ottoman history as a whole.

¹ O. Rutter, *Tiadatha*, quoted in Mazower, “Travellers and the Oriental city c. 1840-1922”, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), 108.

² *Le Journal de Salonique*, December 10, 1896, quoted in Héléne Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique: Un périodique juif dans l'Empire Ottoman (1885-1911)* (Paris: Presses de l'Université de Paris – Sorbonne: 2013).

Such contrasts would not escape the eye of foreign visitors to the city. Owen Rutter was sent to Salonica in 1915, three years after the end of the Ottoman rule over the city, as part of a Franco-British expeditionary corps that landed in the area. His *Tadiatha*, a parody of Longfellow's *Song of Hiawatha*, was published as a war memoir in verse, and offers an account of Salonica during the years of the First World War, when to its population of Jews, Muslims, and Greek Orthodox were added tens of thousands of British, French, Serbian, African and Asian soldiers. Like many fellow European travellers, who visited Salonica before him, during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, Owen found the coexistence of 'Western' and 'Oriental' aspects of life remarkable. Visitors in the city regarded Salonica as if frozen in the middle of an incomplete transformation, where elements of 'modern' life were grafted on an evidently foreign environment, which they did not manage to fully replace.

Such a point of view was, of course, neither unbiased nor innocent. As they arrived in Salonica, Europeans already carried preconception of what their encounter should be like. Most came to the Ottoman Empire in search of remnants of the region's past - be it ancient ruins, places mentioned in the New Testament, or Byzantine churches. Others searched for the ambiance of the East, inspired by orientalist themes that were very popular in the literature of the time. For such people, Salonica's attempt at modern life would never reach the mark. Quite the opposite, it subtracted from the essence that made the city picturesque and worthy of a visit. Their disparaging attitude aside, however, such travellers became one of the first conduits of European influences on the social and cultural life of the city. Dignified visitors were fêted by local notables, received invitations by Ottoman officials, and, during their brief stay in the city, held the spotlight of its local elite circles, who consciously modelled their lifestyle along Western and Central Europe.

This lifestyle was not restricted within a domestic environment. New forms of public spaces emerged for the performance of 'modern' sociability.³ Gentlemen's clubs catered to the city's most affluent individuals and gradually evolved into focal points for the organisation of cultural and sport events. Affluent locals formed charitable societies for the support of communal welfare institutions or schools. Fundraisers would usually involve a ball, a theatrical performance or a music show,

³ For a discussion on the concept, see Georgeon, "Presentation", in *Vivre dans l'Empire Ottoman*, eds. Dumont and Georgeon, 5-20.

hosted in one of the growing number of cafés, theatres and beer-halls of the city. Ottoman, Greek, French and Italian troupes stopped in Salonica, as they toured the port-cities of the Mediterranean, performing the French and Italian melodramas and operas in vogue at the time. Tailors and import merchants introduced the latest fashions in the city, paving the way for the emergency of Stein, Orosdi-Back and other large department stores in the early twentieth century. These spaces fashioned between them new standards for urban life which appealed to the local elites, but also to the growing middle classes, for whom ‘modern’ education and behaviour was necessary to their prospects for upward mobility.

New models of sociability and behaviour were not only transmitted through upper-class individuals nor were their influence restricted to elite spaces. In a number of ways, these trickled down to the lower classes of the city and had an impact on non-elite sociability. Besides the dignified visitor, diplomat or tourist, Salonica attracted a significant number of poor European migrants – sailors, construction workers in the railways and the port, vagabonds. Remarkably, these mobile groups included a substantial number of women who arrived in Salonica and other Ottoman cities to practice a trade or work as singers and musicians, or were brought there through prostitution rings. All these arrivals mingled with the city’s underclasses (working-class locals, recent or temporary migrants from the countryside, the gypsies living at the edge of the city) and fashioned their own public spaces. The quay and the public gardens at the White Tower and *Beşçinar* developed into inclusive spaces, bringing together all local inhabitants in promenades, picnics and band rehearsals.

Older aspects of public life were not fully displaced by newer ones. They were as likely to be incorporated within this novel appreciation of social life, fashion and entertainment, and infused with new meaning. Such a pastiche of forms of public behaviour remained unavoidably incoherent, so as to appear “a kitch version of European modernity or a sullied one of local traditionalism.”⁴ In the following pages, I will attempt to describe how the public and private lives of Salonicans filled in the changing cityscape of the Ottoman city by focusing on the new public spaces emerging in the city and the way these were lived in by the inhabitants. But first, it is necessary to refer to the wider social and cultural trends that, initiating in Western Europe, greatly influenced urban life in Salonica.

⁴ Hosagrahar, 7.

Changing Perceptions of Urban Life in Nineteenth-Century Salonica

From the early nineteenth century on, European cities began their rapid transformation, based on the dynamics unleashed by the Industrial Revolution. At the same time urban life was also transformed. City elites attempted to introduce their own values into patterns of public and domestic life, in a way that would reflect their political and economic ascendancy. The dominance of the urban elites over the city's cultural life evolved in parallel with their growing political strength, buoyed by a set of institutions and association, from clubs to the press, universities and scientific societies, lobby groups and local authorities. These comprised the public sphere, to which all political activity became reduced, and which exercised great influence on cultural and social life as well. The public sphere can be perceived in spatial terms, as an aggregate of specific spaces, where different groups can put forward their specific demands. Nonetheless, the original conceptualisation of the public sphere was as an imaginary and unitary subject that superseded any particular political or class identities. The success of the bourgeois groups in dominating the public sphere lay in their ability to shape the abstract concept of citizenship according to their interests. The model citizen became conceptualised as a male bourgeois, and the latter defined the standards of respectability, public morality, sumptuary preferences and elite behaviour in general for the coming decades. Thus, the existence of the public sphere made it possible for subaltern groups (workers, women, colonial subjects, etc.) to intervene in the discourse and present dissenting views. The coexistence of a number of conflicting perspectives both resulted from and aided the expansion of political rights in Western Europe and ultimately led to the decline of the public sphere and the introduction of mass politics.⁵

If not the political underpinnings of the public sphere, then European trends in fashion and entertainment were readily available to the populations of the Ottoman port-cities, who had already been maintaining ample cultural contacts to Western Europe. European textiles were increasingly popular since the early nineteenth century, to the detriment of local fashions.⁶ Both the clothing of local merchants and

⁵ For a thorough discussion of the conceptualisation of the public sphere, see Herbert Mah, "Phantasies of the public sphere: Rethinking the Habermas of historians", *The Journal of Modern History*, 72, 1 (March 2000), 153-182.

⁶ Charlotte Jiroushek, "The transition to mass fashion dress in the Later Ottoman Empire", in

the uniforms of Ottoman civil and military officials were increasingly modelled after European dress, which functioned as a marker of status both in the cities and in the countryside.⁷ As the empire's foreign trade increased and Ottoman diplomats established permanent embassies and training missions abroad, direct exposure intensified. In that context, Ottoman elites, initially in Istanbul but soon in Izmir, Salonica and the other port-cities, began imitating European styles and behaviours, not only in dress. The introduction of 'modern' tropes into the urban setting created a cultural idiom common to both the empire's urban elites and the reformist Ottoman officials. This association with European culture also offered a generous prestige boost within the local context. At the same time, accommodation of and adaptation to European standards became increasingly important, allowing locals to deal with European diplomats and merchants on as much an equal footing as possible.⁸

The introduction of regular steamer traffic in the Levant and the railway lines that were completed in the 1880s and 1890s brought the region ever closer to Western and Central Europe, as well as Istanbul, Athens, and all the important port-cities of the Mediterranean. By 1900, there were four steamers calling on Salonica on a weekly basis, and five trains departing for Istanbul, Manastir and Vienna. This gave local businessmen the opportunity for regular travel, for business or leisure. In 1886, in anticipation of the completion of the rail connection to Serbia, the local press predicted that soon "we will all be able, three nights after his departure, to be in the audience of the Paris *Grand Opera*, attending the finest musicians, while merchants will have the opportunity to fill their shops within a few days with the excellent merchandise of Paris and Vienna."⁹ The Parisian *Grands Magasins du Printemps* advertised its wares directly through the local press, hoping to attract potential customers from both from among the locals. If few of them could hope to visit the French capital in person, there were always those who would take advantage of the opportunity to shop through the catalogue and receive their purchases via the steamer from Marseille.¹⁰

Consumption studies and the history of the Ottoman Empire, 1550-1922 : An introduction, ed. Quataert (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2000), 208 ff.

⁷ "[The English traveller] will still find an *English shooting jacket and wide-awake* the most respectable and respected travelling costume in the Levant." in Murray, *Handbook for travellers in Greece*, quoted in Mazower, "Travellers", 65.

⁸ Horowitz, "International law".

⁹ *Faros* 1022, January 16 [28], 1886.

¹⁰ *Faros* 1221, March 3 [15], 1888.

There was also evidence of a reverse trend, with Salonica entering the itinerary of European travellers visiting the Ottoman Empire. As travellers and merchants arrived in the city in increasing numbers, the first hotels appeared. They offered ‘modern’ amenities of varying quality to those guests who did not care for staying in the *hans*, the dominant form of travellers’ lodgings up to that point. Local notables and Ottoman officials would make a point to receive these visitors and perform their familiarity with European languages and norms. In 1888, to celebrate the arrival of the first train from Paris to the city, the Allatini family invited dozens of European bankers, diplomats and journalists to the city. A large fête was organised in the family mansion, with the foreign guests exposed to the wealth and refinement of their hosts, and entertained by the scions of the elite families of the city.¹¹

The shrinking of distances had an impact on how the inhabitants of the city perceived space in general. Salonica became a node within a system of railway lines and steamer routes, linked to other such nodes in the Balkans, the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond. In the same manner, its position as a transport hub helped the city emerge as the unofficial but nonetheless undisputed capital of the whole region, and strengthened administrative control over the area: If travelers leaving Salonica could reach Istanbul and the major European capitals in a matter of days, then travelling to the towns of the Macedonian interior was a matter of hours.¹² The gradual decrease in ticket prices meant that travel was becoming increasingly affordable.¹³ This made day and weekend trips from the city to the countryside possible. Schools and societies would soon begin organising excursions to the countryside, imitating the European trend of a ‘return’ to nature.¹⁴ Conversely, the train gave the opportunity to the population of Macedonia to pay similar visits to the city. Salonica would be a role model for the wider region and the Macedonian notables would read its newspapers, shop in its department stores, and attempt to copy the lifestyle and associational structure of its bourgeoisie.

The introduction of new means of transportation and major interventions in the cityscape would also affect spatial perception on the scale of the city itself. Ottoman

¹¹ Lindau, 71-76.

¹² The train of the Oriental Railways took three and a half hours to reach Gevgeli [Gevgelija], about five hours to Ustrumca [Strumica], nine and a half for Köprülü [Veles], and twelve hours for Üsküp, its final stop. *Faros* 1022, January 16 [28], 1886.

¹³ The ticket price between Salonica and Üsküp for all three travellers’ classes was reduced by about 30% between 1885 and 1911. Gounaris, *Steam over Macedonia*, 252.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 292; Anastasiadou, *Salonique*, 251.

Salonica had largely been an aggregate of neighbourhoods [*mahalles*]. The distinction between residential and commercial areas, and the ethnic division of these neighbourhoods was not as pronounced as has been assumed in the literature. Nonetheless, they all contained similar administrative, religious and commercial spaces that allowed for a certain degree of self-sufficiency. The demolition of the walls, the re-planning of the streets and the expansion of the city to the northwest and the southeast affected its spatial organisation. The quay, the Hamidiye and Yalılar neighbourhoods and their mansions, the working-class quarters that sprang out near the port and the station, these all represented examples of the differentiation along economic functions and class lines. The construction of the tram in the early 1890s and the introduction of water transportation across the gulf of Salonica through the ferries of the *Şirket-i Hayriye*, a company owned by the Modiano family, contributed greatly to the consolidation of the expanding urban fabric into a unified space.¹⁵

At the same time, in parallel with similar developments across the empire, a new temporal culture emerged in Salonica. Before the nineteenth century, locals calculated the time of day mainly with sundials, using sunset and sunrise as points of reference – a practice that had been well established throughout the region ever since the antiquity. Each period between these two points would be divided in twelve ‘temporal’ hours, whose length changed from day to day, according to the season. This system of time-keeping, adjusted to the ‘natural’, cycle would come into confrontation with the realities of life in a city increasingly integrated into the wider world. By the early 1800s, ‘modern’ time, the uniform and ‘neutral’ time of the mechanical clock, had largely subsumed alternative systems and was widely implemented in the administrations, militaries, and workplaces of Western Europe.¹⁶ These principles became known as the *alafranga* time and were increasingly felt by inhabitants in the Ottoman port-cities throughout the course of the nineteenth century. *Alafranga* time became the time of European traders and diplomats, and the time at which steamers and trains arrived and departed the city. The factory of the

¹⁵ Ibid., 242; Chekimoglou and G. Anastasiadis, *Otan i Thessaloniki bike ston 20o aiona* [When Thessaloniki entered the twentieth century] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 2000), 87, 97-98.

¹⁶ E.P. Thompson, “Time, work-discipline, and industrial capitalism”, *Past and Present* 38 (1967), 56-97.

Saias family would punctuate the beginning and ending of each shift in this time, and its siren would be loud enough to be heard across the city centre.¹⁷

Nonetheless, *alafranga* time did not fully displace the previous system. The introduction of mechanical clocks into the empire that began in the eighteenth century had already taken local time-keeping in a different direction. A hybrid method had emerged, where clocks would be set to 12:00 each sunset, and then let run until sunset next day. Although this *gurubi* (sunset) or *alaturca* time would adopt the concept of standard hours, the starting point of each day would still remain inconsistent, when measured in *alafranga* time.¹⁸ The two forms of time-keeping would coexist until the very end of the Ottoman period. Importantly, the Ottoman administration would operate on *alaturca* time and would likewise measure its working hours. In 1881, an announcement in the local press notified Salonians that the Commercial Court of the city would be operating between 4 and 11 hours *alaturca* and that sessions would start at 6:30.¹⁹ A few years later, the court's working hours had been slightly modified to between 4 and 10 hours.²⁰ Trams would also operate under *alaturca* time, running during the summer season between 10:30 after sunset and 3 of the following evening.²¹ To the consternation of local and European merchants, *alaturca* time was also observed in the Customs Office. A memorandum submitted by the British consul to the Foreign Office regarding the condition of the harbour stated that:

the hours of business appear well-observed by the Staff. It would, however, be most desirable to fix them according to European time, by which the arrival and departure of trains and steamers are ruled, instead of adhering to the absurd and impractical Turkish time, which varies daily and gives a working day that is too short in winter and too long in summer.²²

¹⁷ Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 280-281.

¹⁸ Information on Ottoman time-keeping is largely based on Avner Wishnitzer, "The transformation of Ottoman temporal culture during the Long Nineteenth Century" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Tel Aviv University, 2009), who also gives a much more detailed account of the literature.

¹⁹ *Faros* 607, September 29 [October 11], 1881.

²⁰ *Faros* 1222, March 3 [15], 1888.

²¹ "Arabaları mevsim-i sayfa sabahları alaturka saat on buçuk'tan akşamları saat üç'e kadar [...] işlemektedir". *Salname-i Vilayet-i Selânik* XVIII [XVII], 1322 [1905], 148.

²² FO 297/17, Graves to London, December 13, 1906.

Changes were less pronounced in the keeping of time on a larger scale, since urban life in Salonica and other Ottoman cities had been always under sway of more than one calendar. The religious calendars of the Jewish, Muslim and Greek Orthodox inhabitants punctuated the year with religious feasts that were celebrated by the entire city. These celebrations would disrupt the usual patterns of activity, with revelries carrying on deep into the night thanks to the illumination of major religious buildings. The sheer size of the Jewish community and their predominance among dockworkers meant that Saturday was the established day of rest in Salonica.²³ In the late nineteenth century not only did the locals become accustomed to the Gregorian calendar, but time itself would become increasingly secularised as result of political and economic processes taking place in the city. Religious feasts would be appropriated by state and communal authorities, and their celebration would be marked by formal visits of local dignitaries. The foreign consulates in the city would receive guests in the occasion of their national holidays or the birthday of each European sovereign; the celebration of the birthday of Abdülhamid II would be modelled after these examples.²⁴ The trend was appropriated by the local elites, who began inviting relatives and friends on their birthdays or other festive occasions.²⁵ The celebration of Christian saints would move from the church to the private homes of the notable Greek Orthodox of the city, who organised parties for their name days. Major feasts became the occasion for public gatherings, balls and lotteries, organised by a growing number of cultural and charitable societies. The Greek Carnival and the Jewish feast of Purim would usually be celebrated in February and March; families and societies began organising *bals masqué* and the guests would attempt to exhibit their wit, finesse and learning through their costumes.²⁶ Public celebrations moved on with the times: the celebration of the Carnival in 1891 included a masquerade that

²³ Nehama, *Istoria ton Israiliton*, 1396.

²⁴ Note that the sultan's birthday was celebrated according to the Islamic calendar, on the 16th day of Şaban. In 1883 the editors of *Faros* mistook the celebrations of the sultan's birthday for the anniversary of his enthronement, possibly confused by the changing date of the holiday in their own calendar. *Faros* 776, June 11 [23], 1883, and 777, June 15 [27], 1883.

²⁵ Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 172.

²⁶ Papamichos – Chronakis, 116; Friedrich Schwan, quoted in Polychronis Enepekidis, *I Thessaloniki sta chronia 1875-1912: Germanoi politikoi, diplomates kai sygkrafeis afigountai gia ti zoi, tous thesmous kai tin istoriki topografia tis polis* [Thessaloniki in 1875-1912: German politicians, diplomats and writers write on the life, the institutions and the historical topography of the city] (Thessaloniki: Kyriakidis, 1988), 270-271.

paraded through town accompanied by the brass band of the Philharmonic Society, carrying a large model steamer.²⁷

The shift towards new forms of sociability was general among the upper classes of Salonica. This was also reflected on the fabric of the city. The local elites had participated in local administration, to the extent allowed to them, through the emergence of new political structures that were based on the principle of representation. Their commercial interests were negotiated through the marketplace and the different bodies that regulated. In a similar manner, the new cultural trends introduced in late Ottoman Salonica were directly connected to the spatial transformation of the city and in the emergence of new spaces of sociability, leisure and consumption.

Spaces of Association

Similar to the emerging elites across the non-European world, the bourgeois of late Ottoman Salonica attempted to fashion a milieu of sociability that would reflect their ‘modern’ outlook and elevated position in the city, always within the specifics of the Ottoman context. Before 1870, the public sphere in the city was largely restricted to religious spaces, and elite sociability only crossed the ethnic divide only in the marketplace. In the 1860s, the most successful Greek Orthodox merchants still exhibited their status through donations to the Church, assumed the repairs of religious buildings and rented stalls for themselves and their family members in their parish churches.²⁸ Gradually, the lay elites of the city began to be influenced by new patterns of public behaviour, which highlighted their leading role in the city, reiterated their responsibility towards their respective communities and the city as a whole, and led them to a continuous effort to spiritually and culturally improve themselves and their families.²⁹ In this, Salonicans found appropriate models not only in Western Europe, but also in similar endeavours in Istanbul, Izmir and Alexandria.³⁰

²⁷ *Faros* 1503, March 6 [18], 1891.

²⁸ The latter sum frequently reached several hundred *kuruş* each year. Chekimoglou and Georgiadou – Tsimino, *Istoria tis epichirimatikotitas, B1*, 195-196.

²⁹ Stefan – Ludwig Hoffmann, “Civility, male friendship and masonic sociability in nineteenth century Germany”, *Gender & History* 13, 2 (August 2001), 226-227.

³⁰ For the emergence of a Greek Orthodox associational milieu, see Eva Kanner, *Ftocheia kai filantropia stin orthodoxi koinotita tis Konstantinoupolis (1753-1912)* [Poverty and

Influenced by these trends, some segments of the local Jewish and Greek Orthodox elites attempted to reform the structure and practices of their respective communities, by enforcing the implementation of the organic laws of non-Muslim communities introduced by the Ottoman state in 1856-1858. Their efforts were actively resisted by the entrenched interests of the majority of the clergy and the rabbinical corps, and by the administrative staff that controlled communal institutions. Though the political developments proceeded in the two communities, the conflict in both cases revolved around how communal finances would be administered, and what rights and obligations non-Ottoman subjects would have. The resulting strife polarised communities and paralysed their workings until the end of the century. At the same time, public initiatives were diverted to the creation of a score of different associational bodies, which became the prime venues for expressing elite sociability in the city.

One of the first such associations was the *Cercle de Salonique*, which was founded in 1873 thanks to the initiatives of the leading merchants of the city, who also formed its first directing committee: Hugo Allatini, Joseph Misrahi, Samuel Modiano, Periklis Chatzilazarou, and the British consul, John Blunt, who also served as the first president.³¹ The purpose of the *Cercle* would be to function as a venue of male sociability, leisure activities, and friendly discussion, adapting the concept of the club from Victorian Britain to the local context.³² Situated in a building on the quay, its luxurious decoration underscored the status of its members and offered an appropriate space for the reception of important visitors to the city.³³ Its membership corresponded to the idea of a local *beau monde* that was comprised by the upper strata of local society, the European diplomats and businessmen stationed in the city – and would swell to include passing visitors: Economic and political status was now complemented by cultural refinement.³⁴

The *Cercle* was perhaps unique to the degree that its membership was ethnically diverse. Most associations that were founded in the following years were

charity in the Orthodox community of Istanbul (1753-1912)] (Athens, Katarti: 2004).

³¹ Molho, “Le ‘Cercle de Salonique’ (1873-1958), club des Saloniciens”, in *Salonica and Istanbul*, ed. Molho, 153.

³² Mrinalini Sinha, “Britishness, clubbability, and the colonial public sphere: the genealogy of an imperial institution in colonial India,” *Journal of British Studies* 40, 4 (October 2001), 489-521.

³³ Molho, “Le ‘Cercle de Salonique’”, 154.

³⁴ Anastassiadou, *Salonique*, 523; Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 174-176.

usually restricted to the members of a single community, but were at the same time open to members outside the small circle of the top families of the city. The aim of these societies was mainly to support the charitable institutions of their respective communities and the welfare provisions for the old and the destitute. Private initiative was becoming absolutely necessary to the institutions of the city. The process of social and spatial transformation along with demographic growth created new demands, with which the communal budgets could not cope. Benefactors emerged among the businessmen of the city, and the founding of new institutions would be accompanied by the creation of collective bodies to supervise their finances and operation. At the turn of the century, the local Greek Orthodox of the city institutionalised their ties to the Macedonian hinterland by organising societies according to place of origin. These local societies would oversee charitable and educational activities directed to the respective homeland, in a period of rising tensions between pro-Greek and Bulgarian factions.³⁵ Charitable institutions and educational societies formed a thick web of collective activities through their regular meetings, the annual reports of the chairmen, their frequent fundraisers, carried out through theatre and musical performance. The social aspect of such societies was felt so strong in the city, that some questioned whether it had become an aim upon itself at the expense of their charitable mission. When *Bikur Holim*, a local Jewish charitable society, organised a fundraiser in the *Eden* theatre, the reporter sent by the newspaper *El Avenir* to cover the event scathingly commented:

I was left dazzled by all the extravagance. So many plants, so many flowers! I wondered how many patients could have been cured with the sum spent on flowers that will be thrown to the street tomorrow. And why did these people pay such an expensive ticket: To admire the flowers or Bikur Holim?³⁶

Education was especially important in this context and a substantial part of social activity in the city revolved around its schools. Both the Ottoman state and the local elites recognised the impact of education both in transferring valuable skills and in shaping the worldview of the younger generations. The attempt to found an Italian school in the city in 1863-1864 brought together the leading Italian Jewish

³⁵ Papamichos – Chronakis, 63-65.

³⁶ *El Avenir*, February 2, 1904, quoted in Albertos Nar, *'Keimeni epi aktis thalassiss'.* *Meletes kai arthra gia tin evraiki koinotita tis Thessalonikis* ['Located on a coast...'] Studies and articles on the Jewish Community of Thessaloniki] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1997), 197.

families of the city and proved instrumental for the emergence of an 'Italian' identity among the Jewish elite.³⁷ The arrival in Salonica in 1873 of the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* proved to be of even greater importance.³⁸ The organisation had been founded in 1860 in Paris with the aim of materially and morally aiding the Jews of Northern Africa and the Middle East through the transmission of European education. The Alliance represented the 'progressive', assimilationist faction of the French Jewry, which promoted the opening up of the community to the culture and values of their country of residence.³⁹ In Salonica, this translated to the introduction of a French curriculum (the learning of Turkish and Greek was largely dismissed), and the adoption of European standards of behaviour.⁴⁰ The Alliance schools did not primarily cater to the leading Jewish families of the cities, who could find recourse to the foreign schools that began appearing in the city in that period, but rather to the middle and lower-middle strata of the community. To them, European and practical education, as provided by the Alliance schools, could provide the keys to a craft or white-collar labour.⁴¹ By the end of the period in question, the knowledge and use of French and Italian had become an essential marker of modernity for the Jews of the city, displacing Judeo-spanish as the language of the Jewish upper and middle classes.⁴²

The Greek Orthodox and Muslims of Salonica would also pay great attention to education, but in their case the appropriation of European modernity would not be as enthusiastic. For both groups, education would be instrumental in their attempts to fashion their own indigenous version of modernity, which would incorporate the practical aspects of European civilisation, while leaving the cultural essence of the respective community unscathed. Therefore, the Greek communal teaching would increasingly invoke a discourse of 'tradition', at odds with the mimetic use of European fashions and cultural practices.⁴³ In a similar vein, the Ottoman state schools, which became increasingly appealing to the Muslim urban population over

³⁷ Papamichos – Chronakis, 133-134.

³⁸ Dumont, "The social structure", 35-36.

³⁹ Aron Rodrigue, *French Jews, Turkish Jews: The Alliance Israélite Universelle and the Politics of Jewish Schooling in Turkey, 1860-1925* (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1990).

⁴⁰ Papamichos – Chronakis, 129-131.

⁴¹ Dumont, "The social structure", 43-46.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 54. Among the many languages spoken in the community, Italian carried the highest prestige, and was employed in inaugurations, obituaries and other most important public occasions.

⁴³ Exertzoglou, "Cultural uses of consumption", 88-93.

the established religious schools [*medrese*], would attempt to instil in their pupils a strong sense of Islamic morality and reverence towards the person of the sultan.⁴⁴ All the same, both types of school would pay heed to and include the teaching of science and foreign language in their curriculum.

The Muslims of Salonica were not as active in forming clubs and societies as their Greek Orthodox and Jewish neighbours. One can tentatively assume that welfare for the community would be administered through the *vakıf* framework, and that would be the form taken by charitable activities. Healthcare and education were to be provided by the state and the municipality – if the non-Muslims attained their respective communal hospitals and schools, then state institutions came to be equated with Muslim ones. One exception was the two private schools founded by the two main *dönme* factions of the city: The Kapancı family founded the *Terakki* [progress] middle-school [*rüştiye*] in 1877; the Karakaş opened their own *Feyz-i Sıbyan* [the elementary of prosperity] eight years later.⁴⁵ The two schools soon acquired a reputation for the excellent quality of teaching and attracted many students not only from the wider Muslim population, but many non-Muslims as well.⁴⁶ The schools were run by boards comprised from the leading *dönme* families and quickly emerged as focal points for the presence of the Muslim elite in the social life of the city. In a similar manner to the Greek and Jewish schools, the two Muslim schools organised performances and fundraisers. As early as 1888, a group of students of *Terakki* performed a number of Turkish songs, as well as the operetta *Orphée aux enfers* in the French Theatre to an enthusiastic audience.⁴⁷

A second exception was the mobilisation of local Muslim notables and state officials around the construction of the Hejaz railroad. The attempt to construct a railway connection between Damascus and Mecca in the early twentieth century was based on the hope of greatly enhancing the Ottoman strategic position on the Arabian Peninsula. At the same time, promoting Abdülhamid II's image as the caliph of (Sunni) Islam was also a crucial element of the initial deliberations. To underscore the Islamic credentials of the project, it was decided that the necessary resources

⁴⁴ Benjamin C. Fortna, *Imperial classroom: Islam, the state and education in the late Ottoman Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 208-224.

⁴⁵ Papamichos – Chronakis, 99-100.

⁴⁶ Anastasiadou, 257.

⁴⁷ *Faros* 1209, January 16 [28], 1888. Apparently the audience of Salonica took very well to Jacques Offenbach's operetta that had seemed so scandalous in Second Empire Paris. About 150 *liras* were collected for the school.

would not be covered by a foreign loan, but rather drawn solely from the state budget and private donations. Like in most Ottoman cities, a donations' committee (*iane komisyonu*) was established, with the participation of the Ottoman bureaucratic elite and a selection of Muslim notables from Salonica and beyond. In 1902, the committee was chaired by the governor-general, Hasan Fehmi Paşa, and included the chief judge (*naib*) and the head of official correspondence (*mektubçu*), three high military officers, the mayor Hulusi Bey, the chair of the Chamber of Commerce Hüsnü Bey, members of the influential Evrenos family of the nearby town of Yenice-i Vardar, as well as Mehmed Kapanıcı Efendi and İnaet Efend, representing the local traders.⁴⁸

The associations that construed elite sociability in Salonica were structured as 'democracies of correspondents', combining the sense of equality and subjectivity among its membership with the recognition of hierarchies inherent between the members. Though membership in this milieu inevitably revolved around male elite citizens, the changing patterns of social life would give new roles to their wives and children. The public conduct of wives and children was an important aspect of the status exhibited by the head of the family. The former would be expected to be gracious hostesses and would represent their husbands in charitable activities. The latter were often literally asked to perform the social and cultural skills they learned during their education: They staged school performances, they sang or played music before family guests and their departures to or arrivals from studies abroad were cause for celebration. The emergence of new forms of public life, aided by a local press that attempted to court the local elites by covering all their activities, gradually blurred the boundaries between the public and the domestic spheres.⁴⁹

The social life of the inhabitants of Salonica was not restricted to their societies, clubs and associations. The emergence of the latter proceeded in parallel with the emergence of other public spaces in the city. Spaces of leisure and consumption became increasingly visible within the urban fabric of Salonica and its outskirts. They became equally important for the performance and exhibition of the new standards that defined urban life in that period.

Spaces of Leisure and Consumption

⁴⁸ *Salname-i vilayet-i Selânik XVII* [XVI], 1320 [1902], 135-136.

⁴⁹ Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 173-174; *Faros* 1213, February 3 [15], 1888.

In 1875 the German deputy Karl Braun-Wiesbaden visited Salonica as part of a journey in the European provinces of the Ottoman Empire. As his steamer approached the port, Braun-Wiesbaden began chatting with a French trader, who had been doing business in the Levant for years. When he explained that he was neither a merchant nor a diplomat, but was only visiting Salonica for his personal amusement, his fellow passenger was genuinely surprised: “For amusement? he exclaimed. To Salonica? This most boring and disheartening of all villages in the East?”⁵⁰ Such a dismissive attitude should come as no surprise. The European traveller lost little time with the neighbourhood coffee-houses (*kahvehane*), the performances of puppet- and shadow- theatre and the wrestling matches, which had entertained the locals before the end of the nineteenth century. The few who did, generally approached them as glimpses at an “authentic” Ottoman essence. Only a few years, however, after Braun-Wiesbaden was warned of the ‘boring’ nature of the city, Salonica was presenting a totally different sight to the visitors. Businessmen were opening venues that provided various forms of entertainment to their clientele, the city had become a stop in the tours of tourists and performers, and local amateur actors and musicians, that had appeared thanks to the activities of schools and associations, were performing for the benefit of the public.

Perhaps the first venues that incorporated European standards of leisure and entertainment were the hotels of the city. The largest and best known were Hotel Colombo and Hotel Royal, both founded during the 1870s. Giacomo Colombo had arrived in the city to work in the Oriental Railways as chief cook; he used the money he earned – or embezzled, as it was rumoured, to open a hotel in the heart of the Frankish Quarter, next to the Ottoman Bank building. Hotel Colombo became quickly known for its restaurant and one of the prime venues of night entertainment in the city. Colombo’s main competitor was the Hotel Royal, located on the quay and owned by an Ottoman Greek, Antonis Trakalis. The hotel was destroyed in the fire of 1890, bought by İsmail İpekçi Efendi, and reopened as Hotel Splendid.⁵¹ Besides offering a place for respectable visitors (*nameley*, those who were appalled by the conditions in the local *hans*), the hotels soon acquired their own restaurants and beer-

⁵⁰ Karl Braun-Wiesbaden, *Eine türkische Reise*, quoted in Enepekidis, *I Thessaloniki sta 1875-1912*, 56.

⁵¹ Kostas Tomanas, *Oi tavernes tis palias Thessalonikis* [The taverns of old Thessaloniki] (Athens: Exantas, 1991), 107.

gardens, and offered various forms of entertainment to guests and local clients. Olympos was particularly popular with clients thanks to its waitresses and female musicians, who flattered the egos of the male customers with their smart flirting.⁵²

Shortly after the establishment of the first hotels in Salonica, the city attained more venues of entertainment. As the construction of the quay went ahead, a string of cafés sprang up along the waterfront.⁵³ These represented a different approach to leisure from the existing coffee-houses, in terms of décor, services and clientele. The cafés of Salonica were largely modelled after the cafés of Vienna, which had been an important cultural influence in *fin-de-siècle* Europe as a whole.⁵⁴ The railroad connection to Central Europe meant that a small number of local merchants, and perhaps their families, had first-hand experience of the café culture of the Austrian capital. Even more crucial was the ability of ambitious owners to import the equipment and decoration that was characteristic of such venues: marble tables, Venetian mirrors, billiard tables. Petros Nedos, who owned the café *Parthenon* on the Hamidiye Boulevard, travelled frequently to Vienna, to buy merchandise for his side-business, a furniture shop in the Frankish Quarter. In this way, he procured the billiard tables and the electric pianola that became the hallmark of his establishment.⁵⁵ Similar to the cafés, but oriented more towards evening entertainment, were the brasseries and beer-gardens that appeared at this period, on the quay, empty lots or in the back-gardens of cafés and hotels.

The cafés provided their clients with a variety of beverages and desserts, ‘European’ or ‘Oriental’. The beer gardens served imported spirits and could also depend on the local production of alcohol; the distillery that the Allatini, the Misrahi and the Fernandez families opened in 1883 was transformed into the steam-driven *Olympos* brewery thanks to renewed investment in 1892.⁵⁶ Soon, the café owners

⁵² Note that all these women were ‘Bohemian’, i.e. migrants from Austria-Hungary. Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 186-189; Anastassiadou, “Les cafés à Salonique sous les derniers Ottomans”, in *Cafés d’Orient revisités*, eds. Hélène Desmet-Grégoire and François Georgeon (Paris: CNRS Editions, 1997), 83.

⁵³ Enepekidis, *I Thessaloniki sta 1875-1912*, 58.

⁵⁴ Tag Gronberg, “Coffeehouse Orientalism”, in *The Viennese café and fin-de-siècle culture*, eds. Charlotte Ashby et al. (London and Oxford: Berghahn, 2013), 59-77. One should note that the Viennese café initially carried strong Oriental connotations, which were reinvented during the nineteenth century in the form of advertisements or nostalgia. Conversely, the café in Salonica was a venue oriented consciously towards Europe.

⁵⁵ Tomanas, *Ta kafeneia tis palias Thessalonikis* [The coffee-houses of old Thessaloniki] (Thessaloniki: Pitsilia sto Chaki, 1997), 20-22.

⁵⁶ A second brewery, *Naoussa*, was founded by a group of Greek Orthodox entrepreneurs in 1911. Dagkas, *I epicheirimatiki kinisi*, 68-69.

decided to expand the scope of their establishments by providing their customers with performances and entertainment. Beer-halls and brasseries started inviting bands of musicians and organised dancing nights in their premises, hosting many fundraising events staged by the various societies of the city.⁵⁷ The cafés of the city began staging their own performances. *Parthenon* staged a puppet theatre (*Fasoulis*) in its back garden; others, like Dionysios Lappos, owner of three cafés of the quay, invited travelling performers and staged novelty shows in their premises: Miss Mavons with her eight trained dogs, or Miss Evelyn and her “electric orchestra”.⁵⁸ The local cafés staged theatrical performances and functioned as the first cinemas in the city: After a first show in 1897, the first regular shows started in 1903 in the brasserie *Olympia*, organised by actor and impresario Plutarch Imrahoris and photographer Leitmer, who imported the equipment from Germany.⁵⁹

By the time café owners embarked on such endeavours there were already a number of theatres present in the city: the Eden, the Italian theatre, the New French theatre, Concordia and others. the exact dates of their founding is unclear; nonetheless, we know that in 1870, when two troupes visited the city at the same time, the single theatre of the city could not accommodate both, and one had to perform in the open.⁶⁰ Sensing a strong demand from the public, businessmen provided the city with more venues. Some were rudimentary constructions located in open lots and operated only in summer months. Other theatres were housed in proper buildings and remained open throughout the year, even if they did not always inspire confidence: In April 1884, Ioannis Karpouzos, owner of the Concordia theatre, was forced to publicly respond to accusations that his theatre was old and unsafe. Karpouzos claimed that Concordia had in the past received up to 600 spectators without incident and had successfully passed the inspection of the technical commission of the municipality. Nonetheless, Karpouzos promised to stage all future performances outside the theatre, weather permitting, until all fears were assuaged.⁶¹

⁵⁷ Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 169-170.

⁵⁸ Tomanas, *Ta kafeneia*, 21-22; Anastassiadou, “Les cafés”, 84-85. In 1881, Colombo hosted the American showman Untham, who had no hands, but performed various functions with his legs. *Faros* 598, September 8 [20], 1881. Note that novelty and the remarkable held a place importance in the public imagination of the nineteenth century. News of this kind were always present in the pages of the local press.

⁵⁹ Tomanas, *Oi kinimatografoi tis palias Thessalonikis* [The cinemas of old Thessaloniki] (Thessaloniki: Nisides, 1993), 8-9; Anastassiadou, “Les cafés”, 85-86.

⁶⁰ Tomanas, *To teatro stin palia Thessaloniki* [Theatre in old Thessaloniki] (Thessaloniki: Nisides, 1994), 48-49.

⁶¹ *Faros* 834, April 18 [30], 1884.

The integrity of the local theatres aside, by 1912 about 150 performances were given in the city.⁶² These performances included regular visits by professional troupes, French,⁶³ Italian,⁶⁴ Greek⁶⁵ or Ottoman Armenian,⁶⁶ who toured the cities of the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean and usually included a stop of several days in Salonica. Sometimes the troupes brought their own musicians, and sometimes they contracted local musicians and bands. Most troupes gave several performances, switching between a dramatic and a lighter repertoire, often in the same evening.⁶⁷ Plays performed included classic tragedies, contemporary European operas, operettas, dramas and melodramas, as well as modern Greek plays, in the original or in the languages of the city. It was not rare that arias and other melodic parts from several plays were performed separately, and theatres would often stage singing acts containing popular European and Ottoman songs.⁶⁸

Through the emergence of a standard of theatrical and musical scene in the city, Salonica would be culturally linked both to Western and Central Europe and the port-cities of the Eastern Mediterranean. Troupes making regular stops in the main cities of the region would exercise a strong impact in the taste and preferences of their growing audience. A sample of performances in Salonica during the 1880s and 1890s highlights the great popularity of contemporary French and Italian composers and dramatists, with the repertoire becoming more diverse in the beginning of the twentieth century. Soon, these influences would result to the emergence of local artistic production, expressed through amateur and school productions, the founding of bands and a *mantolinata*, attached to the societies of the city, as well as the staging of Greek and Ottoman plays.⁶⁹ Such influences would penetrate ethnic,

⁶² Olivia Pallikari, “To erasitechniko kai epaggelmatiko teatro stin tourkokratoumeni Thessaloniki os antanaklasi tis polypolitismikis taftotitas tis kai ton diaforetikon antilipseon gia tin prooptiki tis” [Amateur and professional theatre in Thessaloniki under Turkish [sic] rule as a reflection of the multicultural identity of the city and the differing views on its prospects], (paper presented in the international conference *Thessaloniki, a city in transition: 1912-2012*, Thessaloniki, October 18-21, 2012), 83.

⁶³ *Faros* 841, May 12 [22], 1888.

⁶⁴ *Faros* 508, September 8 [20], 1881.

⁶⁵ *Faros* 680, June 23 [July 5], 1882.

⁶⁶ *Faros* 1215, February 10 [22], 1888.

⁶⁷ The actors performing in the café *Apollon* that was turned into a theatre for the occasion in July 1882 would each night stage a European drama and a Greek comedy. *Faros* 684, July 7 [19], 1882.

⁶⁸ Tomanas, *I kallitechniki kinisi sti Thessaloniki, 1885-1944* [The art scene in Thessaloniki, 1885-1944] (Thessaloniki: Nisides, 1997), 16-17; *Faros* 834, April 18 [30], 1884.

⁶⁹ For one extremely popular such play, see Emmanouil Seiragakis, “Leblebidji Hor-Hor Agha, a Glorious Ottoman Peddler”, (paper presented in the 20th *CIEPO Symposium: new*

linguistic and religious boundaries, and would contribute to the emergence of a shared cultural milieu throughout the region, reflected on a shared musical, theatrical and literary production.⁷⁰

The evolution of spaces of leisure and entertainment in the city introduced novel ideas on public behaviour and gender roles. In contrast to the neighbourhood coffee-houses, the cafés of the waterfront and Hamidiye were not exclusively male spaces, and allowed entrance to women and families. They gradually evolved into venues where young men and women could socialise, under the (gentler or stricter) supervision of their parents. *America*, a café on the quay, became the favourite spot for matchmakers. The two families, and their children who were to be matched for marriage, would often meet each other there.⁷¹ The frequent balls provided opportunities for more direct contact. With dancing becoming central to the social life of Salonica's youth, the first dancing schools appeared, and quickly proved very popular.⁷² The familiarity of the café setting and the intimacy between genders was cautiously appropriated by the local press. *Le Journal* would bemoan the shyness of the young men of the city and their awkward dancing moves. Conversely it would pay increasing attention to female charms, painting the coquettish *flirteuses* in a not so negative light.⁷³

Dancing and flirting were, of course, fine and well, but there were at the same time certain boundaries imposed on gender relationship that neither the respectable society of the city nor its press were prepared to break. Pre-marital sex, inter-ethnic relations and the refusal of arranged marriages were all considered as breaches of conduct and the implications were severe for those involved, especially for women. In a society where family remained the primary unit of economic activity and professional association, and the honour of its head reflected his status in the marketplace, behaviours that could slight that honour were to be avoided at all costs. The elites of the city were quite content to introduce aspects of 'modern' sociability into the social life of the city, but at the same time imposed a constricting framework

trends in Ottoman studies, Rethymno, June 27 – July 1, 2012).

⁷⁰ Nar, 'Keimeni epi aktis thalassis...', 175-188.

⁷¹ Tomanas, *Ta kafeneia*, 31.

⁷² Idem, *Oi tavernes*, 119-120. *Faros* 1214, February 6 [18], 1888, published an advertisement for the services of a certain Charalambos, a native of Kefallonia in Greece, who gave lessons at folk dances ("highly desirable now that the Carnival is approaching") for 5 *kuruş* per person. The most popular dances, however, were the polka, the waltz and other contemporary European styles.

⁷³ Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 186-189.

on behaviour within the spaces they attended and patronised. What they perceived as ‘excesses’ in European contemporary culture were kept at a distance through repression or parodying. In this, the cultural sphere in the city can be said to have resembled its politics, with elite sociability evolving within boundaries similar to those imposed on political participation and representation.

Intermediary Spaces between Elites and non-Elites

Up to this point, we have mainly referred to spaces and practices that appealed to those locals that belonged to the upper strata of local society, or at least those who aspired to belong there. This development did not fully reach the large masses of the local population. At a period when the cityscape was being radically transformed, manual workers, itinerant salesmen, peasants, sailors and refugees held on to their own spaces of non-elite sociability and popular culture. Many of these spaces predated the nineteenth century and represented a native urban tradition. That is not to say that non-elite sociability remained somehow untouched by the new models and fashions that were introduced to Salonica at the time. Non-elite spaces needed to adapt to the same economic and social forces that affected the rest of the city. The guilds that had formed the main example of non-elite association in the Ottoman cities in the past, had by now lost their political significance under pressure from European imports and the Ottoman state. Besides that, Hamidian autocracy cracked down on any form of non-elite association, making the creation of trade unions and even self-help associations untenable. Guilds continued to exist, however, at least nominally, and in two cases they exercised considerable influence in local politics: In the 1870s, the Greek Orthodox guilds became heavily involved in the conflicts that paralysed that community;⁷⁴ and in the 1890s, the porters and lightermen of the Salonica harbour successfully defended their professional privileges against the newly established port company.⁷⁵ On the other hand, despite its largely elite character, the emerging public sphere of late Ottoman Salonica included the shaping

⁷⁴ Dimitris Stamatopoulos, “Ethnikoi antagonismoi kai koinotiki anasykrotisi: I endokoinotiki sygkrousi sti Thessaloniki (1872-1874) kai i syntaxi tou protou koinotikou kanonismou” [National antagonisms and communal restructuring: The intra-communal conflict in Thessaloniki (1872-1874) and the drafting of the first communal statute], *Balkanika Symmeikta*, 10 (1998), 51-98.

⁷⁵ See chapter 3.

of spaces open to the public, that is spaces where the local elites and non-elites would culturally and physically coexist.

The neighbourhood appears to have played an important role for non-elite sociability, acting as a point of reference in the urban fabric. Social life in the neighbourhood was in turn dominated to a large extent by religious practice. The clergy may have lost some of its influence vis-à-vis the state and commercial elites, but its influence among the rest of the population was still strong. All communities continued to operate religious courts parallel to the newly established secular ones, and rabbis, imams and priests would be employed as intermediaries between the people of each neighbourhood and the city authorities. Religious time still held sway here; Muslims ran their days according to the time of prayer, and the Jewish quarters emptied once a week on account of the Sabbath. The daring few who visited a café in that day of rest had usually prepaid their orders, or bought them on credit.⁷⁶

Besides the role of religion and the social ties that grew between groups of guildsmen, shopkeepers or even neighbours, the coffee-house played an important role in life in the neighbourhood. Such establishments had a long history in the city and maintained a strictly male character. The clientele were usually locals, and developed close relations to each other and the proprietor. While Muslim coffee-houses were usually frequented by adherents of any religion, Greek and Jewish venues were usually ethnically exclusive spaces.⁷⁷ Services provided in coffee-houses resembled those found in the cafés of the city, but there were variances that underscored the inherent class and cultural differences. Coffee-houses served *raki* rather than beer or imported liqueur; entertainment would more likely than not be shadow or puppet theatre; and the preferred music was either the folk songs of the Macedonian hinterland or the ‘oriental’ tunes that were popular with the lower classes of the Eastern Mediterranean, known as *Café Aman*.

Some coffee-houses evolved in a way that highlighted the darker aspects of city life. The establishments at Bara, the neighbourhood that adjoined the railway station, were popular with travellers, but also with the pimps and prostitutes that worked in the many brothels of the quarter. Malik Bey, the proprietor of one such coffee-house just outside the Vardar Gate, was known to have under his protection

⁷⁶ Nehama, *Istoria ton Israiliton*, 1385. The handling of money is forbidden on the Jewish Sabbath.

⁷⁷ Anastassiadou, “Les Cafés”, 79-82; Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 194.

most of the nearby ‘houses’.⁷⁸ Many of the prostitutes in the city were migrants to the city, women recruited in Austrian Galicia and Bukovina and brought to the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁹ Local women working as prostitutes were less common; such breaches of family norms were not easily tolerated and crimes of honour were not uncommon.⁸⁰ Prostitution was not exempt from elite spaces either, but it was usually present in a more indirect guise – that of ‘flirtatious’ waitresses and female singers.

The projects that would transform the shape of late nineteenth century Salonica had given priority to the emergence of spaces open to the public. The demolition of the coastal walls of the city and the subsequent construction of the quay provided the locals with an excellent promenade. Even before he started demolishing the walls, governor-general Sabri Paşa had created a public garden in area next to the shore, to the northwest of the city. The gardens were officially named *Millet Bahçesi*, but they soon reverted in popular usage back to the original name of the area, *Beşçınar*.⁸¹ Attached to the gardens was a public beach, and a similar facility was run by the municipality near the White Tower, where a new park and café opened to the public in 1905.⁸² These new public spaces offered the locals spaces to idly pass their free time with strolling or picnicking. The quay, along with its cafés and beer-halls, soon emerged as the prime space of amusement (*tenezzüh*) in the city.⁸³ The same bands that performed in the local theatres, accompanied their co-citizens with European and Ottoman tunes.⁸⁴

It soon became clear that the public spaces of the city were too few to satisfy the demand of the public, which was crowding the waterfront and the parks on days of rest and religious holidays. Certain spaces in the city were becoming congested, with the situation exacerbated by professional practices that challenged their public character. Those taking a stroll along the quay needed to carefully navigate between the tables of the cafés, carts and carriages, porters loading and unloading cargo, and the trams that began moving up and down the stretch in 1893. In December 1896 the

⁷⁸ Anastasiadou, “Les Cafés”, 87-88; Tomanas, *Ta kafeneia*, 18.

⁷⁹ Fuhrmann, “Down and out in the quays of Izmir: ‘European’ musicians, innkeepers and prostitutes in the Ottoman port-cities”, *Mediterranean Historical Review*, 24, 2 (December 2009), 178-180.

⁸⁰ *Le Journal de Salonique*, Mai 26, 1896 reported that a man shot at his sister with a revolver, wounding her, because she had moved to a “house of ill repute”. Cite in Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 190.

⁸¹ Chekimoglou, *Tourkokratia kai Mesopolemos*, 143-149.

⁸² IAM, *Esas defteri* VI, 7-8; Chekimoglou and Anastasiadis, *Otan i Thessaloniki*, 79.

⁸³ BOA, BEO 188/14026, 22 Teşrin-i Evvel 1308 [November 3, 1892].

⁸⁴ Tomanas, *I kallitechniki kinisi*, 15-16.

company that had undertaken the construction of the city port asked for permission to construct a narrow-gauge rail, which would connect a quarry to the east of the city to the main construction site next to the White Tower, and from there along the waterfront to the harbour. The Ottoman authorities took precautions that construction would take consideration the existing layout of shops and cafés, so that they would escape demolition, and that it would finish as soon as possible, so the reserved areas would be returned to the public.⁸⁵ Accidents were frequent, with people getting hit by passing carts or pushed off the quay and into the water. People drowning had become common enough, that Jacob Simha, a local Jew, who saved two people from drowning, received a decoration by the sultan.⁸⁶

The apparent openness of the public spaces of Salonica brought people together in physical proximity in disregard of established religious, gender and class boundaries. This was not so much a problem for the local elites, who could easily maintain some distance from the wider public in the context of their public and domestic lives. The growing middle classes, however, the scores of low ranking clerks and civil servants, whose salaries were not that higher than those of manual labourers, depended on projecting their respectability and cultural refinement, in order to justify their separate status. They sought to model the activities of the elite, adapted to their specific economic and social standards: In February 1896 a group of young Jewish men took the initiative to organise a masquerade in *Olympia*. They intentionally set a low ticket price, in the expressed hope that they would attract people of more modest means, who did not get enough opportunities for such entertainment. In the event, the ball was only a moderate success, as only 12 women showed up, compared to 75 men, and the presence of two *Alliance* teachers among those attending ensured that male and female interaction remained limited.⁸⁷ At the same time, these groups would increasingly mobilise, exercising pressure for the expansion and regulation of public spaces in the city. In December 1908 the inhabitants of Hamidiye organised a protest against the Tram Company and submitted a petition that demanded special fares for pupils, more cars in circulation, and special provisions for the segregation Muslim female passengers.⁸⁸

⁸⁵ BOA, HH 210/9, 12 Kanun-ı Evvel 1312 [December 24, 1896].

⁸⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 1645/66, 18 Temmuz 1305 [July 30, 1889].

⁸⁷ Cited in Guillon, *Le Journal de Salonique*, 181-182.

⁸⁸ Marina Aggelopoulou, “Zitimata schetika me tin apergia ton Ellinon servitoron sti Thessaloniki tou 1908” [On the strike of the Greek waiters in Thessaloniki in 1908] in *Ellines kai Evraioi Ergates sti Thessaloniki ton Neotourkon* [Greek and Jewish Workers in

The local press played an important role in the mobilisation against liminal and transgressive behaviour in public spaces. On September 15, 1881, *Faros* published an open letter to the Ottoman authorities of the port of Salonica. The paper decried the spread of prostitution in Salonica, and especially in the area surrounding the harbour. Only recently, a brothel named *Alcazar de Salonico* had opened its doors “on the most central square” of the quarter, and its matrons caused “the most scandalous scenes.” This “den of orgies” was the first sight that greeted the sailors and passengers who disembarked from incoming ships. The prostitutes had become bold enough to accost an international contingent of military officers, who had just arrived to the city from Thessaly, where they had been observing the demarcation of the new Greek-Ottoman border. The newspaper called on the local police and the Ottoman governor-general to intervene and protect the public by revoking the brothel’s licence.⁸⁹ The concerns of the newspaper went beyond prostitution. In the course of a month following the piece on *Alcazar*, *Faros* published complaints about the activities of unregistered medical practitioners,⁹⁰ the failure of the municipal authorities to keep the city clean,⁹¹ and the streets being constantly blocked by construction workers going about their business.⁹² Its campaign claimed its first success when the authorities announced the shutting down of *Alcazar* and the removal of all prostitutes from the city.⁹³

The popularity of the new public spaces gradually became less a source of pride for the successful introduction of European social norms and more a source of anxiety for the local elites. Incidents of public violence, seemingly endemic, highlighted the dangers lurking behind the modern veneer of urban life. Already in 1881, the press warned against the prevalence of guns in the city, after two Albanians who sat at a waterfront café started shooting at each other after an argument.⁹⁴ A 1909 performance of the German opera *Die lustige Witwe* ended in tragedy, when the Austrian vice-consul started shooting into the audience, mortally

Thessaloniki under the Young Turks] (Ioannina: Isnafi, 2004), 113.

⁸⁹ *Faros tis Makedonias* 596, September 3 [15], 1881.

⁹⁰ *Faros* 600, September 12 [24], 1881.

⁹¹ *Faros* 601, September 15 [27], 1881.

⁹² *Faros* 606, September 26 [October 8], 1881.

⁹³ *Faros tis Makedonias* 596, September 3 [15], 1881. Thessaly, an Ottoman province, was eventually ceded to Greece in the aftermath of the Russo-Ottoman War of 1877-78 and the Treaty of Berlin.

⁹⁴ *Faros* 605, September 24 [October 6], 1891.

wounding two spectators.⁹⁵ For conscious urban reformers among the press, the public spaces of the city were under threat from the atavistic behaviour of groups that were yet to grasp the expected behaviour of ‘modern’ citizens. In a play staged in the city in early 1904, the plot involved an old Albanian man, who suspected that his daughter was having an affair, and asked a friend to avenge his honour by killing her lover. As the play reached its climax, the man tracked down his target, only to discover it was his own son he had to kill. The hesitation of the main character did not go down well with one particular spectator, who decided to uphold the old man’s honour himself by firing his revolver at the actors, thankfully missing them.⁹⁶

The spread of European practices and standards seemed to have dangerously shallow roots. The perceived atavism of traditional culture was not only prevalent within the urban lower classes and recent migrants from the countryside, but it was also present among those of higher status. ‘Excessive’ westernisation was to be shunned, as it threatened to introduce ideas that could not resonate with the social framework of the late Ottoman city, or would undermine it.⁹⁷ Conversely, developing a taste for ‘traditional’ activities and culture at a time when these were evolving into a non-elite cultural *niveau*, shared across the urban centres of the region, was also strongly discouraged.⁹⁸

Ultimately, the polarisation between an elite and a non-elite conception of public space and urban culture in late Ottoman Salonica persisted until the end of the period. The merchants, professionals and high state officials who constituted the *beau monde* of the city successfully fashioned a set of public spaces of leisure and sociability, in the physical and institutional sense, for performing their elevated and modernised status. Nonetheless, by the same standards these spaces were modelled after, they could not be fully exclusive. Popular participation in the emerging spaces of culture and sociability could in the long-term help reinforce the social and political balance in the city by making elite values representative of urban life as a

⁹⁵ Aggelopoulou, “Apergia ton Ellinon servitoron,” 144.

⁹⁶ Tomanas, *To teatro*, 52.

⁹⁷ Mardin, “Super-westernisation”.

⁹⁸ See how middle-class men who liked Ottoman music were portrayed in the *Journal*. “Au cours d’une réception privée [...] quelques musiciens orientaux retenaient un groupe de fervents de la mélodie arabe. S’accompagnant du violon et du tambour de basque, nos exécutant, roulant des yeux alanguis, lançaient leurs interminables trilles. Oh ! Le rythme suave de sons incompris ! Oh ! Le rôle prolonge des syllabes qui n’en finissent plus ! Et dire que les amateurs sont nombreux de cet égossillement a jet continu!” *Le Journal de Salonique*, July 8, 1897, cited in Guillon, 193-194..

whole. In the short term, however, it allowed for challenges against elite monopoly over urban space. Such challenges were especially potent, since non-elite culture was not necessarily based on a conservatism that clung to 'tradition', but actively incorporated diverse elements of different genres and practices into a vernacular urban modernity. In the following years, the port-city society of Salonica would be hard pressed by contradictions as these. After 1908 and the Young Turk Revolution, the repressive Hamidian state, which had kept such growing conflicts in check, would be no more.

Salonica under the Young Turks: The End of an Ottoman City

Chapter Five

So far, I have argued that the production and transformation of urban space in late Ottoman Salonica had a deep impact on the relationship between local civil society and the Ottoman state, as represented in the city. In the period starting roughly from 1870 onwards, the port-city was encouraged to expand, was planned and administered, graced with modern infrastructure, connected by rail and steamer, visited by traders and tourists, lived and experienced by its inhabitants, old and new. Religious leaders, leading merchants and bankers, foreign nationals, captains of industry, newspaper editors and Ottoman bureaucrats developed a consensus on how the city should develop and how it should be governed. It was shaped by the modernising discourse all groups adhered to, up to a certain extent, as well as shared material interests. Following the ups and downs of the international markets and the empire's fortunes, that consensus remained hegemonic and unchallenged up to the beginning of the twentieth century.

The situation began to change as events in the city's immediate hinterland threatened the balance between the different social groups of the city. Starting in the 1890s, Macedonia became a battleground between competing Balkan nationalisms. Security throughout the region steadily deteriorated, as factions affiliated to the neighbouring nation-states formed armed bands and clashed with each other and Ottoman troops. The growing violence in the countryside brought closer the prospect of a Great Power intervention and the end of direct Ottoman rule over the area, which in turn galvanised the Ottoman officers and bureaucrats stationed there. The inability of Sultan Abdülhamid and his absolutist regime to control the situation brought large numbers among the local Muslim elites closer to the clandestine opposition, mainly expressed by the Committee of Union and Progress. The group had been operating from exile in France, but managed to establish itself among the garrisons of Salonica, Manastir and other Macedonian towns. Their activities culminated in the coup of July 23, 1908, which forced the sultan to reinstate the 1876 Ottoman constitution. After years of violence, the people of the region perceived

these events as a genuine opportunity to reform Ottoman government and society along more inclusive lines. The resulting euphoria did not last long, however. The removal of most restrictions on political activity allowed for a challenge to the existing status quo from below; in a process repeated across the empire, the introduction of mass politics led to the fracturing of once cohesive elite groups, with each manoeuvring to defend its position in the new, expanded public space.

Salonica was at the centre of these events and their influence was felt strongly. The city functioned not only as the base of the Ottoman troops operating in Macedonia, but also as the hub of the networks which kept the Greek and Bulgarian bands armed and supplied. As thousands of refugees escaped the countryside, violent confrontations in the city became common, starting with a string of bombing attacks in April 1903. During the second constitutional era, Salonica became the bastion of Ottoman constitutionalism, as one of the places where the Young Turk movement came in to the open and the seat of the “Committee of Union and Progress”. It also became the cradle of the Ottoman labour and socialist movements, which built on the experience of the popular mobilisation of the summer of 1908, as well as the strike wave which followed.

All these developments were played out in Salonica’s urban spaces. Modern cafés and hotels were rented out for political speeches; the streets which were drawn or widened during the last thirty years were now packed with people attending political rallies and protests; its machinery and infrastructure ground to a halt, as striking workers assessed their political strength and put forward demands. With the Young Turks growing increasingly intolerant of opposition, the Ottoman state became more and more assertive. The issue of supporting or opposing the committee divided most ethnic and social groups in the city. The social fabric of the late Ottoman port-city gradually broke apart, unable to withstand pressure from all directions and without the time required to reconstitute itself into something different: In October 1912 the Balkan Wars broke out and within a few weeks Salonica had been lost to the Ottomans.

Salonica and the Macedonian Question

Macedonia started figuring prominently in the Eastern Question from the 1870s onwards. In 1870, after years of lobbying from influential Bulgarian notables and the

Russian embassy, the Ottoman government recognised an autocephalous Bulgarian Church, the Exarchate, administratively autonomous from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate – a decision which the latter never accepted. The Exarchate was given control the dioceses of Bulgaria proper, while, crucially, it was allowed to expand its area of responsibility in other dioceses in the future, under the condition that two thirds of the local Orthodox Christian congregation were willing to join. The foundation of the Exarchate shocked the Patriarchate and initiated a period of intense competition between Patriarchists and Exarchists in the region. Lacking the funds necessary to counter the activities of the Exarchate, the Patriarchist cause became increasingly dependent on the material assistance of the independent Greek kingdom, whose influence among the Greek Orthodox of Macedonia steadily grew.¹

The Ottoman authorities may have hoped that conceding an autocephalous church to the Bulgarians would divide the Orthodox community, which would in turn thwart the growth of nationalism in the empire's European provinces. If so, the plan backfired, as the agitation for the creation of the Exarchate was followed by the much more militant nationalist movement, the Bulgarian insurrection of 1875-1876 and the disastrous, from the Ottoman perspective, war of 1877-1878 against Russia. The Treaty of San Stefano briefly created an extended Bulgarian state, which was to occupy most of what had been the European provinces of the empire. San Stefano was amended at the Congress of Berlin soon after it was signed and the autonomous Bulgarian state found its borders much curtailed. But the spectre of that treaty haunted both Bulgarian irredentism and its competitors in the years that followed.²

The years after 1878 were a period of increasing tensions in the region, as Greeks, Bulgarians and, to a lesser extent, Serbs and Rumanians attempted to secure their influence in the region in anticipation of the imminent collapse of Ottoman rule, while the Ottoman authorities tried to improve their administrative and military presence and prove that their control was as strong as ever. Partisans of the different factions counted the number of churches, schools and pupils, using the (contradicting) figures as proofs of the legitimacy of their respective claims. They cultivated relations with the foreign diplomatic missions in the area as well as

¹ Paschalis Kitromilides, "‘Imagined Communities’ and the origins of the national question in the Balkans," *European History Quarterly* 19 (1989), 182-184.

² Kemal H. Karpat, *An inquiry into the social foundations of nationalism in the Ottoman state: From social estates to classes, from millets to nations* (Princeton: Center for International Studies, 1973), 88-91.

academic institutions and newspapers in Western Europe, where partisan journalists and intellectuals presented the perspective of their preferred party in reports and ethnographical surveys, in an attempt to sway public and government opinion.³

Gradually tensions in the region rose. The competition between the different Balkan states and the Ottoman authorities became violent and in two cases erupted into full-scale wars: In 1885 Bulgaria unilaterally annexed the smaller autonomous principality of Eastern Rumelia and won the resulting brief war against Serbia; and in 1897 pro-Greek insurgencies in Crete and Macedonia led to a war with the Ottoman empire, which the latter easily won. Military victories and defeats did not resolve the situation on the ground, however. Nationalist agitation in the countryside was now being exercised not only by priests, schoolmasters and notables, but by armed bands as well. Such bands, like the pro-Bulgarian IMARO (Internal Macedonian-Adrianople Revolutionary Organisation), were supplied and directed by committees operating within the Ottoman territories, but maintaining bases and networks of logistic support in the neighbouring countries. The conflict was fuelled by the long traditions of rural brigandage in the area, as well as the increasing discontent of the rural population - a result of the introduction of market relations and cash-crops in a countryside where the ownership of the cultivated lands was concentrated in a few hands. Class and ethnic distinctions in the disputed regions of central Macedonia were not completely unrelated, with the majority of the sharecroppers and landless peasants being Slavic speakers. Conversely, the land belonged mostly to families of Muslim grandees and the Greek Orthodox Church, and the wholesale merchants were primarily Ottoman Greeks and Jews from Salonica and the other towns of the region.⁴ Debates over the connection between the national struggle and social issues became so heated within the IMARO, that the organisation split between a 'right-wing' faction advocated close ties to Sophia and a 'left-wing' one, led by radicals like Yani Sandanski, that began steering an autonomous course.

In the first years of the 20th century, and especially after the failed 1903 Ilinden rising organised by the IMARO in western Macedonia, the area witnessed a rapid deterioration of public order. Greek bands, right- and left-wing factions of the

³ On the connection between Western European journalist and intellectuals and Balkan nationalisms, see Skopetea, *I Dysi tis Anatonis*, passim.

⁴ Gounaris, "Social cleavages and national 'awakening'", 418-424; Hanioglu, *Brief history*, 106-107.

IMARO, Serbian and Rumanian sympathisers attacked each other, each side's civilians and the Ottoman state in a free-for-all which lasted until 1908. Attacks on churches and schools, beatings and assassinations, bombs on trains and public buildings, the collection of "taxes" and the abduction of hostages became daily occurrences. The Ottoman authorities were unable to restore order and when the Ottoman army, mainly composed by Anatolian *redif* (reserve) regiments, did intervene, its heavy-handed approach exacerbated the situation. In September 1903, the Russian Czar and the Austrian Emperor met in the Hungarian town of Murzsteg and drafted a comprehensive plan for reforms in Macedonia. These included the re-organisation of the gendarmerie under foreign officers, and the restructuring of the local administrative and fiscal institutions. After protracted negotiations, the Ottoman Empire agreed a modified set of reforms, and career bureaucrat Hilmi Paşa was appointed Inspector General of the three provinces of Salonica, Kosovo and Manastır did not manage to improve the situation.⁵

Salonica was at the centre of the conflict and life in the city was heavily influenced by events in the immediate countryside. As the headquarters of the Inspectorate General and the Third Army Corps, the city served as the main seat of Ottoman administration in Macedonia. As the main harbour of the region, it also functioned as arrival point for the troops transferred from other theatres. The presence of ill-disciplined and under supplied soldiers, whose pay was frequently in arrears, caused much consternation among the inhabitants. In August 1901, Kemal Bey, the treasurer, or *defterdar*, of the *vilayet*, left for Istanbul, as he was unable to provide for the pay of those soldiers who were being decommissioned and waited for repatriation. He returned a month later with enough money to cover the soldiers' salary and then promptly resigned.⁶ On the 18th of September, 1904, soldiers angry at being encamped on the quay without being given food or proper shelter rioted and proceeded to loot the stalls of the main market. The incident led to recriminations fired between the governor-general Hasan Fehmi Paşa and the commander of the Third Army Corps, *muşir* Hairi Paşa, which led to the resignation of the former.⁷ The city housed a Greek and a Serbian consulate as well as a Bulgarian commercial

⁵ Nadine Akhund, "Muslim representation in the Three Ottoman *Vilayets* of Macedonia: administration and military power (1878-1908)," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 29 (December 2009), 452.

⁶ FO 195/2111, Billioti to O'Connor, September 19, 1901.

⁷ FO 295/16, Du Vallon to embassy, September 22 and 25, 1904. See also Akhund, 451.

bureau, and the diplomatic agents lobbied the Ottoman authorities and administered the communal schools, while half-secretly coordinating the respective armed bands and providing logistical support.

The city itself was not spared the violence which had engulfed the countryside. In 1903 a group of young anarchists, mostly students in Salonica's Bulgarian school who were in contact with IMARO, began planning an attack against the symbols of the Ottoman state and European capital in the city. The conspirators, calling themselves the "boatmen", spent months secretly constructing a tunnel under the Ottoman Bank and filling it with dynamite and other explosives. On morning of the 28th of April the French steamer *Guadalquivir*, which had just docked on the harbour, was holed by an explosion. A smaller bomb was thrown in the railway station without causing much damage. On the following evening, some of the group blew up the main gas pipes, plunging the city centre into darkness. After that, they moved on to their targets: A group of seven attacked the Ottoman Bank with hand-made explosives. They triggered a huge explosion that not only gutted the building itself, but in the process also destroyed the city's German Club, which was situated just behind. Others threw bombs at the Ottoman Post office and the cafés *Alhambra* and *Noris*. The military post at Tophane fort was also fired upon, the soldiers driving the attackers off after a bloody battle.⁸

The response of the Ottoman administration was immediate and bloody. The garrison canvassed the streets, searching through the Bulgarian quarters for suspected terrorists and their hideouts. Anyone who resisted or fled was shot. There were long stand-offs with isolated anarchists, who barricaded themselves in their houses and kept the troops at bay with bombs and revolver shots. An undetermined number of people died in the aftermath of the bombings: The French, Russian and Bulgarian resident diplomats talked of a massacre that involved hundreds of dead; Billioti, the British Consul-General, estimated the Bulgarian dead at around fifty.⁹ Hundreds were arrested that night; most were released, but dozens, mainly those of a notable, merchant or professional background, remained imprisoned until the court martial, which adjourned in early June. In the trial, four men were found to be the surviving ringleaders of the group and were condemned to death.¹⁰

⁸ Megas, *Oi "varkarides" tis Thessalonikis*, passim; FO 195/2156, Billioti to O'Conor, May 2, 1903.

⁹ FO 195/2156, Billioti to O'Conor, May 3, 1903.

¹⁰ FO 195/2156, Billioti to O'Conor, May 7 and 19, 1903.

Though the situation in Salonica calmed down soon after, this “most deliberate attack – not so much on the government, as against Salonica society in general” had a deep impact.¹¹ With its hinterland engulfed in growing violence and refugees bringing tales of excesses committed by both the competing bands and the army, the city descended into a mentality of siege. Though there were no other incidents of the scale of the 1903 attacks, low level violence was common. In December 1905, the Consul and Vice-Consul of Romania and the inspector of Romanian schools in Macedonia were fired upon as they were dining in the *Tsakonas* restaurant on the quay. Three Greeks were arrested in connection with the shootings, but were later acquitted.¹² The abduction of Robert Abbot, the son of Alfred Abbot, a British subject and head of one of the most esteemed Greek Orthodox families of the city, on the 21st of March 1907 caused much excitement, as did the eventual arrest and subsequent trial of most of the abductors.¹³

In the spring of 1908 two attacks on prominent individuals exacerbated the already tense situation in the city. On the 6th of March Theodore Askitis, Dragoman of the Greek consulate, was shot dead as he was walking from a friend's house to the consulate. Despite the deceased giving testimony before he died, the culprit was never found. As a member of the Greek diplomatic staff, Askitis had taken a role in the band activities in Macedonia but was considered a moderate and therefore enjoyed some respect. His funeral was attended by all the consular corps with the exception of the Bulgarian and Rumanian delegates, and was followed by a peaceful demonstration of the local Greek Orthodox community.¹⁴ About three weeks later, the second dragoman of the Russian consulate, a man called Hadji Mouscheff, was shot at by a Greek former tram conductor, who managed to escape arrest.¹⁵ The two shootings caused a feeling of deep insecurity and, with Orthodox Easter approaching, led to more violent incidents: A Greek precursor was fired upon on his way to the church on the 20th of April, while six days later, during the procession of the Greek Orthodox epitaph, the crowd tried to storm the pharmacy of a Bulgarian.

¹¹ FO 195/2156, Billioti to O’Conor, May 7, 1903.

¹² FO 295/17, Graves to O’Conor, December 18, 1905; February 6, 1906 and December 16, 1906.

¹³ FO 295/17, Graves to embassy, March 25, 1907 and April 30, 1907; FO 295/18, Lamb to Gray, December 10, 1907.

¹⁴ FO 295/18, Lamb to Gray, March 8, 1908.

¹⁵ FO 295/18, Lamb to Gray, April 14, 1908. Hadji Mouscheff was regarded as the liaison between the Russians and the Bulgarian bands. FO 195/2156, Billioti to O’Conor, February 21, 1903.

In the days that followed, a Bulgarian was shot at in the city centre, while another was attacked with an axe near the Allatini brickworks, where he was employed. On May 3, two men entered the tavern of a Bulgarian called Bakaloff, situated near the Eski Cuma mosque, and fired 20 shots at random, wounding one individual. As the British consul sardonically remarked, “if more lives have not been yet sacrificed, the fact is due to chance and bad shooting rather to the extra measures of precaution adopted by the police.”¹⁶

Though the murder of Askitis and the attacks which followed raised the spectre of inter-communal violence within the city limits, the situation in Salonica was soon to take an unexpected turn. The inability of the Ottoman authorities to stamp out band activities in Macedonia and the threat of another Great Power intervention against Ottoman interests in the area had caused much discontent among the bureaucrats and officers posted in Salonica against the Hamidian regime. Many of them had been involved in opposition groups since their training in Istanbul; they continued such activities in their new posts and established contact to figures of the opposition who operated from abroad.¹⁷ In 1908 their presence became strong enough and the sultan’s intelligence service was forced to take action in order to discover the various opposition cells in the area, especially in Macedonia. Faced with state suppression, a number of junior officers affiliated with the opposition took a leap of faith, launching a chain of events which would eventually lead to the 1908 revolution and the restoration of constitutional rule in the empire.¹⁸

The 1908 Revolution

On the night of the 11th of June 1908, Nazım Bey, the head of military police at Salonica, was shot at while sitting on the porch of his house. Nazım Bey, who was about to depart for Istanbul the following day, was regarded as an agent of the palace; his last visit to the capital, in February of that year, had been followed by the

¹⁶ FO 295/18, Lamb to embassy, May 5, 1908.

¹⁷ Hanioglu, *Brief history*, 147-149.

¹⁸ Donald Quataert has brought attention onto the economic background of these events. Crops failure in 1907 and 1908 led first to rising prices of staples, then to social unrest throughout the empire. See Quataert, “The economic climate of the Young Turk Revolution of 1908”, in idem, *Workers, peasants and economic change in the Ottoman Empire, 1730-1914* (Istanbul: The Isis Press, 1993), 49-62.

arrests of a group of junior officers on charges of sedition.¹⁹ A hastily assembled committee of enquiry failed to find the assailant and was dissolved after repeated protests from Hilmi Paşa, Inspector General of Macedonia, and *muşir* Ibrahim Paşa, commander of the Third Army.²⁰ In the meantime, Enver Bey, a young officer and brother-in-law of the said Nazim Bey, was summoned to Istanbul in relation to the assassination attempt, but disappeared soon after. Enver would resurface in the Macedonian countryside, at the head of a band of deserting soldiers and local Muslim peasants. In the following days, a number of such bands, all led by mutinous officers, emerged throughout the region.²¹

The regime seemed unable to control the situation, while the local authorities showed no inclination to act against the insurgents, who gathered strength in the countryside. The following weeks were marked by chaotic events, as loyalist officers and suspected informants were fired upon in the streets of Salonica in broad daylight. By the 23rd of July, the men of the Committee appeared in full control of the telegraphs and send news of the bands' activities directly to Salonica. Those members of the opposition still operating clandestinely in the city decided to step to the open, distributing pamphlets and calling for a demonstration on the following day. In the event, Nessim Russo, a young Jew who worked for the International Financial Commission, delivered an impromptu speech in favour of the constitution in front of a café at Olympos square. People began filling the streets and the city's government buildings, the municipality, the gendarmerie, the Ottoman Bank and other buildings were turned into stages. The president of the municipal council, the president of the commercial court, the director of the technical school, editors of local papers and the aide-de-camp of the inspector general, all addressed the jubilant crowd and called for the return to constitutional rule. The streets remained full until the late hours of the night, with large groups of officers and civilians parading around the city, in their hands the flags of the empire and of the Committee.²²

Public euphoria was, if anything, intensified the following day, with Hilmi Paşa reading from the steps of the *konak*, the local Government House, to a crowd of about 15000 people a telegram he had received from the sultan, promising to restore

¹⁹ FO 295/18, Lamb to embassy, June 12, 1908.

²⁰ FO 295/18, Lamb to embassy, June 18, 1908 and July 7, 1908.

²¹ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Barclay, July 26, 1908.

²² FO 195/2298, Lamb to Barclay, July 23, 1908 and July 24, 1908. See also Megas, *I epanastasi ton Neotourkon*, 115ff.

the constitution and the Chamber of Deputies. In the words of Henry Lamb, the British consul:

The rest of the day was given up to demonstrations of popular rejoicing, of which I doubt if the like has ever been seen in Turkey. The whole town was dressed in flags, processions paraded the streets, speeches were delivered in every public place, and the populace, half intoxicated with a sense of unwonted freedom, applauded uproariously on every possible occasion. At nightfall the city was illuminated, and the wildest enthusiasm prevailed when Enver Bey, a young officer who had deserted from Salonica to form one of the earliest insurgent bands, returned about 9 o' clock in the evening from Gevgeli and was conducted in triumph to the Garden of the Tour Blanche, where he was publicly received by [...] the Inspector General.²³

The public celebrations continued for days, as rebelling officers like Enver Bey and other opposition figures returned from exile to the city and were met with a public welcome. The restoration of constitutional rule had an immediate impact on the Macedonian countryside as well, with most band leaders agreeing to lay down their arms and pledge their loyalty to the constitution. Bulgarian and Greek insurgents arrived at the city, embraced each other in public and gave speeches in favour of the brotherhood of all Ottomans.²⁴ By that time, the new order seemed secure and the sultan resigned himself to the idea of constitutional rule. In anticipation of the election of a new parliament, the cabinet abolished the restrictive laws on assembly and association along with censorship. An amnesty was proclaimed for all political prisoners in Salonica.²⁵

The 1908 revolution created a vastly different reality for Ottoman society and the changes were especially pronounced in Salonica, one of the initial centres of the movement and the seat of the Committee of Union and Progress. The city now attracted visitors from the empire and abroad, eager to visit the capital of the revolution.²⁶ Interestingly, a significant number of visitors arrived to the empire from

²³ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Barclay, July 24, 1908.

²⁴ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, July 31, 1908.

²⁵ The satisfaction at these news was somewhat dampened, when it became known that *all* prisoners, both penal and political, were released. FO 195/2298, Lamb to Barclay, July 28, 1908.

²⁶ According to the British Consul, more than thirty thousand visited the city in August 1908! FO 195/2328, Lamb to Lowther, February 6, 1909. Separate estimates make reference to about 4000 Bulgarian visitors arriving in the city in the same period. Aggelopoulou, "Apergia ton Ellinon servitoron," 86-87, citing *Akropoli*, August 23 [September 5], 1908.

the neighbouring Balkan states. Thousands of Greeks,²⁷ Serbians and Bulgarians²⁸ organised tours in the region, visiting the main towns and cities before converging on Salonica. The visitors included a large number of civil servants, teachers and other intellectuals, many of which had been previously active in the revolutionary committees of their respective country. Even though the Ottoman authorities were naturally suspicious of the presence in the area of their former enemies, at the same time they were aware that the restoration of the constitution had changed the mood in favour of the empire, much to the consternation of the old guard of irredentists.

The introduction of an element of public participation, first seen on and immediately after July 23 marked developments in Salonica in the following years and irrevocably changed the way politics were conducted on the local and the imperial level. Whether as a member of the municipal council or a candidate for parliament, careers which had been advanced by serving on a school board, attending services in the synagogue or church and joining on the gentlemen's club had now to be reinvented in the balcony and the street. Informed by a rapidly multiplying number of local papers, the people of the city remained mobilised even after the initial euphoria subsided; mass gatherings, demonstrations and public speeches remained a feature of local life throughout this period. Platforms and opinions were propagated and debated among the patrons of the city's pubs and beer gardens, and cafés housed political gatherings and speeches.

Political activism spread to all classes of the population. Industrial and commercial workers across the empire decided to put their newly acquired rights to the test and formed associations and unions. Protesting against long work hours, lack of pension rights, and salaries that remained stagnant in the face of rising living costs, they were soon involved in a series of strikes across the major cities of the empire. Salonica was the city with the highest concentration of industrial production and workers in the empire, and its economy was soon paralysed by industrial action. A union of clerks was founded only the day after the restoration of the constitution was proclaimed; their example was soon to be followed by other workers throughout the city. On the 31st of August the workers at the tobacco manufacturing plant refused to go to their shifts. It was as if a signal had been given: For the next month the city

²⁷ The first party of Greek travellers arrived from Volos, just south of the border, in early August. FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, September 10, 1908.

²⁸ BOA, A.} MTZ (04) 169/70. 15, 23 Temmuz 1324 [August 6, 1908], informs on the 500-600 Bulgarians who visited Macedonia and Salonica immediately after the Revolution.

was paralysed by strikes at many of the local factories, all three railway companies, the docks and the *Errera* and *Orosdi-Back* department stores. Some strikes, like that of the assistant bakers, were quickly called off, while others became drawn-out affairs: the strike at the flour mill of the Allatini family lasted for eight days, by which point there had been attacks against blackleg workers and the arrest on the orders of the governor-general of five workers who had been representing the strikers. Virtually all strikes ended with some compensation for the workers, who succeeded in negotiating leveled pay rises, ranging between 20 and 45% for those with the lowest salaries, depending on the case.²⁹

In early September the workers in the city's cafés, hotels, and beerhouses – a sector where both employers and employees were overwhelmingly Greek - called a strike for wage increases. The strike coincided with the arrival of a special train carrying Bulgarian visitors to the city, leading to the suspicion that the reasons behind that industrial action were to be found in the underlying ethnic tensions in the city. As the strike turned Salonica into a dead city, and the visit was in danger of becoming a fiasco for the Committee, the latter arranged for a fête in the grounds around the White Tower, and “forcibly” opened one of the cafés in the Olympos square. Service to the guests was provided by soldiers and other volunteers.³⁰ In the evening of Sunday, September 13, large numbers of waiters assembled outside the café; some in the crowd approached a Jewish strike-breaker and overturned his tray, at which point the police and the gendarmerie intervened and started arresting people. The workers counterattacked and managed to push back the police and free those initially detained, but others were taken in the scuffles, including Garpolas, director of the “Faros” newspaper.³¹ The Ottoman authorities and the non-Greek press of the city portrayed the waiters’ strike as a Greek provocation, and a manifestation of their antipathy towards the Bulgarians.³² The waiters, on the other hand denounced the actions of the Committee, their interference in a labour dispute,

²⁹ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, September 9 and 24, 1908. See also Peter Carl Mentzel, “Nationalism and the labor movement in the Ottoman Empire, 1872-1914,” (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Washington, 1994), 112-115, and Yavuz Selim Karakışla, “The Strike Wave in the Ottoman Empire”, *Turkish Studies Association Bulletin*, 16 (1992), 153-177.

³⁰ See Aggelopoulou, “Apergia ton Ellinon servitoron,” *passim*.

³¹ BOA, DH.MKT 2614/9, 2, 6 Eylül 1324 [July 19, 1908].

³² The Greek consul, apparently rather embarrassed by the whole affair, shared this assessment. His report is reproduced in Aggelopoulou, “Apergia ton Ellinon servitoron,” 112-115.

and their demands that the waiters would work on the sultan's birthday.³³ It appears that in the days following the revolution, even nationalism needed be manifested within the context of Ottomanism.

The strike wave of September 1908, which had spread around the empire, put the Committee in a delicate situation. On one hand, the striking workers embodied the same spirit of public participation that was evident during the constitutional revolution and their appeals to the spirit of that revolution were frequent and steadfast. Committee members or public functionaries regarded as affiliated to the group, like the mayor Osman Adil Bey, played a crucial role in the negotiations between the strikers and their employers, to the point that a significant portion of the public thought the Committee itself was behind the strikes. On the other hand, it was of utmost importance to the Young Turk movement that the transition to constitutional rule was an orderly and controlled process – preferably controlled by the Young Turks themselves. The strikes had to be curtailed and legislation was drafted at Istanbul to this goal.³⁴

The ambivalent position of the Committee was indicative of the ideological influences that had shaped its political philosophy in the years of exile. The a conception of society formed in close connection to *fin-de-siècle* French positivism: that of a mechanical whole constituted by different parts. That whole would be operated by a national party, playing the role of the moderator between the state, the established elites and the “Ottoman nation”. The participation of the latter was crucial: In the following months the committee faced tremendous challenges: an uncooperative sultan and a government which was beyond its direct control, anti-constitutional conspiracies launched by conservative elements, pressure from the neighbouring countries and differences of opinion between moderate and radical elements within its ranks. In the face of these problems, the appropriation of public participation and mass politics was a means for the Committee to reinvent itself and from a secret organisation of junior officers and disgruntled exiles turn into a hegemonic political force with a structure reaching throughout the empire. Groups

³³ Ibid., 111, citing *İttihad ve Terraki* September 13, 1908.

³⁴ A more traditional approach views the interference of the Committee as instrumental, as part of its advocacy of “local” capital against foreign investors. For example, see Ilicak, “Jewish Socialism,” 122-123.

like the workers, the youth or the women had to be encouraged into greater public participation, under the guidance of the Committee and its affiliated organisations.³⁵

The workers of Salonica were thus left to choose: They could move closer to the Committee, sacrificing autonomy of action for political influence; or they could try to retain their autonomy and expecting a hostile reaction not only from their employers, but also from the state. Different segments of the city's workers split along these choices. The mainly Jewish dockworkers and porters would prove, as we will see, the most reliable ally of the Committee among the local workers. Other workers, predominantly Jewish and Bulgarian, influenced by the socialism of the Second International and Russian anarchism, maintained contact with Sandanski and the Bulgarian "narrow" Social-democrats, and strived for an independent organisation in the city. They would find most success with the city's growing industrial working class, mainly in the tobacco processing plants, but in other sectors as well.³⁶

At the same time it empowered Salonica's workers, the new conditions challenged the control of the said established elites over local politics. The Ottoman constitution represented a formal guarantee of individual rights against the state. On the other hand, the communal arrangements, common material interest and networks of patronage and patrimony, which had been defending the position of the elites in the city, were all now under question. The administrative order was disrupted and scores of officials were replaced - some demoted in disgrace, others promoted in recognition of their constitutional sympathies.³⁷ Local administrative institutions continued to function, but their authority was challenged by the mere existence and operation of the Committee in the city. The organisation had an internal hierarchy that remained hidden from public view and did not necessarily correspond to the hierarchies established in the local society in the previous decades. Though the Committee initially gestures of reconciliation with the local notables, the response of the commercial classes and the communal leaders oscillated between enthusiasm

³⁵ For the nascent Ottoman women's movement, see Ayfer Karakaya-Stump, "Debating progress in a 'serious newspaper for Muslim women': The periodical *Kadın* in post-revolutionary Salonica, 1908-1909", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, 30:2 (November 2003), 155-181.

³⁶ For the emergence and development of labour politics in Salonica, see Quataert, "The Workers of Salonica, 1850-1908" in *Workers and the Working Class in the Ottoman Empire and the Turkish Republic, 1839-1950*, eds. Quataert and Erik J. Zürcher (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1995), p. 59-74.

³⁷ FO 195/2328, Lamb to Lowther, February 6, 1909.

among the Jews and *Dönme*, who welcomed the modernist and Ottomanist discourse, and suspicion from the Muslim clergy and the Greek Orthodox church and community, who feared for their established privileges.³⁸

The elections for the restored Ottoman parliament, which were to be held throughout the autumn, were expected to shed some light on the intentions of the Committee and its relations with the city's elites. The elections were to be held under a complicated two-stage electoral system, with the franchise restricted to the adult, male holders of property and the deputies being elected from a joint list at the level of the *sancak*. Based on an electoral census conducted in September, the *sancak* of Salonica was awarded six deputies, with another five for the rest of the *vilayet*. The Committee succeeded in entering into an agreement with the Jewish and the Greek communities of the city, as well as with the Constitutional Clubs, which represented the conservative and 'right-wing' faction of the IMARO, to jointly support six candidacies: two Muslims, two Greeks, one Bulgarian and one Jew. Similar deals were made for the other two districts of the province, Siroz [Serres] and Drama.³⁹

The election campaign proved to be quite tumultuous despite these arrangements. On the 5th of October Bulgaria unilaterally declared itself independent; the day after Austria-Hungary, also unilaterally, formally annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, which had been under its military control since 1878. Both developments had important repercussions in the diplomatic field. On the local level, they caused the Committee to switch its support from the original Bulgarian candidate, a man called Tilkov, to Dimitar Vlahov, a school-teacher with socialist tendencies affiliated to Sandanski.⁴⁰ Their group had proclaimed its allegiance to a constitutional Ottoman empire, even if their radicalism far surpassed the Committee's own positions. Sandanski came close to paying for this position with his life on the 7th of October, when an argument with a rival group of Bulgarian ex-

³⁸ For the attitudes of the Jews, Ottoman Greeks and *Dönme*, see respectively Eugene Cooperman, "The Young Turk Revolution of 1908 and the Jewish community of Salonica," in *Studies on Turkish-Jewish history*, eds. David F. Altabe, Erhan Atay and Israel J. Katz (New York: Sepher-Hermon Press for the American Society of Sephardic Studies, 1996), 168-180; Veremis, "From the national state," 17-22; Baer, "Globalization, cosmopolitanism and the *Dönme*," 157-158.

³⁹ For the negotiations before the election, see Megas, *I epanastasi ton Neotourkon*, 331-346; see also FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, 22/9/1908.

⁴⁰ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, 9/11/1908. Sandanski would prove a valuable ally to the Committee in the coming years, receiving various forms of support. Only in October 1909, the governor-general deposited 100 *liras* in an account in his name in the Salonica branch of the Ottoman bank. BOA, DH.MUI 13-1/1, 8, 27 Eylül 1325 [October 9, 1909].

komitacis at a café close to Boşnak Han escalated into a gun-fight.⁴¹ The seat claimed by the Salonican Jews also became strongly contested, as Emanuel Carasso, a local lawyer who had introduced freemasonry into the city and enjoyed strong ties to the original Young Turk conspirators, found his candidacy challenged by Nassim Mazliah, Vice President of the commercial court, who was also affiliated with the Committee. As the campaign turned increasingly ugly, with supporters of each candidate interrupting the meetings of the other, the committee intervened and convinced Mazliah to contest a seat in Izmir with its support.⁴²

The Committee mobilised popular protest against Bulgaria and Austria-Hungary so as to further its influence in the city and secure an electoral victory in the region. On the 10th October thousands of people congregated on the open ground in front of the Third Army headquarters. From there, they moved towards the Austrian consulate and attended a speech by Rahmi Bey, a local landowner, high-ranking member of the Committee, and candidate in the upcoming elections.⁴³ The following day, an Austrian steamer that had just docked at the port found that the local lightermen refused to handle its cargo. Despite the protests filed by the consular corps and the intervention of the Chief Rabbi of the city, in the following month, the dockworkers allowed neither Austrian and Bulgarian ships, nor cargo originating from either Austria or Bulgaria to unload in the harbour. Goods imported by train were also boycotted.⁴⁴ A boycott committee, comprised from the leading merchants of the city, gave the boycott the appearance of a universal demand of the population. Underneath the surface of public unanimity, however, lay the frustration of those merchants and shipping agents who had invested heavily in the Austrian trade, as well as the resentment of the local administration, which found its jurisdiction circumvented.⁴⁵

The boycott gradually developed into a confrontation between the Committee and the government in Istanbul. The latter was negatively predisposed towards the

⁴¹ BOA, DH.MKT 2628/34, 25 and 28 Eylül 1324 [October 7 and 10, 1908].

⁴² FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, 24/8/1908.

⁴³ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, September 22 and October 10, 1908.

⁴⁴ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, October 26 and December 13, 1908. See also Mehmet Emin Elmacı, “1908 Avusturya boykotunda liman işçileri” [The port-workers during the 1908 Austrian boycott], *Kebikeç*, 5 (1997), 155-162. We have seen that the construction of the modern port in Salonica did by no means diminish the importance of boatmen and porters for seaborne commerce.

⁴⁵ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, 23/11/1908. See also BOA, DH.MKT 2677/54, 13 Teşrin-i Sâni 1324 [November 26, 1908].

movement, but at the same time unwilling to directly confront the mood of the public.⁴⁶ The situation came almost to a head on November 22, when the Austrian steamer “Alga” arrived in town. The steamer had departed from Antwerp with an exclusively Belgian cargo, and had already docked in Alexandria and Beirut without incidents. In Salonica, however, the boatmen and porters refused to handle the cargo, and remained steadfast despite the arrival of police, the intervention of the governor-general and the assurance of the Belgian consul that the cargo was not, in fact, Austrian. In the end, the Ottoman authorities decided not to press the matter, and preferred to face the Belgian embassy, which was threatening legal action, rather than move against the boatmen.⁴⁷ The boycott finally ended in early 1909, when the Austrians agreed to pay 2.5 million *liras* in indemnities, and it was deemed a success. Not only did it exercise enough pressure on the Austrian-Hungarian government so as to allow the empire to avoid complete humiliation; at the same time it furthered the influence of the Committee inside the city and cemented its appeal among the popular classes. Such measures would be soon repeated to an even greater extent.⁴⁸

Despite the tense atmosphere, the elections themselves were peaceful. Still, the Bulgarian “constitutional clubs” as well as the Greek Orthodox communities documented a series of irregularities and voting fraud. Gerrymandering of the first degree electoral colleges and the manipulation of the electors’ lists seem to have given the Muslim element a dominant position among second degree electors. Nonetheless, the Committee honoured the electoral pact it had signed and the Muslim electors of the second degree voted en block for the non-Muslim candidates. They swept the elections in the province, returning all their eleven candidates. The six new deputies for the district of Salonica were, for the Committee, Rahmi Bey,

⁴⁶ A circular from the Interior Ministry to the provinces, sent in mid-October, called on the governors-general to maintain order, and guarantee that goods were unloaded and transferred to shops. The interference with the operation of the ports was regarded as dangerous, and full of unintended consequences. Of particular concern was the possibility of commercial agents recruiting foreign boatmen and porters, outside the guild control, for their own needs. BOA, DH.MKT 2631/44, 2 Teşrin-i Evvel 1324 [October 15, 1908].

⁴⁷ Ibid. Also BOA, BEO 3447/258461, 18, 21, 25, 29 Teşrin-i Sâni 1324 [December 12, 1908].

⁴⁸ For information on the boycott in Istanbul and other Ottoman ports, see Quataert, “The Ottoman boycott against Austria-Hungary”, in idem, *Social Disintegration and Popular Resistance in the Ottoman Empire, 1881-1908* (New York and London: New York University Press, 1983), 121-145; also BOA, DH.MKT 2693/9, 13 Kanûn-ı Evvel 1324 [December 26, 1908].

Carasso and Mehmet Cavid Bey, the director of the technical school of the city and a writer of local fame; Vlahof, the partisan of Sandanski, who became the first socialist deputy in the Ottoman parliament; and the Greeks G. Artas, a lawyer and instructor of Turkish, and G. Honaios, who had been the first dragoman at the Greek consulate until his election.⁴⁹

The reconstitution of the Ottoman parliament was initially regarded to be a first step towards the normalisation of the political life of the empire, under a parliamentary and constitutional regime. These expectations remained unfulfilled. Instability remained, as the Committee, still officially seated at Salonica, the Palace, the bureaucracy and the parliamentary opposition fought for political power. Outmanoeuvred by the Committee, its opponents were drawn closer into an unlikely alliance of liberals, ethnic nationalists and supporters of absolute rule of the sultan. On April 13, 1909 things in the capital came to a head, as troops from the Istanbul garrison, along with students from the religious schools and crowds of people stormed the parliament and forced the appointment of a new government, which would be more in accordance with religious law.⁵⁰

News of the movement in Istanbul was met with anger in Salonica. The officer corps and soldiers stationed in Macedonia were all hostile to the new government and Mahmud Şevket Paşa, head of the Third Army, agreed to mobilise his troops and advance towards Istanbul. Crowds were again on the streets, cheering at speeches that denounced the threat to the constitution and called for volunteers who would go to the capital and defend the new regime once and for all. The overwhelming majority of such volunteers were Muslim reservists from Salonica and the hinterland, but civilians joined as well. By April 23, the army had taken control of Istanbul with minimal fighting. Four days later a delegation of four deputies that included Carasso, visited Abdülhamid and then announced his abdication in favour of his brother Mehmet Reşad. The Istanbul garrison and police force were to be disbanded and replaced by gendarmes from Salonica and pupils of the local Police School.⁵¹

⁴⁹ FO 195/2298, Lamb to Lowther, September 22, November 9 and 15, 1908. Reflecting the different level of acceptance of each candidate, Rahmi Bey and Cavid Bey along with Artas received 266 elector votes. Carasso took 257, Honaios 230 and Vlahof 100 votes. Megas, *I epanastasi ton Neotourkon*, 216.

⁵⁰ Hanioglu, *Brief history*, 151-154; Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 514-516; FO 195/2328, Lamb to Lowther, April 17, 18 and 19, 1909.

⁵¹ Finkel, *Osman's Dream*, 517-518; FO 195/2328, Lamb to Lowther, April 21, 1909.

At the news of Abdülhamid's abdication, Salonica was illuminated and the following day was declared a public holiday.⁵² The city became a rehabilitation centre of sorts, as those arrested as complicit to the events of the 13th of April were sent to prison there; the troops who had taken part in the mutiny were also sent to Salonica, where they were gradually decommissioned. Abdülhamid himself arrived at Salonica by a special train on the night of the 28th. His train stopped at the military station, in the outskirts of the city, to avoid the crowds who had gathered in front of the passenger station. Declining the offer of a motor car, the sultan boarded a carriage and was driven through the less frequented streets of the city accompanied by some thirty mounted gendarmes, until he reached his destination: the Villa Allatini, at the easternmost end of the *Kelemeriye* quarter.⁵³

Capital of the Revolution

The failure of the movement of April 1909 gave a great boost to the influence of the Committee. The appointment of Mahmud Şevket Paşa to the post of Minister of War cemented the Committee's control over the army, or at least the alliance between the Committee and the top military echelons. Faced with the growing intransigence of the Committee and with few remaining allies in the palace and among the bureaucracy, Hamidian loyalists became ineffective. Inside Salonica itself, the control of the Committee seemed absolute. The population was supportive, the civil and military authorities affiliated to it, and the press was sympathetic. In the short period between July 1908 and April 1909, the city had become known as the "capital of the Revolution", a bastion of support for the constitution, the parliament and the Committee, and the only place deemed secure enough to keep the former sultan imprisoned.

The stranglehold of the Committee over imperial and local politics, however, bred discontent, which would eventually allow for the reorganisation of the opposition. The dissenting groups were many and diverse. Faced with growing tensions with the empire's neighbours and the Great Powers, the Committee became less inclined to accommodate the demands of ethnic and religious minorities. The organisation became increasingly open to Turkic nationalism, as it was propagated

⁵² FO 195/2328, Lamb to Lowther April 27, 1909.

⁵³ FO 195/2328, Lamb to Lowther, April 27 and 29, 1909; Mazower, *City of ghosts*, 277-278.

by many of its intellectuals active at Salonica at the time. This caused alarm to the non-Muslim communities. At the same time, there was opposition to the Committee from the Muslim clergy: although some *ulama* held a prominent role in the public events following the restoration of the constitution, a significant part was very suspicious of what they regarded as the Young Turks' "atheism". There were merchants who feared that measures like the boycott would endanger their commercial interests, and workers who were unsatisfied with the gains of the September strike wave and thought that independent action was the only way to defend and extend them. Support for or opposition to the Committee cut across ethnic, religious and class groups, which led to a greater fragmentation of local society.⁵⁴

The 1908 revolution had greatly expanded the space available for public expression, by initiating elections and mass politics and abolishing the restrictive legal framework. It had also politicised the spaces that had been there before: the broad, straight streets became sites for rallies, which ended up in the open spaces of the city; streetlamps and telegraph posts were placarded with pamphlets and posters; and the theatres, which once only played comic operas or tragedies, now had their share of satires and patriotic plays.⁵⁵ We have seen how the night-life of the city became a site of confrontation during the waiters' strike in September 1908. In the following months, cafés became one of the centres of the political life of the city. Besides the debates among the patrons over the reading of the newspapers, such venues hosted political speeches, and became crucial for the operation of both the city's labour groups and the Committee.⁵⁶ Since the Revolution, the latter had frequently employed such spaces to expand its influence in the city. Now it found itself challenged in the same spaces, with the same means it had used before. Aware that an attack on the freedom of expression would undermine the legacy of 1908 and its own legitimacy, the Committee had no other choice, but to combine certain

⁵⁴ For the debates within the Greek Orthodox *millet* concerning the Committee and elections, see Catherine Boura, "The Greek *millet* in Turkish politics: Greeks in the Ottoman Parliament" in *Ottoman Greeks in the Age of Nationalism: Politics, economy and society in the nineteenth century*, eds. Charles Issawi and Dimitri Gondicas (Princeton, New Jersey: Darwin Press, 1999), 193-206.

⁵⁵ Captain Kazim Nami, a leading member of the committee, wrote a play in three acts, titled "Nasil Oldu?" (How did it happen?) right after the success of the Young Turk movement. Performances had started in August 1908 by a troupe of *dönme* actors, with great success. See Megas, *I epanastasi ton Neotourkon*, 193-194.

⁵⁶ Ilicak, 133.

restrictive measures with enhancing its own presence in the public spaces of the city.⁵⁷

Challenging the order imposed locally by the Committee, the workers returned to the streets and celebrated May Day for the first time in the city. On June 19, a crowd of thousands gathered in Olympos Square, known as the Square of Liberty ever since the revolution of 1908 was proclaimed there, to protest against the introduction of anti-strike and anti-union legislation and for the defence of workers' rights.⁵⁸ Among the speakers was a Bulgarian Jewish printer called Avraam Benaroya, an ardent socialist who had contacts with the Bulgarian radicals and had joined the Third Army as a volunteer during the events of April 1909. Benaroya had gathered around him a growing group of workers, who assembled regularly and debated workers' rights, progressive politics and socialist theory. By the summer of that year, the group had been reorganised as the *Fédération Socialiste Ouvrière*. An "international workers' fair" held in the public gardens of *Beşçınar* had sold 6,000 tickets, and had used the 100 *liras* collected there were used to fund the publication of its newspaper, *The Worker's Journal*, which appeared in August in four editions: in Judeo-Spanish, Bulgarian, Ottoman Turkish and Greek.⁵⁹

From its emergence the nascent labour and socialist movement in Salonica was confronted with the national question. Some of the unions in the city were organised on a communal basis and others on the corporation level. The declaration signed by the protest of June 10, mentions a number of segregated unions: there were separate Greek and Jewish unions of clerks and employees, of workers at the cigarette paper factory, of soap-makers, carpenters, and tailors; Greek and Bulgarian unions of typographers. Conversely, there was unified representation of the workers at the tobacco *Régie* and the tobacco processing plant, the Oriental Railways, the Tram and the gas-works.⁶⁰ Salonica's labour leaders were acutely aware of the threat posed to workers' solidarity by the prospect ethnic competition. Benaroya and the others had

⁵⁷ For the post-1908 theatre, see Bilge Seckin, "Staging the Revolution: The Theatre of the Revolution in the Ottoman Empire, 1908-1909," (unpublished MA thesis, Boğaziçi University, 2007).

⁵⁸ FO 195/2329, Lamb to Lowther, June 21, 1909. The so-called "Ferid Paşa" law was an adoption of the French anti-strike legislation of 1892. It endeavoured to protect the "freedom of enterprise" (*serbesti-yi i'mal*), forced strikers to deploy security personnel, and prorogued the right to strike and to form a union in the public sector. Ilicak, 123-124; BOA, BEO 3898/292319, 14 Mayıs 1327 [May 27, 1911].

⁵⁹ Dumont, "The Workers' Federation of Salonica", 55, 61-62; FO 195/2329, Lamb to Lowther June 21, 1909.

⁶⁰ FO 195/2329, Lamb to Lowther 21/6/1909.

been influenced by Marxists like Otto Bauer and Karl Renner, and the debates on nationalism carried within by the Social-democratic Party of Austria Hungary. The *Fédération* therefore developed into a staunchly Ottomanist organisation, and the initial plan called for the setting-up of federative structure, where different ethno-religious groups would operate in a separate section, but within a unified organisation. The socialist transformation of the Ottoman Empire it strived for would alleviate ethnic tensions and would result to a matching federal, decentralised structure of government. In practice, socialist internationalism had difficulties in expanding beyond the Jewish and, to a lesser extent, Bulgarian workers, and the Federation's newspaper soon had to suspend the Ottoman and Greek editions. The Muslim element was greatly underrepresented within the city's labour movement, and the Greek workers were unwilling to leave their separate unions, which had been integral to communal life and maintained strong connections to the Church.⁶¹

The debate on inter-communal relations in the wake of the restoration of the constitution did not stay within the circle of local socialists. Although the restoration of the constitution had brought with it a wave of patriotic feeling, it seemed that the Ottomanist ideal was facing pressure from all sides, and mutual suspicion developed between the Committee and the local non-Muslims. Tensions began to flare soon after, however, when the deputies of the autonomous Cretan State voted to annex the island to Greece. The Committee took an initiative and formed the "Ligue de Paix et d'Entente", in order to attract the support of members of all communities and stabilise the situation. Its inaugural meeting was held on the 14th of July and was chaired by Major Faik Bey, an influential member of the Committee. The city's major clubs, comprising the inter-communal elites of the city, had been invited and attended the meeting. It was agreed that the local press would be monitored, so as not to excite the public, and that public lectures would be organised to further the reach of the group.⁶²

The ameliorating results of these meetings were soon overcome by events. Following a concentrated campaign in the press, the Greek government decided to repatriate a number of its consular staff from Macedonia, who had been implicated in the coordination of Greek band activity in the region. One of these, an individual

⁶¹ Greek guilds were usually led by non-workers: priests in the case of the bakers and the shoe-makers, a lawyer connected to the consulate, in the case of the tailors. Ilicak, 129.

⁶² FO 195/2329, Lamb to Lowther, July 9 and 15, 1909.

named Alexandros Meneditis, was arrested on the evening of July 16, as he arrived at the train station from Manastır. More arrests followed, though no convictions were achieved.⁶³ The celebration of the first anniversary of constitutional rule was rather muted, in the light of these events, despite the return to the city of Mehmet Cavid Bey. Cavid Bey, first elected deputy of Salonica in the 1908 elections, had by that point risen to the top echelons of the Committee leadership and had been appointed Minister of Finance after the deposition of Abdülhamid.⁶⁴ In the event, the *Fédération* declined the Committee's offer for a joint celebration and fielded a separate manifestation, with red banners and a brass band, that rivalled the official one in terms of participants.⁶⁵

On August 7, the Committee organised a large public meeting against the violation of Ottoman sovereignty in Crete. As was the case in the fall of 1908, the meeting was followed by a call to boycott imports from the Kingdom of Greece, as well as all ships flying the Greek flag. The boycott officially started on August 15 and lasted for 17 days.⁶⁶ In the meantime it had caused great dissatisfaction among not only the Ottoman Greek merchants, but also their Jewish colleagues, who had extensive dealings with Greek shipping and the Greek banking institutions in the city.⁶⁷ Large scale police operations in the countryside and the establishment of a court-martial in Salonica to try cases of brigandage further unsettled the non-Muslim population.⁶⁸

In February 1910, half of the municipal council resigned, its two-year tenure having expired, and the resulting elections gave the local voters an opportunity to express their dissatisfaction with the Committee.⁶⁹ While the Federation protested the

⁶³ FO 195/2329, Lamb to Lowther, July 16, 1909; Satow to Lowther, July 22, 1909.

⁶⁴ FO 195/2329, Satow to Lowther, July 25, 1909.

⁶⁵ Dumont, "The Workers' Federation of Salonica", 65; Ilicak, 125-126.

⁶⁶ BOA, DH.MKT 2896/65, 28, 29 Temmuz 1325 [August 11, 1909]. Note that a boycott against Greek shipping and merchandise had been called during the height of the Austrian boycott, in late December 1908 in Izmir and Salonica, but it had not gathered much traction. BOA, DH.MKT 2699/79, 20 Kanun-ı Evvel 1324 [January 2, 1909].

⁶⁷ FO 195/2329, Satow to Lowther, August 8 and 19, September 2, 1909.

⁶⁸ FO 195/2330, Lamb to Lowther, November 5, 1909; FO 195/2357, Lamb to Lowther, January 23, 1910. For the impact of the boycott to the Greek community of a different Ottoman port-city, see Vangelis Kechriotis, "Protecting the city's interest: the Greek Orthodox and the conflict between municipal and *vilayet* authorities in Izmir (Smyrna) in the Second Constitutional period", *Mediterranean Historical Review* 24, 2 (December 2009), 214-216.

⁶⁹ Osman Adil Bey, the mayor of the city during the Revolution, who had appeared to be close to the committee in the months that had followed, broke ways with them early on. Soon after the 1908 parliamentary elections he had resigned his post and left for Belgium.

restricted franchise, leading members of the Jewish and *dönme* communities presented candidates opposed to the ticket of the Committee, which this time did not succeed in getting the support of the Greek community. In the first competitive elections after 1908 in what had so far been a consensual institution, the opposition won all six seats. Nonetheless, after months of lobbying, which involved the resignation of both a councillor and the mayor, Ismail Bey, the Committee managed to appoint its preferred candidate, Kerim Efendizâde Tevfik Bey, first to the council and then to its presidency.⁷⁰

By that time the city was again embroiled in agitation on the issue of Crete. The formal procedure of first holding a demonstration, held in May, followed by a boycott, which commenced on June, was repeated.⁷¹ The measure spread from Greek shipping to include all businesses owned by Greek subjects. Kerim Ağa, head of the guild of porters and lightermen, established himself at the Customs House and was given the responsibility to provide Ottoman Greek businessmen with certificates of Ottoman subjecthood in return for a small charge, the proceeds of which were supposed to compensate his men for the losses incurred. Since the merchants in question showed no great enthusiasm in stepping forward and paying the tax, groups of porters started visiting shops demanding money, destroying merchandise that had been imported from Greece and writing “boycott” on the stores of those who did not pay. The effects were felt not only by Greek subjects and Ottoman Greeks, but also by Jewish merchants and foreign protégés.⁷²

The boycott remained strong in the following months. While putting a break on the worst excesses of the porters, the authorities embarked on a campaign of disarming the Greek Orthodox population of the city, be they Ottoman or foreign subjects.⁷³ In the meantime, to alleviate the impact on local trade, a compromise solution was found regarding the harbour: ships flying the Greek flag were allowed to dock, as long as they carried foreign cargo. Conversely, Greek cargo could indeed be unloaded in the port, but only on third-party ships. But even these escape clauses

Megas, *I epanastasi ton Neotourkon*, 216.

⁷⁰ FO 195/2357, Lamb to Lowther, March 3, 1910; FO 195/2358, Lamb to Lowther, June 17, 1910.

⁷¹ FO 195/2357, Lamb to Lowther, May 15, 1910; FO 195/2358, Lamb to Lowther, June 6, 1910.

⁷² FO 195/2358, Lamb to Lowther, June 18, 28 and 29, 1910. For the importance of Greek banking for the commerce of the Aegean port-cities, see Frangakis-Syrett, “Banking in Izmir.”

⁷³ FO 195/2358, Lamb to Lowther, August 30, September 6 and 21, 1910.

were not observed constantly, the boycott becoming stricter or looser without warning.

The tense climate persisted until the spring, when it was announced that the sultan would be visiting the city. The visit, which had been originally intended for Abdülhamid and postponed in the chaos of the events of April 1909, was set first for March 31, then for June 7. Apparently, a large number of visitors had made preparations to arrive to the city for the first day, so the sultan, in a show of imperial largesse, distributed 2,500 *liras* to cover the expenses incurred by those less well off.⁷⁴ The preparations for the sultan's visit constituted the last large-scale intervention in the cityscape of Ottoman Salonica: The streets, whence the sultan would pass (the quay, the old *Hamidiye* Boulevard, and the Midhat Paşa Street, where the *konak*, was situated) were re-paved and widened. The walls which had surrounded the White Tower were demolished and the public gardens enlarged to incorporate the building. The restoration of the Ayasofya mosque, where the sultan would attend Friday prayers, was accelerated.⁷⁵ The religious communities and the political and cultural clubs were encouraged to participate in the festivities and prepared large apses with celebratory slogans, to be placed around the sites that the sultan would visit. Visitors (more than sixty thousand, as estimated by the authorities) started arriving days before and all accommodation in the city was booked.⁷⁶

Not all Salonicans were taken in by the festive atmosphere, however. In early May, the workers in the train depot of the Oriental Railways began voicing complaints about their wages and their working conditions. The unrest soon spread to other groups of railway workers, including the brakemen and the workers at the train repair "factories" in the city. On May 18, an appeal was published in the name of the workers of the Oriental and the Salonica-Manastrı lines. It complained about the repressive attitude of the company and stated nine demands, including a raise of 3 *kuruş* in their daily wage, the establishment of a pension fund for the families of deceased workers and a five *lira* reimbursement for funerary costs. The workers expected a positive reply within fifteen days, otherwise they threatened that they

⁷⁴ BOA, BEO 3901/252553, 23 Mayıs 1327 [June 5, 1911].

⁷⁵ Theoharidou, *The architecture of Haghia Sophia*, 179-180.

⁷⁶ FO 195/2381, Lamb to Lowther, June 11, 1911. For the perspective of the Jewish community, see Julia Philipps Cohen, "Fashioning Imperial Citizens: Sephardi Jews and the Ottoman state, 1856-1912" (unpublished PhD dissertation, Stanford University, 2008), 217ff.

would go on strike. Faced with a labour dispute that could potentially disrupt the visit of the sultan, the Ottoman state took immediate action. The Military Commission of the Salonica and Manastır railways selected up to 30 rail workers from among its men and prepared to send them to Salonica in case of a strike. And the government displayed its readiness to use the anti-strike legislation and deploy the security forces against the workers. Faced with the full power of the state, the latter had to back down.⁷⁷

The sultan arrived at Salonica on board the warship *Hayreddin Barbarossa* on the evening of the 7th of June and disembarked at the harbour the following morning. He was driven around the city in a carriage to the applause of thousands of spectators, until he reached the *konak*, where he received various delegations. In the evening the clubs of the city organised a parade of torch bearers, which was accompanied by a luminous fountain, courtesy of M. Cuypers, the Belgian consul and head of the city's Water Company. The following day, the sultan went to Ayasofya to pray, then proceeded to the gardens of *Beş Çınar* where he attended an exposition of local manufactures. The sultan sent his First Secretary to the Villa Allatini, to ask after his brother's health, but direct communication between the two men was denied. After the sultan visited the Third Army headquarters and inspected the officers on the morning of the third day, he departed by train for Kosovo.⁷⁸

The sultan's visit was perhaps the last manifestation of the Ottoman city. In the following months, war and an increasingly restrictive set of state policies would lead first to the compartmentalisation of local society, then to its eventual neutralisation.

The Unravelling of Ottoman Salonica, 1911-1912

The summer of 1911 was marked by a cholera epidemic in the countryside, which reached the city and paralysed trade, and growing apprehension over the escalation of the crisis between Italy and the Empire over Tripoli. When Italy formally declared war on September, the Committee organised counter-measures against the local Italian element. A large demonstration converged on the Italian consulate, where it removed the coat of arms and burned the flag mast.⁷⁹ The boycott currently in effect

⁷⁷ BOA, BEO 3898/292319, 14 Mayıs 1327 [May 27, 1911].

⁷⁸ For the programme of the sultan's visit to Salonica and his journey across Macedonia, see BOA, DH.MTV 25/19, 13 Mayıs 1327 [May 26, 1911].

⁷⁹ FO 195/2382, Morgan to Lowther, June 28, 1911; interestingly, the largest demonstration

against Greek trade was extended to Italian commodities and commercial and financial establishments owned by Italian subjects were closed.⁸⁰ Since a significant part of the Jewish upper-class of the city, including the powerful Allatini brothers, carried Italian citizenship, these measures, along with the gradual flight of those targeted in this way, exacerbated the already critical financial situation.⁸¹ The closure of the *Banque de Salonique*, the unwillingness of the remaining banks to provide credit, and the harassing actions of the Italian navy in the Eastern Mediterranean proved disastrous for local trade.⁸²

The outbreak of the war had galvanised support for the government, but as the weakness of the Ottoman military was made apparent, opposition to the Committee picked up and reorganised itself as the Liberal Entente. The municipal elections which took place in February 1912 were regarded as a first round between the Committee and the opposition, in anticipation of the parliamentary elections, which were to take place that spring. In the event, the Committee suffered a humiliation, as none of its candidates was elected and İsmail Bey, a former mayor, was eventually reappointed to the post.⁸³ By this point, however, the relative power and autonomy of the municipality had diminished and the victory of the opposition proved to be hollow. The Committee had taken control of the provincial bureaucracy and its leading members all held managerial positions in the *vilayet*: of the members of the bureau of the Salonica branch of the organisation, Nazım Bey, the *Dönme* doctor who had served for years as the secretary general of the Central Bureau of the Committee, was appointed director of the Municipal Hospital; Fadil Bey, his brother, served as treasurer, or *defterdar*, of the province; Tevfik Rüşdü Bey, Celal Bey and Kâzım Nami Bey were respectively Inspectors of sanitation, the judiciary and public education; Kerim Efendizâde Tevfik Bey had been the mayor between 1910

against the war was not that of the Committee, but the one organised by the *Fédération*. Mazower, *Salonica*, 289.

⁸⁰ The Greek boycott was officially brought to an end in November. *Makedonia* 102, November 2 [15] 1911.

⁸¹ FO 195/2382, Lamb to Lowther, December 2, 1911. For the Italian-Jewish community of the city, see Meron, "Sub-ethnicity and elites: Italian-Jewish professional and entrepreneurs in Salonica, (1881-1912)", *Zakhor: Revista di storia degli Ebrei d'Italia* 8 (2005), 177-220.

⁸² Ilicak, 120. The *Banque de Salonique* had been founded by the Allatini family in 1888 and operated as a branch of the Austrian *Länderbank*. Its estimated deposits were 250 thousand *liras*.

⁸³ See the article in the Greek newspaper *Nea Alitheia* 829, February 12 [25], 1912; FO 295/21, Lamb to Lowther, February 12 and March 9, 1912.

and the end of 1911.⁸⁴ Nuri Bey, *kaymakam* of the county of Salonica, and Adil Bey, chief of police in the city, were also Committee members.⁸⁵ By appointing weak individuals without administrative experience at the post of governor-general, Committee cadres could ensure their control of provincial administration from their secondary positions.⁸⁶

That control proved crucial during the parliamentary elections that took place in spring of 1912, appropriately remembered as the “big stick elections.” As the selection of the electors of first degree approached, the opposition press reported numerous cases of gerrymandering, disruption of political rallies, intimidation and violence on the responsibility of the authorities.⁸⁷ As the local socialists had decided to declare their support for the Liberals, the authorities seized Benaroya and deported him to Istanbul.⁸⁸ Uniformed and plains-clothed policemen were present in the voting stations; in the mosque of Soğuk Su, the ballot was taken at about 10:30am, an hour after the voting process had begun, and was returned only three hours later, staffed with ballots for the Committee.⁸⁹ In another voting station the opposition got a majority of votes, but the Committee observers asked for a recount, which they won, after allegedly staffing the ballot box with an additional 300 votes.⁹⁰ Unfazed by such allegations, the governor-general, Hüseyin Kâzım Paşa, publicly endorsed the Committee and the candidacy of Rahmi Bey who was running for re-election along with Cavid Bey and Carasso.⁹¹ The final results of the elections seemed largely unrepresentative of public opinion: Only nine of eighty six second degree electors recorded their votes for the opposition in the county of Salonica, only one in the county of Vodina, none in the counties of Kesendire and Yenice, i.e. in those areas of the province which it had been expected to perform well.⁹² The Liberals only

⁸⁴ FO 195/2359, Lamb to Lowther, December 16, 1910.

⁸⁵ FO 195.2382, Lamb to Lowther, November 20 and December 14, 1911.

⁸⁶ FO 295/21, Lamb to Lowther, January 31, 1912.

⁸⁷ FO 295/21, Lamb to Lowther, March 30, 1912.

⁸⁸ *Nea Alitheia* 829, 12/2/1912. It appears that the Ottoman authorities had developed an obsession with Benaroya, whom they suspected of being a Bulgarian spy, charged with creating havoc in the city, and thus diverting the commerce of the Balkans towards the Bulgarian ports of Varna and Burgaz. Ilicak 124-125.

⁸⁹ *Makedonia* 221, March 28 [April 10] 1912.

⁹⁰ *Makedonia* 223. March 30 [April 12] 1912.

⁹¹ FO 295/21, Lamb to Lowther, March 30, 1912.

⁹² The authorities refused to allow Honaios and Vlahov, who were contesting the elections on the Liberal ticket, to visit Vodina. *Nea Alitheia* 840, 25/2/1912. The electors of second degree in Kasandra, which was the last *kaza* to send its votes, claimed that when they arrived at the seat of the district, in order to cast their votes, the authorities pressured them to vote

carried the district of Karaferye, with 11 electors for themselves and 4 for the Committee. Through fraud and violence, the Committee swept the first round of the elections and managed thus to elect as deputies all six candidates on its ticket. These included, apart from the three mentioned above, Halil Bey, J. Nikolov and K. Kotsanos.⁹³ Honaios and Vlahov were not returned, while Artas ran successfully in Istanbul with the support of the Committee.⁹⁴

The elections of 1912 had a subduing effect on political activity in the city. They had proved, if anything, the extent of the control the Committee exercised over the state apparatus, and its willingness to use it to further its political aims and, conversely, the weakness of local civil society in maintaining its influence vis-à-vis the state. The ideals of constitutionalism and Ottoman brotherhood, which seemed triumphant after July 1908, now appeared unsalvageable and perhaps irrelevant. With the war with Italy showing no signs of abating, and tensions rising with the neighbouring Balkan States, local society withdrew from public life and held its breath, as the city passed into a state of emergency. By November of that year, the Balkan Wars would have break out and the city would be occupied by Greek troops.

for the Committee candidates. *Nea Alitheia* 873, April 4 [17], 1912.

⁹³ *Nea Alitheia* 870, April 3 [16], 1912.

⁹⁴ Boura, 203-205; *Nea Alitheia* 872, April 5 [17], 1912.

Conclusion

On October 8, 1912, the militaries of Bulgaria, Greece, Serbia and Montenegro began their combined assault against the Ottoman Empire, initiating the First Balkan War. Inspired by the poor performance of Ottoman forces in the ongoing war against Italy, the Balkan states had spent most of 1912 in negotiating a military alliance and in dividing the prospective spoils of war between them. The military response of the Ottomans was uncoordinated and, with the Greek fleet blocking the transport of reinforcements from Anatolia and the Arab provinces, resistance in Macedonia collapsed within a month. In November 11, the military commander of Salonica surrendered the city to Greek Crown Prince Constantine and Greek troops entered the city to a jubilant welcome by the Greek Orthodox inhabitants. The Muslims and Jews of the city stayed in their homes, contemplating what these dramatic events meant for the city and themselves.

The entry of the Greek army signaled the end of almost 500 years of Ottoman rule over the city and its hinterland. The Greeks had defeated both the Ottomans and, after a short but bloody war over summer 1913, their Bulgarian former allies, and the city was formally incorporated in the Hellenic Kingdom by the Treaty of Bucharest in August that year. As a result of the Balkan Wars, the actions of Greek administration, and the internal dynamic of a nation-state whose political and economic life was strongly oriented towards Athens, many of the networks that had helped the city emerge as a major economic and commercial centre were disrupted. The new political situation meant that the city lost direct access to about half its former hinterland (now part of Serbia or Bulgaria), that the favourable customs rates that had supported the growth of international trade were gone, and that local economic development would be dependent on the directives of the central government in an unprecedented manner. The new military and civil authorities found themselves responsible for a city and a region, whose population, nationalist discourse aside, was not necessarily committed to the agenda of the Greek state. They enforced their presence by swiftly replacing most civil servants with personnel from 'Old Greece', displacing the former Ottoman bureaucrats and replacing them with a different administrative elite.

Still, for such a radical change, what is perhaps remarkable are the continuities from the Ottoman period, at least in the short term. The Greek authorities faced Bulgarian claims over their newly incorporated territories, and Austria-Hungary was actively implicated in an attempt to make Salonica an international port, in the model of Tangiers.¹ It was imperative, therefore, to cultivate good relations with the Jewish and Muslim communities and assuage any of their fears. Despite of acts of violence committed by Greek troops and the feared Cretan gendarmes, order was quickly restored and the multi-ethnic fabric of the city survived the initial transition from the empire to the nation-state. Saturday remained the unofficial day of rest for the city. The municipal authorities and the intermediate bodies that governed civil society continued their operation unchanged. The venerable İsmail Bey was even allowed to retain his position as city mayor. Ironically, the new rulers of the city seem to have found common ground with their Ottoman predecessors in keeping limits on local political representation. The Greek constitution of 1911 included universal male suffrage, but the Jews of Salonica were eventually placed in separate electoral registers as a means to prevent them from dominating local politics.² Nonetheless, the local political scene remained as lively as in the Young Turk period. The Federation was especially active in establishing links with labour associations in the rest of Greece and its activists were instrumental in the foundation of the first Greek socialist party in 1918.³ There were many contentious issues between the Greek authorities and the Jewish and Muslim minorities, but their resolution was being constantly deferred. The outbreak of World War I, the landing of the Entente troops and the establishment of a provisional Greek government in the city put any deliberations on hold.

Like late Ottoman Salonica, Greek Thessaloniki and its new urban order emerged through a process of spatial transformation. Like Ottoman bureaucrats, the Greek administration only proceeded to radically reordering the cityscape after being given a chance opportunity. On August 18, 1917 a fire incinerated about two-thirds of the city centre. The burned zone contained most of the Frankish Quarter, almost

¹ N.M. Gelber, "An attempt to internationalize Salonica, 1912-1913", *Jewish Social Studies*, 17, 2 (April 1955), 105-120.

² Dimosthenis Dodos, *Oi Evraioi tis Thessalonikis stis ekloges tou ellinikou kratous, 1915-1936* [The Jews of Thessaloniki in the elections of the Greek state, 1915-1936] (Athens: Exantas, 2005).

³ The Socialist Labour Party of Greece, or SEKE.

all downtown Jewish neighbourhoods, including the areas that had been rebuilt after 1890 and had formed the ‘modern’ core of the city, and a considerable portion of the Muslim quarters in the upper city. Within a few hours most of the physical traces of the recent Ottoman past were gone. The authorities were presented with an empty pallet for the new city and decided to attempt a complete redesigning of the centre. The drafting of the new plan was entrusted to Ernest Hébrard, a French architect who happened to be in the city as part of the Entente expedition. Hébrard envisaged the construction of a ‘Byzantine’ city that would complement the classicist character of Athens. His plan included the combination of a grid with diagonal axes, highlighting the Byzantine monuments of the city that would be now dominating urban vistas. The application of an invented tradition of planning and architecture came in opposition to the elements of the Ottoman city, whose public spaces were mainly directed towards the sea, and the conceptions of the city planners had largely disregarded its urban past.⁴

The consequences of the fire were especially grave for local Jews and Muslims, and ended the visibility of their collective presence in urban space. Half the synagogues of the city were lost to the flames, while many properties that had belonged to the Jewish community and notable Jews were now being expropriated to make room for the replanning of the city. Though these proprietors were fully repaid by insurance companies and the state, this was of little comfort to their tenants. Tens of thousands of Jews were left homeless and were forced to move out of the city centre, in a process that dwarfed similar developments after the 1890 fire. The situation of the local Muslims was equally bad: not only were their main mosques and the pious foundations that sustained them mostly gone, but also the Greek Church was now demanding the ‘return’ to Christian worship of those sites that had once been Byzantine churches – and consequently ownership of their properties in the city. As tensions between Greece and the Ottoman Empire increased, initially because of the persecution of Anatolian Christians and, after 1919, with Greek troops actually landing in Western Anatolia and fighting a war against Atatürk’s national movement, pressure on the Muslim community grew.

⁴ Yerolympos, *I anoikodomisi tis Thessalonikis meta tin pyrkagia tou 1917* [The reconstruction of Thessaloniki after the fire of 1917] (Thessaloniki: University Studio Press, 1995).

The war of 1919-1922 had severe consequences for the city's demographics. As the Greek military effort foundered, the city became flooded with tens of thousands of Greek Orthodox refugees, who left persecution on the other side of the Aegean. After the peace treaty at Lausanne in 1923 and the agreed population exchange, the Muslims of the city, as in the rest of Greece, were forced to take a journey in the reverse direction. These refugees included the *dönme* community, despite some members petitioning for exemption on terms of their 'Jewishness'.⁵ These dramatic events were accompanied by a number of ordinances to hellenise urban space: Sunday became the official day of rest, Greek the prescribed language in public and shop signs. Societies and associations were dissolved and reformed according to Greek law. The minarets of the city that had so impressed foreign travellers were blown up in 1924-1925. As a result, the 500 years of Muslim presence in the city ended, as did the Jewish predominance in the city.

About 150,000 refugees were eventually settled in Thessaloniki, doubling its pre-1912 population. They were given land and built their shacks in what had been the *Yalılar* quarter, crowding the mansions of the old commercial elites. With the city losing its economic dynamism, most of these elites, and especially the grand Jewish families, began to leave the city for Athens, Marseille or Trieste, continuing a process that had started during the Young Turk period. The rest of the Jewish population of Thessaloniki embarked on an attempt to integrate themselves within the cultural and social milieu of the Greek state and secure equal political and economic status.⁶ That attempt was tragically interrupted when the city and the rest of the country was occupied by Axis forces in April 1941. Two years later, the deportation of more than 50,000 Jews began; more than nine out of ten of them would die in the Nazi death camps. The tragedy of the war and the Holocaust represented the final destruction of the multi-ethnic fabric of Salonica.

Just like the transformation of Salonica at the turn of the nineteenth century followed a pattern similar to developments in the other Ottoman port-cities, as well as beyond, in the urban centres of Western Europe, the post-war changes reflected

⁵ Baer, "The double bind of race and religion: the conversion of the Dönme to Turkish nationalism," *Comparative Studies of Society and History*, 46, 4 (October 2004), 693-694.

⁶ Ginio, "'Learning the beautiful language of Homer': Judeo-Spanish speaking Jews and the Greek language and culture between the wars," *Jewish History*, 16, 3 (October 2002), 235-262.

wider global trends. If the *fin-de-siècle* Mediterranean was influenced by global trade networks and state reform, the reconstruction of the 1950s followed the Marshall plan, rapid urbanisation and the attempts at setting up import-substitution industries. New elites emerged, the political and economic role of the city was renegotiated with Athens. In the following years, the nationalisation of the cityscape and the removal of any visible signs of the late Ottoman order proceeded at full pace. Communal institutions were taken over by the Greek state, the tram lines were dismantled to make room for automobile traffic, and the once splendid mansions were gradually replaced by modern apartment buildings, the elite families that built and owned them long gone from the city. The inhabitants of the city continued to shape their surrounding spaces according to their needs, their desires and their preferences. As before, the contingencies of production, social life, competition, and style transformed space, and the new forms of latter reinforced or modified these trends.

Main of this dissertation was to highlight this bidirectional process within a specific urban environment, that of late Ottoman Salonica between roughly between 1870 and 1912. Through my choice of primary sources, and especially those produced locally, I attempted to bridge the distance between the theoretical framework that informed my understanding of my subject matter on the one hand, and concrete documentation of interventions onto the urban fabric by state and non-state actors on the other. Rather than focusing on textual accounts, I tried to employ as much as possible accounts of the local and central Ottoman administration, thus prioritising the material aspects of space over its ideological ones. Much attention was given to disputing the linearity of the developments under question. Where applicable, I underlined the divergence between planning, implementation, and results of the various projects that took place in Salonica during that period. By tracing the differing interests of three main groups of local actors – the Ottoman authorities, local property-owning and commercial elites, and European merchants, investors, and diplomats, not in order to challenge the existence of a modernising consensus among those groups, but to reconstruct this consensus as a dynamic aggregate of interests.

I believe that this study opens the way for follow-up research from a number of perspectives, many of which have not much preoccupied the historiography. The property registries of Salonica were only selectively used here and only offered qualitative information on developments in the city. The study of this resource in full, however, would allow us to reconstruct the late Ottoman city and trace its transformation over a defining thirty-five year period. In the same vein, there appears to be large amounts of textual and visual material in the Ottoman archives. Though its largely available, this study and the rich literature on late Ottoman urbanism have so far used only a small percentage. Comparative studies on these and other sources can offer invaluable insight in differences and similarities between different Ottoman cities, between the logic and profitability of different projects and forms of economic activity, and between urban transformation and capitalist urbanisation in the Ottoman Empire, Western Europe, and beyond. With this optimistic assessment of our field, I would like to close this dissertation.

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